

WHAT IS FORCED MARRIAGE?

Forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both parties do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

Key Facts

- Forced marriage is illegal in the UK
- Forced marriage can be carried out anywhere, including the UK
- Forced marriage should not be confused with arranged marriages where both parties and their families consent to the marriage without the pressures associated with a forced marriage
- The summer break sees an increase in forced marriage cases as family or community members take their children abroad to go ahead with the marriage
- Forced marriage affects all genders
- A Forced Marriage Protection Order is a legal document that can protect individuals from a forced marriage in the UK or from being taken abroad to be married. The order will also help to bring them back to the UK if they are taken out of the country
- Forced marriages are not just confined to certain religious groups and cultures. The practice of forced marriage can happen regardless of ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, age, gender and sexuality
- Force Marriage can be carried out anywhere including the UK

Signs and Indicators

Education

- Truancy or extended absence
- Removed from school
- Surveillance by siblings
- Prevented from going to higher education
- Poor exam results
- Announcement of engagement to a stranger
- Decline in behaviour

Health

- Self-harm or attempted suicide
- Eating disorders
- Depression
- Isolation
- Chaperoned to doctor's appointments

FACT SHEET

Police Involvement

- Reported missing by family
- Reports of domestic abuse
- Threats to kill
- Reported for offences (e.g. shoplifting or substance misuse)

Employment

- Not allowed to work
- Confiscation of wages or income
- Accompanied to and from work

Family History

- Siblings forced to marry
- Early marriage of a sibling
- Self-harm or suicide of sibling
- Death of a parent
- Family disputes
- Running away from home
- Kept at home by parents
- Financial restrictions
- Poor performance or attendance
- Limited career choices
- Unable to be flexible in their working hours

Forced Marriage & the Law

Forced Marriage is a crime within the British law with a maximum sentence of 7 years indictment for those who forced someone into a marriage without their consent.

Forced Marriage protection order (civil protection) the order is used to protect someone from being forced into a marriage. The order can also be made to protect someone who has been forced into marriage.

Responding to Risk of Forced Marriage:

Where someone discloses fear of forced marriage, professionals in all agencies should:

- Take the disclosure seriously and act on it
- Refer to Adult or Children's Social Care and the Police promptly
- Always follow your organisational policy and other relevant local/national policies and procedures
- Follow the ONE CHANCE RULE at all times. We believe that there might be only once chance to speak to potential victim and, therefore, just one chance to prevent a forced marriage
- Hold an emergency strategy/professional meeting with relevant agencies, (this should be immediately or within no less than 24 hours)

FACT SHEET

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES

- Let the family, community or social network know about the disclosure
- Speak to the person at risk in front of family members
- Approach the family or community leaders or attempt mediation
- Use members of the community to interpret
- Accidentally give out information which might jeopardise the person's safety

Caution is required about how information is recorded and shielded within the organisation.

**For help and support
please contact:**

0800 107 0726 (Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm, exc bank holidays)
www.saverauk.co.uk
info@saverauk.co.uk

In an emergency,
please call 999