

## “Honour”-based abuse training - handout

**The facts:** HBA is abuse that is motivated by the belief that someone in the family has brought shame or dishonour to their family or community. Examples of behaviours which can damage “honour” may include:

- Behaving in what is perceived to be a ‘Westernised manner’ e.g. wearing makeup or certain clothing
  - Going against parental authority
  - Having a non-approved relationship, for example, intimate relations before/outside of marriage or same sex relations.
- Families/communities who uphold honour systems often place a very high value on maintaining virginity before marriage and heterosexual marriage.

Most HBA is perpetrated against girls and women but boys and men can also be at risk.

There may be multiple perpetrators, most often fathers, brothers and uncles, but female relatives can also be involved.

The victim is abused to “correct behaviour” or restore the reputation of the family in the community. The abuse may be verbal, physical, sexual or financial; it may also constitute various criminal offences, such as forced marriage, coercive control or murder.

“Honour” based abuse takes place across different countries, cultures and religions. In the UK, most victims of HBA originate from South Asian countries, such as Pakistan and Bangladesh. Victims also originate from Eastern European, Middle Eastern and African countries.

It is estimated that at least one girl or woman is killed every month in the UK in the name of “honour”.

Whilst there is no specific offence of honour-based abuse, the Crown Prosecution Service will recognise honour-based abuses as incidents or crimes under current legislation e.g. assault, kidnapping, theft etc.

**Forced marriage** is a form of “honour”-based abuse and it is **illegal in the UK**. It is illegal to:

- Force an individual to marry against their will
- Use violence, threats or deception to cause another person to leave the UK for the purpose of a forced marriage
- Breach a Forced Marriage Protection Order
- Marry someone who lacks capacity to consent to the marriage

Forcing someone into marriage can lead to up to **7 years** in prison. Breaching the terms of a Forced Marriage Protection Order can lead to up to **5 years** in prison.

### Harms: Recognising HBA - types of harm:

- Self-harm
- Lower academic performance
- Removal from education
- Depression or anxiety
- Isolation
- Disowned by family
- Suicide

### Reasons:

- Control sexual behaviour / maintain virginity
- Pressure from family / community
- Financial gains
- Response to pregnancy out of wedlock
- To “cure” homosexuality
- Immigration
- Out of love

There may be warning signs that “honour”-based abuse, including forced marriage, is taking place. Please refer to the **HBA Risk Assessment Tool**. This can be found on the Oxford Against Cutting website, under **Honour-based abuse > resources > safeguarding**.

### Safeguarding

If you talk to a child about HBA, please bear in mind the following:

- Find a private space
- Use independent translators (if needed)
- Avoid judgemental language
- Maintain a record of your conversation
- Don’t promise not to share information

NB. Never approach the family (unless advised by Social Care).

If someone is in immediate danger, call **999**.

If you are concerned that a child may be at risk of / experiencing “honour”-based abuse, then you need to make a **report** to the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)/ Children’s Social Care

If you think someone is being taken abroad, or has already been taken abroad to be forced into marriage:

Call the **Forced Marriage Unit (FMU)** on 020 7008 0151

## Helpline numbers

**Karma Nirvana** supports victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage.

National helpline, Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm: 0800 5999 247

**The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU)** offers advice and support to victims of forced marriage as well as guidance to professionals.

Tel: 020 7008 0151

Email: [fmu@fco.gov.uk](mailto:fmu@fco.gov.uk)

**MASH / Windsor and Maidenhead Children's Services** – 01628 683 150

(Emergency Duty Team – 01344 786 543)

**Adult Social Care** – 01628 863744

**The Dash Charity** (Windsor and Maidenhead domestic abuse services) – 01753 477352

**Police** – 999



**OxfordAgainstCutting**  
ProtectingGirls&Women

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