

WHEN BRITNEY SPEARS' father, **Jamie**, blasted her in the *New York Post* on April 20 for her wild ways, it came as a shock to many who believed the singer had been blessed with a close-knit, loving family. "We have never had a good relationship," Britney fired back via her rep. "It's sad that all the men that have been in my life do not know how to accept a real woman's love." But Spears, 25, hasn't only lost the support of Dad. A source close to the mom of two tells *Us* she is at odds with her mother, **Lynne**, and her estranged manager, **Larry Rudolph**, for forcing her to check into Malibu, California's Promises treatment center, which she felt jeopardized her chances of retaining full custody of her kids, Sean, 19 months, and Jayden, 7 months.

"Her family believed the media over Britney, and that's why they sent her to rehab," says the source. "She was never an alcoholic, yet she had to stay there for 30 days." As a result, "she's cut everyone out of her life," the source says. "She says she doesn't want to

see anyone from her past." (Her reps have no comment, and Lynne and Jamie Spears could not be reached.)

Spears' relationship with her mother — with whom she cowrote two feel-good books, including 2000's *Heart to Heart* — has been troubled since Spears began dating **Kevin Federline** in 2004. But it further deteriorated when Federline, 29, was given custody of their kids while Spears was in rehab — a move Spears says was orchestrated by her mom. "She feels her mother gave Larry Rudolph power: He handed her kids over to her ex," explains the source. Though the source describes the women's relationship as "horrible," insisting "they don't speak," another insider says, "Britney loves her mom and they talk almost every day, but they aren't the most cordial conversations."

As for her dad, the singer told the *Post*, "I am praying for my father." (A source says, "That's her way to get back at people: She says, 'You're in my prayers.'") And don't expect a reconciliation between Spears and Rudolph anytime soon. "Their

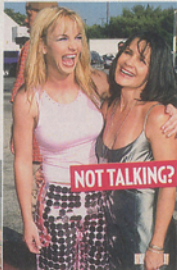
business relationship is pretty much done. He never stuck up for her." (A rep for Rudolph has told *Us* the pair signed a two-year contract before she filed for divorce from Federline.)

For now, Spears has stopped drinking, says a pal, and people are noticing a difference. "She was calm and relaxed," Jamie Worth of Beverly Hills' Hands-on

Retail Therapy — where Spears got a French pedicure April 18 — tells *Us*. "I was surprised at how mellow she is." One calming influence: her brother, Bryan, 30, with whom she still talks. (Her beloved little sis, Jamie-Lynn, 16, is attending high school back in Kentwood, Louisiana.) Yet Spears is serious about making some change. "She wants to be left alone."



Jamie Spears (in 2005) recently called his daughter "out of control."



FLASHBACK: 1999 "I worry about her pushing herself too hard," Lynne said of Britney around the time.

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Spears thought Rudolph (in 2006) "did a horrible job" with her press, says a pal.



Spears "likes to work with people she clicks with, both as a dancer and as a person," Baker tells *Us*.

Recording Scoop!

As she begins work on her next CD, Spears searches for new dancers

GET READY FOR THAT comeback album. A source tells Hot Stuff Spears is throwing herself into her work: "Her schedule in the studio is packed." Adds a Spears pal, "She's writing lyrics. She'll be like, 'Isn't this hot?'" And she isn't just logging recording time. Robert Baker, director of Millennium Dance Com-

plex, tells Hot Stuff that the singer has been regularly popping into his North Hollywood studio, taking classes and recruiting future dancers and choreographers. "She's definitely looking for a new style of dance to match her new clean slate," Baker tells *Us*. "She's in great spirits, upbeat and ready to go."