

'Honour'- Based Abuse and Coercive Control - handout

Definitions

'Honour'-based abuse is a form of 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 be perceived as damaging "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 marriage or same sex relations.

The victim is abused to "correct" the 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.

'Harmful practices' is an umbrella term for many practices that take place as a result of belief systems. There are many different practices worldwide and examples include child marriage, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, breast flattening, child abuse linked to faith or belief and 'honour'-based abuse.

Coercive control is a form of abuse where one person uses repeated actions or threats to undermine another's freedom, independence and sense of safety, often without physical violence being the main factor. It includes emotional, psychological, financial and social manipulation to gain power over someone.

Examples of coercive control include:

- Isolating the person from friends or family
- Monitoring communications or limiting access to money
- Constant criticism, humiliation or intimidation
- Controlling everyday choices such as what to wear, eat or how to spend time
- Threats or fear-inducing behaviours to enforce compliance

HBA and Coercive Control

Honour-based abuse has unique coercive control indicators that differ from general domestic abuse because they often involve collective enforcement by family or community members.

Surveillance & Monitoring

Victim's phone and social media checked or restricted
Victim escorted to and from school, work or social events
Community members report on victim's behaviour

Restrictions on Autonomy

Control over education, employment, friendships, clothing or relationships
Victim prevented from independent decision-making
Travel or movement restricted without family permission

Emotional Manipulation

Threats of shame, dishonour or disownment by family/community
Emotional blackmail: "You are bringing shame on us"
Pressure to conform to cultural/religious expectations

Collective Perpetration

Abuse enforced by multiple family and/or community members
Victim faces reprisals from extended networks, not just one abuser

Forced Marriage & Harmful Practices

Coercion into marriage to restore 'honour'
Threats of violence if victim resists
Risk of escalation to "honour killings" or other harmful practices

Isolation

Victim cut off from friends, services or police support
Community silence or collusion reinforces isolation
Victim fears reporting due to mistrust or cultural stigma

Harms

The DASH Risk Checklist and the DARA are useful starting points but not sufficient on their own for assessing coercive control linked to HBA or harmful practices. These assessments need to be supplemented with specialist training, contextual understanding and knowledge of the structural and cultural nuances of 'honour'-based abuse and harmful practices. They are designed to assess immediate risk, particularly of serious harm or homicide, but they do not always reflect the ongoing, evolving nature of abuse that many victims experience.

Further considerations needed:

- Immigration
- 'Honour'-based abuse
 - Pre marriage/forced marriage
 - Post marriage
- Mental health
- Family mediation
- Community role
- Transnational elements
- Faith
- Sexuality and gender conformity

High risk indicators of HBA:

Victim's fear of harm or death
Multiple perpetrators
Recent perceived breach of 'honour' code
Threats of forced marriage or actual attempts
Isolation from support networks
Surveillance and monitoring
Previous 'honour'-based abuse in family
Victim has left or is planning to leave
Immigration or residency vulnerability
Community pressure or 'gossip'
Perpetrator(s) has access to weapons
Previous history of violence or abuse
Mental health or substance abuse in perpetrators
Victim has been taken abroad or plans exist to do so
Victim has disclosed abuse but was not believed

Tips for Professionals

Remember the one chance rule
Use a private space
Listen to and believe survivors
Be mindful of translators - do not use children, family members or community members to translate!
Identify the victim's details, including religious, ethnic and nationality background, preferred language and specific needs
Use the same terminology as the victim and avoid judgmental language
Maintain a record of what is disclosed
Minimise who the information is shared with
Don't promise not to share information
Don't approach the family
Keep an open door policy
Keep a safety plan with the victim
Share information regarding support agencies or offer to call specialist support
Link with your Designated Safeguarding Lead

Always follow up a safeguarding referral

Professional curiosity is key!

Helpline numbers

• Immigration advice

Law Centres Network - 020 3637 1330

[Law Centres Network](#)

Migrant Rights Network - 07534 488696

[Home - Migrants' Rights Network \(migrantsrights.org.uk\)](http://migrantsrights.org.uk)

AIRE Center (EU rights) - 020 7831 4276

[The AIRE Centre](#)

Public Interest Law Centre - 0203 559 6342

[Public Interest Law Centre • Public Law • Human Rights • Legal Action](#)

Rights of Women - 020 7251 6575

[Home | Rights of Women](#)

Refugee Council - 020 7346 6700

[Homepage - Refugee Council](#)

Migrant Help - 01304 203977

[Migrant Help \(migranthelpuk.org\)](#)

Muslim Women's Network - 0800 999 5786

[Muslim Women Network \(mwnuk.co.uk\)](#)

Safety for Sisters - 0161 464 9505

[Safety4Sisters](#)

Southall Black Sisters - 020 8571 0800

[SBS No Recourse Fund - Southall Black Sisters](#)

Latin American Women's Rights Service - 0808 145 4909

[LAWRS - Latin American Women's Rights Service](#)

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants - 0800 1601004

[Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants](#)

● **Accommodation & specialist DV organisations**

No Woman Turned Away (NWTa) project (Women's Aid) - 0800 2000 247

[No Woman Turned Away - Women's Aid \(womensaid.org.uk\)](#)

Ashiana - 020 8539 0427

[Home - Ashiana Network](#)

Halo Project - 01642 683 045

[Get Help \(haloproject.org.uk\)](#)

Latin American Women's Aid - 020 727 50321

[LAWA - Latin American Women's Aid \(lawadv.org.uk\)](#)

Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO) - 020 7490 0303

[IKWRO - IKWRO Women's Rights Organisation](#)

Sistah Space - 020 7846 8350

[Sistah Space](#)

Latin American Women's Aid - 020 727 50321

[LAWA - Latin American Women's Aid \(lawadv.org.uk\)](#)

Email: bookings@sundialcentre.org

Website: www.sundialcentre.org

Jewish Women's Aid - 0808 801 0500

[Jewish Women's Aid \(jwa.org.uk\)](http://jwa.org.uk)

Sikh Women's Aid

[Sikh Women's Aid Domestic Abuse Charity \(sikhwomensaid.org.uk\)](http://sikhwomensaid.org.uk)

Stonewater South Asian Refuge - sawr@stonewater.org

[Domestic abuse | Stonewater's refuges and Safe Spaces | Stonewater](#)

Ubuntu Women's Shelter - 07835 160913

[Ubuntu Women Shelter | Womens Shelter | Block A, Room 8, Adelphi Centre, 12](#)

[Commercial Rd, Glasgow G5 0PQ \(ubuntu-glasgow.org.uk\)](#)

Salvation Army - 020 7367 4800

[Homelessness | The Salvation Army](#)

• **Destitution & benefits entitlement**

Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) - 020 7837 7979

[CPAG | We are the trusted voice on child poverty](#)

CORAM (Migrant Children)- 020 7520 0300

[Children's charity : Coram Group](#)

Project 17 - 07701 330016

[Home | Project 17](#)

Together With Migrant Children - 01865 528 658

[Together with Migrant Children | England \(togethermigrantchildren.org.uk\)](#)

Public Interest Law Centre - 0203 559 6342

[Public Interest Law Centre • Public Law • Human Rights • Legal Action \(pilc.org.uk\)](#)

Youth Legal (community care) - 020 3195 1906

[Home | Youth Legal](#)

• **Other support**

Support Line- 01708 765200

[SupportLine – Confidential Emotional Support for Children, Young Adults and Adults](#)

The Traveller Movement- 0754 1637 795

[Home | The Traveller Movement](#)

Project Salama- 01635 953588

projectsalama.co.uk

GALOP- 0800 130 3335 helpline

[Helplines – Galop the LGBT+ anti-abuse charity – Galop](#)

Email: bookings@sundialcentre.org

Website: www.sundialcentre.org

LGBT Foundation- 0345 3 30 30 30

[LGBT Foundation – Home](#)

House of Rainbow- +447521130179

[House of Rainbow](#)

Naz and Matt Foundation- support@nazandmattfoundation.org

[Support – Naz and Matt Foundation](#)

Mind Out- 01273 234 839

[MindOut | Mental Health Charity for LGBTQ community](#)

Hidayah – hello@hidayahlgbt.co.uk

[Hidayah LGBT • Gender, Sexuality and Islam](#)

Support U- 0118 321 9111

[Your LGBT+ Resource for the Thames Valley – Support U](#)

Switchboard LGBT+- 0800 0119 100

[Switchboard LGBT+ Helpline](#)

Traveller Pride- [CONTACT | LGBT Traveller Pride](#)

[LGBT Traveller Pride – Gypsy, Roma Traveller support](#)

Email: bookings@sundialcentre.org

Website: www.sundialcentre.org