

'Honour' based abuse is a collection of practices which are used to control behaviour within family or other social groups to protect perceived cultural and religious beliefs and/or honour. Such abuse can occur when perpetrators perceive that a relative has shamed the family and/or community by breaking their honour code. It can be distinguished from other forms of violence, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or wider community members. Women, men and younger members of the family can all be involved in abuse. For young victims it is a form of child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

Why is it important?

The concept of 'honour' is, for some communities, used as an indicator of a family's respectability and social standing within their community. HBA involving children and young people means that they are at significant risk of actual physical harm, neglect and emotional harm through the threat of, or witnessing violence. Families may feel shame long after the incident that brought about dishonour occurred, and punishment of individuals may continue until honour is deemed to have been restored. In some cases, children and young people are deliberately exposed to the abuse to warn them not to behave in a way that is deemed dishonourable to the family and therefore the risk of serious harm to a child or young person can persist.

Warning signs to consider

- History of forced marriage in the family
- Evidence of domestic abuse, including controlling and/or coercive behaviour within the home
- Attempts to run away from home (or history of sibling(s) running away from home) as means of keeping themselves safe
- Constant monitoring by the family
- Surveillance by siblings or family members who are in the same school
- Restrictions on movement in and outside of the family home i.e. imprisonment in bedroom, being chaperoned etc
- Restricted and/or no access to the internet, mobile phones, passport
- Being withdrawn from school i.e. home education
- Hyper-vigilance by the young person
- Attempted suicide or suicidal tendencies

How do we do it?

Young victims may find themselves in an abusive and dangerous situation against their will with no power to seek help. The usual avenues for seeking help - through parents or other family members may be unavailable due to the risk they pose to the young person.

Practitioners should make themselves aware of potential warning signs of honour based abuse (please note the above is not an exhaustive list). If a child tells a practitioner about honour based abuse in respect of themselves or another family member, the practitioner:

- Should see the child alone in a safe and private place to obtain their wishes, views and feelings and explain confidentiality fully, including the need to share with other agencies
- Should carefully record information received and consideration is required about how information is recorded and shielded within the organisation to ensure the child's safety
- Should NOT make contact with the family or community leaders, and should not under any circumstances, tell the family or their social network about what the child has said, attempt mediation, use members of the family or community to interpret on behalf of the child or act as an appropriate adult for the child



One Minute Guide Honour Based Abuse (HBA)



- Continual assessment and review is essential as circumstances can change very quickly e.g. following a disclosure the risks to the victim and others who are supporting the victim may increase
- If a child tells a practitioner about honour based abuse, a referral must be made to the Portsmouth Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

For more information:

Portsmouth MASH: 023 9268 8793 (out of hours 0300 555 13736)

The Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Checklist -

https://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Dash%20for%20IDVAs%20FINAL_0.pdf

Honour Based Violence and The Forced Marriage Protocol -

https://www.cps.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/legal_guidance/hbv_and_fm_protocol_nov_16.pdf

Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522166/VAWG_Strategy_FINAL_PUBLICATION_MASTER_vRB.PDF

HIPS Force Marriage and Honour Based Violence Procedure -

<https://hipsprocedures.org.uk/zkyysq/harmful-practices-linked-to-faith-or-culture/forced-marriage-and-honour-based-violence>