





# **Honour Based Violence and Forced Marriage**

# Forced Marriage & Arranged Marriage

-  In a forced marriage, one or both spouses do not (or in the case of some vulnerable adults, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can involve physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure
-  In an arranged marriage, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage, but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses

# Why does Forced Marriage happen?

- Control unwanted sexuality, behaviour or relationships
- Protect family honour and pride, respond to peer group and family pressure
- Fulfil long-standing family commitments, strengthen family links
- Protect perceived cultural & religious ideals which are misguided
- Ensure care for a child or vulnerable adult with special needs
- Gain UK residence and/or citizenship
- Financial gain, protect land, property and wealth

# Forced Marriage – Facts and Figures

- Most cases involve young women & girls aged 13 to 30
- Majority of cases in the UK involve South Asian families
- Self-harm/suicide is significantly higher among South Asian women
- 500 cases dealt with annually by the Forced Marriage Unit:
  - 90% of cases involve South Asian families
  - 39% of cases involve minors
  - 15% involve males
- At least 12 'honour killings' per year
- At least 3000 women in Britain are victims of FM per year

# Honour / Izzat








- ☾ A fluid concept, widely interpreted
- ☾ Promotes behaviour seen as beneficial
- ☾ Upheld by women
- ☾ Exists primarily in Middle Eastern and South Asian communities



# How can Honour be Damaged?

- Defying parental authority
- Becoming 'western' (clothes, make-up, behaviour, attitudes)
- Women having sex / relationships / pregnancy before marriage
- Use of drugs or alcohol
- Gossip
- Interfaith relationships
- Leaving a spouse or seeking divorce

# Consequences of Damaging Honour for the Victim

-  Ostracism / disownment
-  Physical / emotional abuse
-  Restriction of freedom / loss of independence
-  Isolation
-  Guilt / shame
-  Forced marriage
-  Murder

# FM and HBV Risk Factors



## Education

Truancy, low motivation in school, poor exam results, withdrawal from school



## Health

Self harm, attempted suicide, eating disorder, depression, isolation








## Family History

Siblings forced to marry, family disputes, domestic violence and abuse, running away from home, unreasonable restrictions, e.g. house arrest, or never permitted to leave home unescorted

**Cases rarely present as forced marriage/ HBV and the young person often does not mention force marriage**

## **Children's Social Care staff should**

-  See young person in a secure, private place
-  See young person alone, even if they want others present
-  Explain all options to young person but respect their wishes and ensure their safety is taken into account
-  Get advice from a Forced Marriage specialist
-  Activate local child protection procedures

## **Children's Social Care staff should**

- ☞ Reassure young person of confidentiality
- ☞ Initiate strategy discussion under child protection procedures
- ☞ Involve young person in any strategic discussions
- ☞ Consider the need for immediate placement away from the family
- ☞ Refer to Police Public Protection Unit if there is suspicion of a crime being committed

# Children's Social Care staff should NOT

- ❌ Treat allegations as a domestic issue
- ❌ Send young person back to family home as part of routine child protection procedures
- ❌ Ignore what the young person has told you
- ❌ Dismiss out of hand the need for immediate protection
- ❌ Contact family in advance of enquiries either by phone or in person

# Children's Social Care staff should NOT

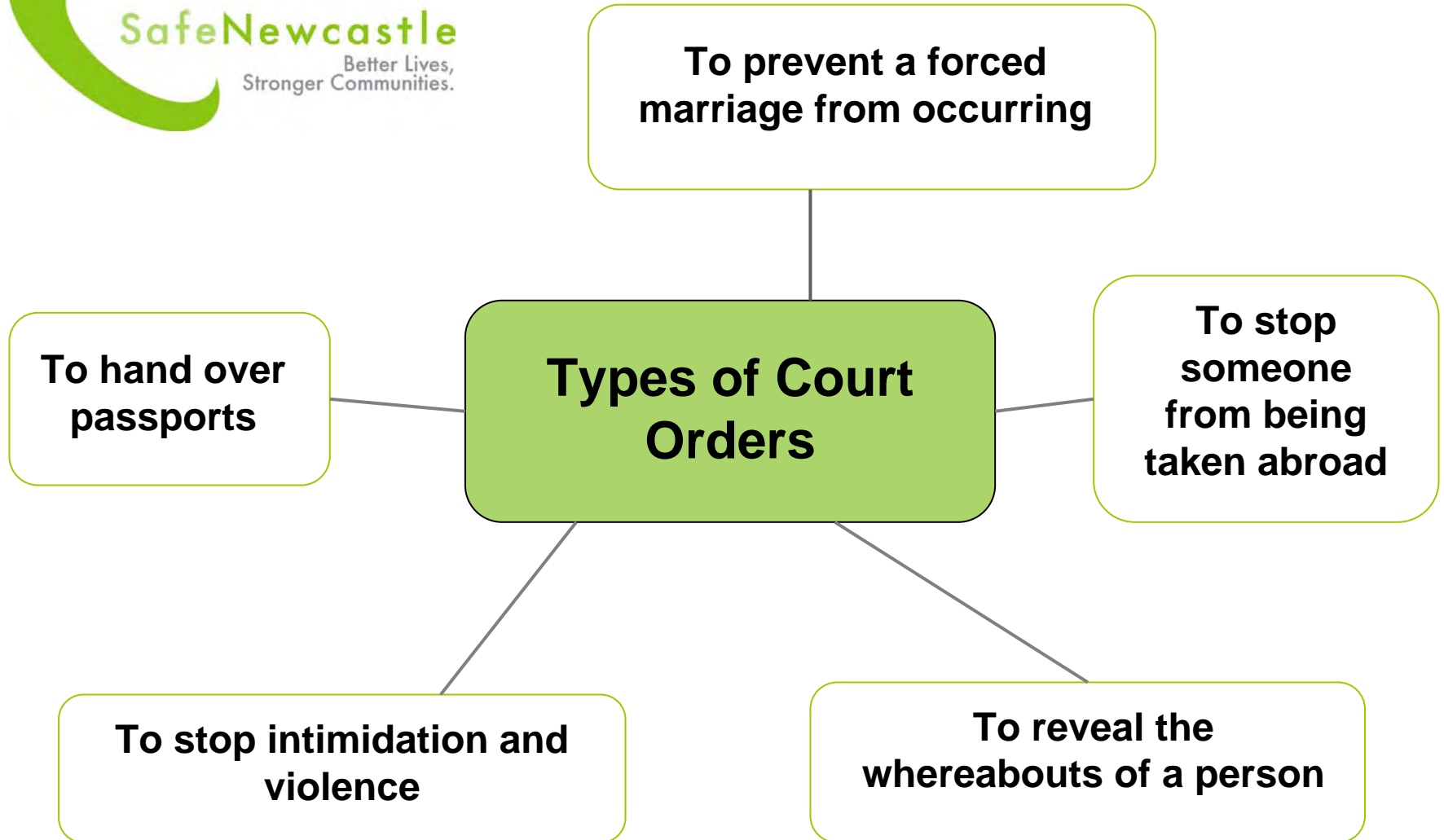
- ❖ Breach confidentiality unless necessary to ensure safety
- ❖ Approach young person's family, friends or those who have influence within the community without express permission of young person
- ❖ Share information outside of child protection protocols without express permission of young person
- ❖ Attempt mediation, reconciliation or family counselling

# If young person is going overseas

- Gather information about their travel plans: dates, where they will be staying, full names of who they will be travelling & staying with, and phone numbers
- Get a copy of their passport
- Get names & addresses of extended family in the UK & overseas
- Ask them to contact you immediately they return to the UK
- Give them details of nearest British Embassy or Consulate

# If young person is going overseas

- Advise them to take emergency cash and a hidden mobile phone if possible
- Find out if they have dual nationality
- Ask them for a written statement stating that they want Children's Social Care to act on their behalf if they do not return
- Contact the Community Safety Unit and/or Forced Marriage Unit for specialist advice if needed



# FMU – Information for Professionals

 Practice guidance for professionals:

Social workers

Police (interactive)

Education professionals

Health professionals

 “The Right to Choose: statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage”

# Remember

- One Chance Rule
- Forced marriage places children and vulnerable adults at risk of rape and possible physical harm
- Some cases have resulted in the reluctant spouse being murdered.

# And Finally...

**“Multicultural sensitivity is not an  
excuse for moral blindness”**

(Mike O’Brien MP, House of Commons debate on Human  
Rights, 1999)

**“Cultural acceptance does not mean  
accepting the unacceptable”**

(Sir Ian Blair)



*Honour and Shame*



**MISSING**

**SHAFILEA AHMED**

SHAFILEA AHMED AGED 17 WAS REPORTED MISSING ON THURSDAY 11th SEPTEMBER 2003. SHE IS 5'3", SLIM BUILD WITH PIERCED EARS AND DARK BROWN SHOULDER LENGTH HAIR.



FORCED MARRIAGE:

**AWRONG**  
**NOTARIGHT**

