



Home Office



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

# FORCED MARRIAGE

## Reasons

## Risks

## Response



**FORCED MARRIAGE UNIT**  
**@FMUNIT**

# Objectives

- ▶ **What is Forced Marriage?**
- ▶ **Warning Signs**
- ▶ **Suggested Safeguarding Measures**
- ▶ **Statistics 2014**
- ▶ **Role of the Forced Marriage Unit: UK & Overseas**
- ▶ **How to protect victims: Legislation and FMPOs**
- ▶ **Other support available**
- ▶ **Q&A**

# What is Forced Marriage?



***‘A marriage conducted **without** the valid **consent** of one or both parties and where **duress** is a factor.’***

Adults who lack ‘capacity’ as defined under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 are classed as not being able to consent and any marriage they enter into is classed as FORCED.

**When we talk about duress we mean pressure...**

# The difference between Arranged and Forced....



An **'arranged marriage'** is one where parents or other **relatives choose** the suitor, but both parties involved have the final say and **CAN decline at any point.**



If a person **changes their mind** and then has no choice – **this becomes forced and is unacceptable.**

# Different Types of Pressure

- ▶ PHYSICAL
- ▶ EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL
- ▶ FINANCIAL
- ▶ SEXUAL



# Factors behind Forced Marriage

Protecting **perceived** cultural or religious ideals.



No religion endorses forced marriage, similarly, forced marriage is a form of abuse ... Abuse is **not part of any culture**, whether the victim's family are Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu or Jewish. No religious texts promote this harmful practice



# Factors behind Forced Marriage

Claiming **residence and citizenship** to strengthen family links.

For example: Getting a British Passport for extended family.



# Factors behind Forced Marriage

## Providing a carer for a child



\*Remember Mental Capacity Act 2005 and FM Guidance



# Consequences For Victims

In addition to education and employment being ceased...

Greater risks.....

- ▶ Theft (e.g. of passport, money and belongings)
- ▶ Unlawful imprisonment and restriction of freedom of movement and association
- ▶ Abduction and kidnapping
- ▶ Rape
- ▶ Enforced pregnancy
- ▶ Abortion
- ▶ **Murder and mutilation**

# Honour Based Violence

“CULTURAL ACCEPTANCE DOES NOT MEAN  
ACCEPTING THE UNACCEPTABLE”

‘Honour’ based violence (HBV) is any act of violence, predominately against women and girls, which is committed by family or community member(s) in order to defend their perceived honour.

Restoring honour or ‘izzat’ is viewed as being more important than anything else

Forced marriage can be a consequence of HBV...used to restore HONOUR alternatively...Fleeing a forced marriage can result in HBV occurring. If there is an HBV element to a forced marriage case this could escalate the risk significantly.

# Banaz Mahmud

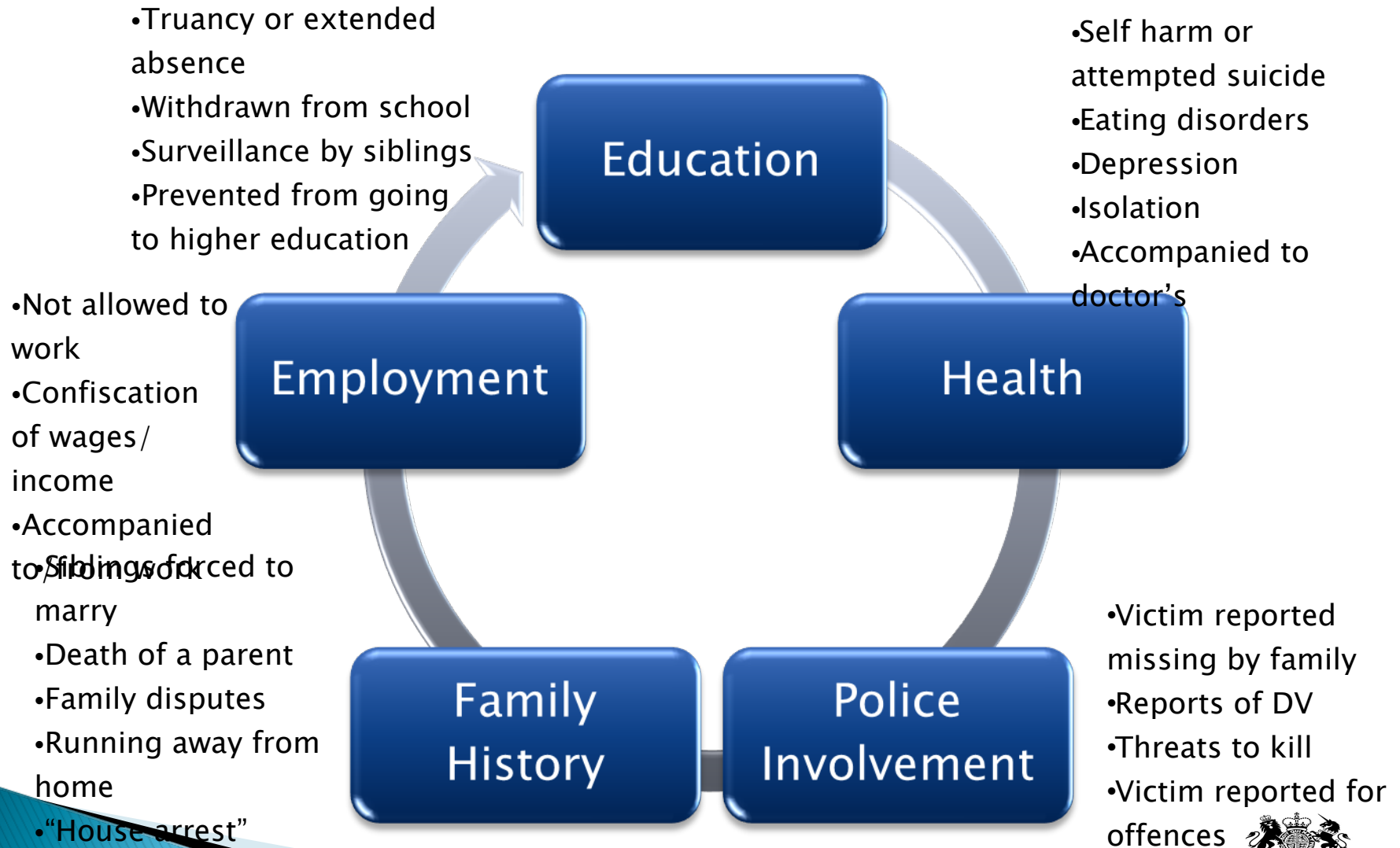
## case example



**Banaz Mahmud** was 20 years old, and starting her life again when she was **murdered by her family in the name of 'honour'**.

- ▶ 'According to the prosecution, Banaz had to pay the "ultimate price" for bringing **shame** on her Kurdish family.'
- ▶ **She had been forced into a marriage** at 17 to an older man who had repeatedly beaten and raped her, finally she left.
- ▶ She found genuine love with another and paid the **ultimate price for choosing love over honour**.
- ▶ Four months later, the suitcase containing her body was found buried more than 100 miles away from her family home.
- ▶ Her father and uncle planned this murder with 3 others.
- ▶ She went to the police 5 times with their names...**she was not protected**.
- ▶ **Understanding the importance of honour and the significance of shame is key when handling forced marriage cases**

# WARNING SIGNS



# WARNING SIGNS FOR POTENTIAL VICTIMS IN EDUCATION

- ▶ Anyone, male or female, adult or minor, when facing a threat of forced marriage may become **anxious**, **depressed** and emotionally withdrawn with low self-esteem.
- ▶ There may also be more overt (but less common) signs in cases involving females; for example cut or shaved hair (as form of punishment), being taken to the **doctors to be examined** to ensure she is a virgin or presenting to hospital/doctors with **symptoms associated with poisoning**.
- ▶ A full list of warning indicators can be found on pg 13 [Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines](#)

## SPECIFIC INDICATORS FOR EDUCATION:

- \* Absence or being withdrawn from education
- \* Request for extended leave/failure to return
- \* Fear about forthcoming holidays
- \* Surveillance by siblings or older cousins at school
- \* Decline in behaviour, performance, engagement in lessons
- \* Not allowed to complete extra-curricular activities
- \* Sudden announcement of engagement to a stranger
- \* Attending school with henna/jewellery specific to marriage

# SUGGESTED SAFEGUARDING MEASURES

- ▶ **Enrolment**: Do you have procedures in place to take down full information of pupils including nationality (passport details etc.) Immigration status if not British.
- ▶ **Information sharing** with other schools if a pupil is at risk (welfare, FM, FGM etc.) and has siblings in other schools.
- ▶ Key information to be taken down when a pupil is taken **out of statutory education**: contact details, dates of travel, address overseas.
- ▶ Agreed process on **referring cases** to Social Services, the Police and Forced Marriage Unit

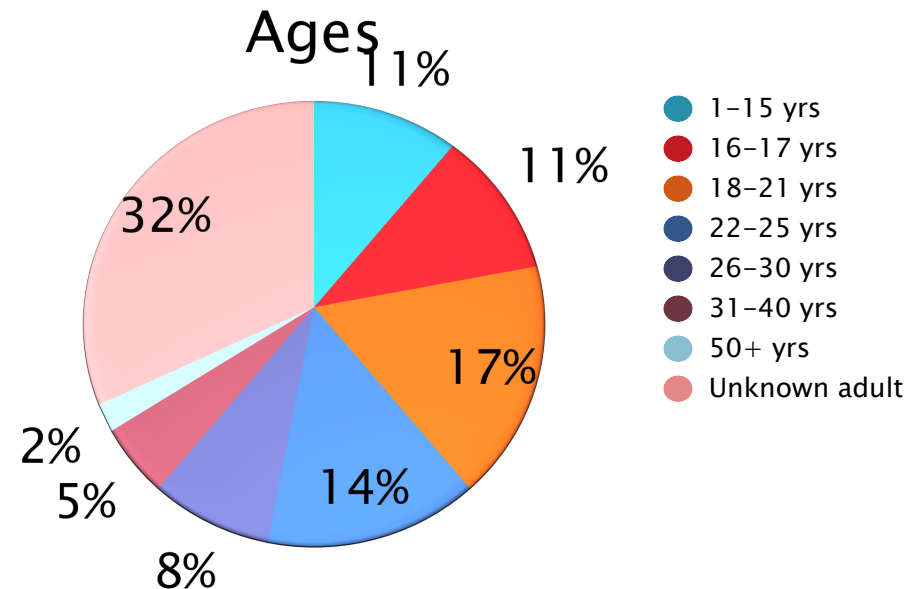
# FMU Statistics 2014



FMU gave advice or support in over 1200 cases related to possible/ forced marriage.



- 11% of calls involved victims below 16 yrs.
- 39% of all calls involved those 21 or under.
- 1 in 5 callers were male victims
- 135 instances involving those with disabilities
- 8 instances involved victims who identified as LGBT



# DATA from 2014

## Countries of Origin



**Pakistan (38.3%), India (7.8%), Bangladesh (7.1%),**

**Afghanistan (3%) Somalia (1.6%)  
Turkey (1.1%), Iraq (0.7%), Sri Lanka (1.1%) and Iran (1.0%).**

**23% of the cases handled by the FMU were domestic and had no overseas element**

**\* Overall the FMU has handled cases involving over 90 different countries**



# What is the FMU?

## Forced Marriage Unit established in 2005.

FMU is the Government's one-stop shop for:

Developing effective Government policy

Awareness raising

Domestic Casework

Consular Casework



# How We can help – in the UK



- Through the **FMU national helpline** and email we reassure, assist, provide options and remain victim focused. 9am-5pm Mon-Fri and GRC out of hours.
- Work with police, social workers, teachers, welfare officers, health professionals and many others in UK to protect people at risk.
- Provide **support, information** and **contacts**.
- Arrange **safe** accommodation in the **UK**.
- Immigration cases

# When the victim has been Taken Overseas

## HOW WE ASSIST

- Signposting to BHC/Embassies.
- Arrange safe accommodation overseas.
- Assistance with their **return to the UK** – providing local knowledge linked to exit visas.
- Awareness of local laws in order to provide advice on any travel limitations.
- Organise repatriation - and **rescues** in extreme cases.
- Accompanying victims to the airport – especially in the case of minors.
- Organise **emergency flights/ travel documents** with safe pick-up and transport from airport. Airport police.



# Aftercare for repatriated victims

Aftercare project being delivered by NGO Southall Black Sisters

Provides emotional and practical support for victims that have been repatriated to the UK

Without support victims can experience pressure to return home

Aims to bridge the gap that victims experience in support and practical advice and enable them to develop a plan for the future



020 8571 0800

020 8571 9595

# What we can all do: ONE CHANCE RULE

## DO:

- ▶ Take them seriously
- ▶ See them immediately and alone
- ▶ Respect their wishes and reassure them
- ▶ Establish means of safe contact.



## DO NOT :

- ▶ Send them away/minimise their concerns
- ▶ Approach members of the family or
- ▶ Community (\*interpreters)
- ▶ Share information without consent
- ▶ Attempt to mediate.



# LEGISLATION: HOW THE LAW CAN HELP

## FORCING SOMEONE INTO MARRIAGE IS NOW A CRIMINAL OFFENCE.

A civil route to protect victims was established through the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007, however, **victims now have the ability to take action against perpetrators either through the criminal justice route or the civil courts.**

# Key Elements Of the New Law

- ▶ **Forcing an individual to marry against their will.**
- ▶ **Using deception with the intention of causing another person to leave the UK for the purpose of forcing that person to enter into marriage.**
- ▶ **Breach of a forced marriage protection order.**
- ▶ **If a person lacks the capacity to consent, the offence is also capable of being committed by any conduct carried out for the purpose of causing the victim to marry, whether or not it amounts to violence, threats or any other form of coercion.**

# FORCED MARRIAGE PROTECTION ORDERS

Forced Marriage Protection Orders are civil orders with legally binding requirements to protect a person at risk and were established through **Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007**,

Conditions include:

- ▶ Protect victims from being taken overseas/or bringing them back.
- ▶ Stop person being forced into marriage whether religious or otherwise.
- ▶ Stop person being hurt/harmed or threatened.
- ▶ Stop person being harassed.

Critical in cases where:

- ▶ Victim is in a country we cannot assist in.
- ▶ Freedom of movement is restricted.
- ▶ We have no contact address.





# Penalties

## FORCED MARRIAGE OFFENCE

- ▶ If convicted in a criminal court, maximum penalty on indictment will be imprisonment for a term not exceeding **seven years and/or a fine**
- ▶ If convicted in a civil court, maximum penalty on summary conviction will be imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years and/or a fine

## BREACH OF A FORCED MARRIAGE PROTECTION ORDER

- ▶ If the breach is in a criminal court, maximum penalty on indictment will be imprisonment for a term not exceeding **five years and/or a fine**
- ▶ If the breach is in a civil court, maximum penalty on summary conviction will be imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months and/or a fine

# Benefits of the new legislation.....

**Further protection**  
**Deterrent**  
**Support for professionals**  
**Clarity of message**  
**POWER TO THE VICTIMS**



# More Support

- Survivors' Handbook
- **Statutory Guidance for professionals**
- Guidance for Registrars
- Guidance for MPs and Councillors
- Free training from the FMU including schools/colleges
- Social media short films/summer campaigns – using actors from various backgrounds
- Facebook Page/twitter page
- Posters
- Funding for NGOs to provide grassroots training



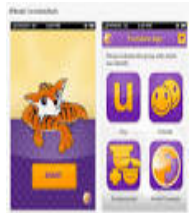
# Freedom Mobile Phone App

The FMU has part funded a useful free app developed by Freedom Charity for both potential victims and those concerned for others.



## Some of the features:

- GPS Tracking
- Advice for professionals – spotting the signs
- Advice and checklist for friends and friends of victims
- Links to nearest police station and hospitals
- Information also on sexual abuse and FGM



# RECOMMENDED READING & VIEWING

- ▶ ***Shamed***, Sarbjit Kaur Athwal
- ▶ ***A father's betrayal***, Gabriella Gillespie
- ▶ ***But it's not fair***, Aneeta Prem
- ▶ ***Shame***, Jasvinder Sanghera
  
- ▶ ***Rescued from a forced marriage***, BBC Panorama
- ▶ ***Britain's Crimes of Honour***, BBC Panorama
- ▶ ***Banaz, a love story***, Fuuse Films
- ▶ ***Our girl***, Animage Films

# Thank You!

## Any Questions?

Call us: **National Helpline 020 7008 0151**...out of hours  
Global Response Centre will assist on **020 7008 1500**



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