



## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- If you are concerned that someone you know is a victim of honour-based violence, you should contact the freephone 24-hour National Domestic Violence Helpline on **0808 2000 247**, run by Refuge and Women's Aid
- Karma Nirvana is the specialist helpline for forced marriage and honour-based abuse. It is open 9-5 Monday to Friday on **0800 5999 247**
- You can report your concerns to the police on **101**
- If you are worried that someone you know may be about to be taken abroad to be married against their will, you should contact the Forced Marriage Unit on **020 7008 0151** or email **fmu@fco.gov.uk**
- If someone is at imminent risk of FGM, contact the police immediately. If in London, call the Metropolitan Police Child Abuse Investigation Command on **020 7161 2888**
- If abroad, call the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on **+44 (0) 20 7008 1500**
- Call the dedicated NSPCC FGM Helpline: **0800 028 3550** or email **fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk**
- Call FORWARD (African women-led organisation that provides support and advice on FGM) on **020 8960 4000**.

**NEVER raise any of these issues with, or make an approach to, the family of the victim. This will only increase the risk of harm to the victim.**

## “HONOUR” ABUSE

Domestic abuse is part of violence against women and girls, which also includes different forms of family violence such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called “honour-based abuse” that are committed mainly by family members.

The perpetrators, and sometimes even the victims, may not recognise these activities as crimes or accept that they are, but UK law is very clear: all of the following acts constitute a criminal offence.

## FORCED MARRIAGE

Forced marriage is where someone is forced to marry against their will, often by parents, family or religious leaders. Victims may be subjected to threats, violence, or emotional pressure, including being made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family if they resist.

Most forced marriages involving British girls and women take place overseas.

The government's Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) gave advice or support relating to a possible or actual forced marriage in 1,764 cases in 2018. There were 6,099 visits to ChildLine's forced marriage webpage.

Most forced marriages involve people aged under 25 and a third are under 18. Four in five are female. Forced marriage is not a problem specific to one country or culture.



The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) has handled cases relating to over 110 countries across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe and North America.

## HONOUR-BASED CRIMES

Honour-based crimes are violent crimes or other forms of abuse that are carried out in order to protect the so-called 'honour' of a family or community.

The code of 'honour' to which it refers is set by the male relatives of a family, and women who break the rules are punished for shaming the family.

Women can be subjected to honour-based punishments for trying to:

- Separate or divorce
- Start a new relationship
- Talk to or interact freely with men
- Have relationships or marry outside a particular religion
- Have sex before marriage
- Attend college or university

Honour-based crimes can include:

- Murder
- Forced marriage
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual violence
- Threats to kill
- Pressure to go or move abroad
- House arrest
- Isolation from friends and family



Honour crimes are most prevalent within diaspora communities from South Asia, the Middle East, and North and East Africa. Reports come from Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Orthodox Jewish and occasionally Traveller communities. <https://karmanirvana.org.uk/about/honour-based-abuse/>

Honour abuse is not determined by gender; both perpetrators and victims can be male or female.

## FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

FGM is where the female genitals are deliberately cut for non-medical reasons. Some of the reasons cited for carrying out FGM include religious requirements, cleanliness, ensuring chastity, protecting family honour, and better marriage prospects.

When carried out on girls, it is a form of child abuse.

FGM is mainly practised in 29 countries in the western, eastern, and north-eastern regions of Africa, in some countries in the Middle East and Asia, as well as among migrants from these areas decades in Europe, including in the UK.

<https://www.forwarduk.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Forward-FAQ-August-2019-New-Branding-WEB.pdf>

FGM is a human rights issue that affects girls and women worldwide.

It is estimated that 60,000 girls under 15 are at risk of FGM in the UK, and 137,000 women and girls in the UK have already been subjected to it. Over 130 million women and girls worldwide have undergone FGM.

The National FGM Centre says there are 11 new cases of FGM in England every day. The vast majority involve girls being taken overseas to be cut.

More than three-quarters of the cases recorded by the Centre involved girls aged 10 or under.

### What are the signs that someone is at risk of these types of domestic abuse?

- The young person suddenly withdraws from their friends
- The young person suddenly goes away on holiday
- The young person has siblings who were forced to marry or married very young
- The young person has older siblings who refused to marry. This can increase the pressure on younger siblings (especially girls) in order to uphold the family honour
- The young person may show signs of injury, ie bruising on their arms.