

Honour Based Abuse Fact Sheet

also known as Honour Based Violence

What is Honour Based Abuse (HBA)?

The NPCC (National Police Chief's Council – Formerly ACPO) definition of Honour Based Abuse is “A crime or incident which has or may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community”. It is a form of domestic abuse which is perpetrated in the name of so called ‘honour’. The honour code which it refers to is usually set at the discretion of male relatives and women who do not abide by the ‘rules’ are then punished for bringing shame on the family. Infringements may include a woman having a boyfriend; rejecting a forced marriage; pregnancy outside of marriage; interfaith relationships; seeking divorce, inappropriate dress or make-up and even kissing in a public place. Crimes of honour do not always include violence, it can occur in many forms including:

- domestic abuse
- threats of violence
- sexual or psychological abuse
- forced marriage
- being held against their will
- assault
- Attempted/ conspiracy to commit murder
- Manslaughter
- Procuring an abortion
- Encouraging or assisting suicide

The Law

Honour based violence or abuse is not a specific statutory offence. It is merely an umbrella term to encompass various offences such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation, male child preference and male privilege. It is covered by existing legislation and would be prosecuted for the specific offence committed, e.g. common assault, GBH, harassment, kidnap, rape, threats to kill, murder, forced marriage etc.

Who can be a Victim?

HBV can exist in any culture or community where males are in position to establish and enforce women's conduct, examples include: Turkish, Kurdish, Afghani, South Asian, African, Middle Eastern, South and Eastern European, Gypsy and the travelling community (this is not an exhaustive list). Males can also be victims, sometimes as a consequence of a relationship which is deemed to be inappropriate, if they are gay, have a disability or if they have assisted a victim. This is not a crime which is perpetrated by men only, sometimes female relatives will support, incite or assist. It is also not unusual for younger relatives to be selected to undertake the abuse as a way to protect senior members of the family.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- ✓ Take them seriously
- ✓ See them immediately and alone
- ✓ Conduct a risk assessment
- ✓ Respect their wishes and reassure them about confidentiality
- ✓ Establish safe means of contact
- ✓ If under 18, refer them to the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding
- ✓ Contact a trained HBA specialist agency/charity

Don't:

- ✗ Attempt to mediate.
- ✗ Send them away
- ✗ Share information without consent
- ✗ EVER use family members as translators
- ✗ EVER approach family or community leaders
- ✗ EVER underestimate the perpetrator/s of HBV
- ✗ EVER consider culture or religion over the safety and welfare of the individual

Contact

Police – Emergency 999, Non-emergency 101 (requesting to speak to the Harm Reduction Unit)

Children's Services - 03001234043

Karma Nirvana - 08005999247 <http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/>

Forced Marriage Unit - 02070080151 <https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage>

Freedom Charity - 08456070133 www.freedomcharity.org.uk