



O.T.C.A

**If you scanned the poster because something felt familiar,
this handout is for you.**



What exactly is 'honour'-based abuse?

'Honour'-based abuse happens when a person is controlled, threatened, pressured or harmed because their family or community believes they have brought shame or dishonour and are not complying with expected family or community norms.

It can include:

- Pressure to stay in a relationship
- Pressure to protect family reputation
- Controlling your money, phone, social media or time
- Controlling your friendships or relationships
- Restricting contact with friends or family
- Threats involving your children
- Threats involving your immigration or pre-settled status
- Exclusion or threats because of your sexual orientation or gender identity
- Emotional blackmail, intimidation or violence
- Pressure from family or community members

Recent statistics show that nearly 3,000 'honour'- based abuse related offences were recorded by the police in England and Wales in the year ending March 2025. You are not alone. It can happen in many different ways and is not always physical violence.

It is never your fault, and abuse is never justified by family expectations, culture, tradition or community pressure.

Free and confidential support is available, see the helplines below

Is this really abuse, or is it just my family being strict?

Many families have rules and expectations. But when fear, guilt, threats, surveillance or pressure are used to control your choices, it may be 'honour'-based abuse.

What if I feel like I have no choice but to stay?

Financial pressure, family expectations, children, community judgement or fear of what people will say can make leaving feel impossible. You do not have to make a decision before you are ready. You deserve support to understand your choices and to stay safe.

What if I am afraid of what the community will say?

Fear of gossip, judgement or being blamed can make it difficult to leave an abusive relationship. You are not responsible for protecting your family's reputation at the expense of your safety. **Your safety matters.**

What if I still love my family?

You can love your family and still experience pressure or abuse. It is normal to feel worried about losing relationships, disappointing your family or being judged by your community. Asking for support does not mean you have to stop loving your family.

What if someone controls my money, phone or social media?

Controlling your money, taking your phone, checking your social media or controlling where you go and who you speak to can all be forms of controlling behaviour. You have a right to privacy, independence and connection with others. If someone checks your phone, make sure it is safe before accessing support online.

What if someone threatens to take my children away?

Using children to frighten, control or pressure you is not okay. If someone threatens to take your children away, you can seek specialist advice and support to understand your options. Get in touch with one of the services below to get free and confidential support today.

What if someone threatens my immigration or pre-settled status?

Using your immigration status to control or frighten you is not okay. You can seek confidential advice about your rights and your options. Get in touch with one of the services below to get free and confidential support today.

What if I am LGBTQ+?

Everyone has the right to live safely and be themselves. If you are being threatened, rejected, isolated or harmed because of your sexual orientation or gender identity, this is not your fault and you deserve support. You do not have to face this alone.

What if I'm not ready to leave?

You do not have to make any immediate decisions. Speaking to someone does not mean you have to leave your relationship, report anyone or take action before you are ready. You deserve information, support and a chance to explore your options safely.

What do I do if someone is checking my phone?

If someone else may check your phone or internet history:

- Use a private browser where possible
- Clear your browsing history if it is safe to do so
- Consider using another trusted device to access support
- Speak to a specialist service about how to stay safe

Who can I talk to?

In an emergency always call **999**.

Support services:

- Karma Nirvana: 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)
- Southall Black Sisters: 020 8571 0800
- Galop: 0800 999 5428 (for LGBTQI+ individuals)

Legal advice:

- Advice on Individual Rights in Europe (AIRE Centre): 020 7831 4276
- Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI): 0800 160 1004 (Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am to 1pm)
- Rights of Women:
 - o Family law advice: 020 7251 6577
 - o Immigration advice: 020 7490 7689

How can I help someone experiencing 'honour'-based abuse?

If someone tells you they are experiencing 'honour'-based abuse:

- Listen without judgement

- Believe them
- Do NOT contact their family or community
- Encourage them to speak to a specialist service
- If they are in immediate danger, contact emergency services
- Your safety matters.
- Your voice matters.
- You have the right to make your own choices.
- You do not have to go through this alone.