

Honour Session Plan

Learning Intentions:

- To learn about the nature of honour-based abuse
- To learn how to support people who you think may be experiencing honour-based abuse

Key Learning Outcomes:

HWB 1/2/3/4-04a

I understand that my feelings and reactions can change depending upon what is happening within and around me. This helps me to understand my own behaviour and the way others behave.

HWB 0/1/2/3/4-16a

I am learning to assess and manage risk, to protect myself and others, and to reduce the potential for harm when possible.

HWB 3/4-49b

I know where to get support and help with situations involving abuse and I understand that there are laws which protect me from different kinds of abuse.

HWB 3-51b

I can explain the support and care necessary to ensure a child is nurtured through the different stages of childhood.

Children's Rights:

Article 19 states that children have the right to protection against violence.

Article 29 states that children have the right to an education which encourages them to respect other people's rights and values.

Article 5 states that Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognises the child's increasing capacity to make their own choices.

GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators:

Safe, Healthy, Respected, Responsible, Included.

RSHP: Second level

<https://rshp.scot/second-level/#protectingme>

Success Criteria

- I can describe some possible warning signs of honour-based abuse
- I can identify the difference between genuine care/concern and honour-based abuse

- I know how to delicately approach a friend if I think they are experiencing honour-based abuse
- I know the names of some honour-based abuse helplines and can access their contact details

Preparation:

- Prepare 5 min icebreaker activity (you can develop your own, or see session plan below for an example)
- PowerPoint slides or handout sheet of scenario/train of thought/options
- Slides or flipchart with Agree Disagree Unsure statement(s)
- Agree and Disagree signs, if not using slides
- Current relevant statistics from: [Shakti Women's Aid \(shaktiedinburgh.co.uk\)](http://shaktiedinburgh.co.uk)
- Familiarise yourself with context and guidance information on our Wakelet page: [Honour-based Abuse - Wakelet](https://wakelet.com/wake/Wg43_g_Mdd0dzDrk0KNJK) or https://wakelet.com/wake/Wg43_g_Mdd0dzDrk0KNJK

Resources:

- Projector & PowerPoint slides
- Flipchart/whiteboard
- Marker pens
- Your Group Agreement (pin/tack this up in the room)

Introduction (5 minutes)

Welcome the group and inform them that **this session will explore honour-based abuse within family relationships.**

Share slide 2 and read out the following definition of honour:

Honour is - being regarded with great respect or in high esteem *e.g it was an honour to represent my country in the Olympics*

Then read out the following definition of honour-based abuse:

Honour-based abuse is a term used to describe any act of violence or abuse which is committed with the purpose or belief that they are protecting or defending the honour of an individual/family/community *e.g being prevented from forging relationships with the opposite sex because of the belief that it will be seen as promiscuous or immoral*

Explain to pupils (also repeated later on):

In this scenario we will explore how honour-based abuse can affect those in the Muslim community, because this scenario has been developed in partnership with Shakti Women's Aid. Honour-based abuse can and does exist within all areas of society and in many different religious communities, however statistics show that it is especially prevalent amongst those in the Muslim community. This scenario is designed to raise awareness in order to educate mentors and mentees about the signs of honour-based abuse which they can be mindful of.

Show slides 3 and 4, sharing the Success Criteria and Children's Rights for this session.

Show slide 5 and refer to the group agreement which should be tacked up in the room. Ask if pupils would like to add or change anything.

Icebreaker Activity (5 minutes)

Example Icebreaker: SORTING TASK

Have 3 headings written on board/stuck onto wall – Abuse, Not abuse, Depends

Give pupils (in groups or individually) different scenarios which may or may not fall under the headings, either written on cards or verbally (e.g not allowed out at night, locked in a room, looking after younger siblings, having rules on electronics, reading private messages, hitting your child etc.)

Ask pupils to write the scenario/stick the card under the heading they feel is most appropriate.

Scenario (5 minutes)

Remind the class that for this session they will be bystanders to an incident involving a friend, classmate or someone they know.

Show slide 6 and read out the explanation once again.

Show slide 7 and ask for a volunteer to read the scenario (If, after asking twice, no one volunteers then read it yourself).

You are worried about your friend. She was absent from school for 4 days and upon returning explains that her parents were upset as they found some messages on her phone from her boyfriend. It looks like she hasn't slept for days. You know her Muslim faith parents can be strict and has mentioned that she is supposed to marry someone of her faith. She has mentioned before that she worries about bringing dishonour upon her family.

Ask the group:

1. Is this realistic; is it the kind of thing that could happen?

2. Put your hand up if you feel there is something wrong with what is happening in this scenario...

If most of the group raise their hand, before they are lowered ask them to look around the room and see how their friends/classmates have responded. If most don't put their hand up at this point – return to this question after the discussion part of the session.

3. As we've identified there is something wrong here, what are the red flags? What are the key words or phrases in this which make you feel uncomfortable?

Train of Thought (5 minutes)

Ask the group:

As a bystander, what questions might you have?

This can be briefly discussed in pairs or groups and then shared.

Show slide 8 then ask for a volunteer to read the following train of thought (if after asking twice no one volunteers then read it yourself):

Why would she be off school for sending messages to her boyfriend? Is withholding her education a punishment? What was she doing whilst she was off? She seems really dishevelled...is she OK? It might be normal for parents to want to protect their children but why would having a boyfriend bring dishonour? What does dishonour mean? What does it look like? And what is the result of bringing dishonour on the family?

Ask the group:

1. What reasons might someone give for not getting involved in this situation?

Suggestions may include: fear of repercussions, think it's nothing to do with me (family business), don't want to get into an argument with your friend, don't know how to approach, sensitivity around religion etc.

Agree Disagree Unsure (10 minutes)

Place your agree and disagree signs at opposite sides of the room, if not using the slides. Tell the group you are going to show them a statement and they should decide whether they agree or disagree with the statement, then move to the relevant side of the room. If they are unsure, they can stand in the middle.

Statement

It is OK for parents to forbid their child from having a boyfriend/girlfriend

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group: **Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?**

Ask the group:

1. Would there be good reasons for forbidding a child to have a boyfriend/girlfriend?

Take responses and conclude by highlighting that whilst education about safety in relationships is important, ultimately parents cannot stop their child from communicating with/getting to know whoever they choose.

Statement

'Honour' has the same meaning in every community

Give a short amount of time for group to make their choice then ask 2-3 people in each group: **Why did you agree/disagree/Why are you unsure?**

Ask the group:

1. Would everyone be 'honoured' to be asked to perform at the half-time show of a sports match?

Whilst most people would agree this is a pleasant thing to be asked to do, not everyone will feel that half-time shows at sports matches are highly valuable/enjoyable

2. If honour is about what you hold in high esteem/the qualities or behaviours you think are 'correct' – is it OK to persuade someone to feel the same way as you do?

There is no harm in telling others what you think or in trying to raise your child with your own personal values at the heart of all **you** do, but to persuade someone else to feel the way that you do denies them the freedom of choice and independent thought

*****highlight difference between genuine care/concern and abuse*****

Ask the group to sit down.

Discussion (10 minutes)

Show slide 11 and ask the group:

1. Why might your friend's parents be worried about 'dishonour' in this scenario?

Responses may include: not wanting their daughter to be in a relationship with someone outwith their faith, not wanting their daughter to be in a relationship at all (incorrect presumptions of promiscuous behaviour), not wanting their daughter to communicate with a boy

2. Could these reasons ever be used to excuse them from controlling her behaviour?

No, there is no excuse for abusive behaviour. We can understand why someone does something, without condoning the behaviour.

3. When might parental boundaries turn into abuse?

Checking someone's phone is a violation of their privacy – there are certain situations in which it might be necessary for a parent to check their child's phone but this should not be used as a tool for punishment or control.

Article 15 of the UNCRC makes it clear that children and young people have the human right to freedom of association.

4. Where is the abusive behaviour in this scenario taking place?

You want the group to identify that this is happening in private, in your friend's home and therefore the full scope of abuse may not be obvious – important to pick up on any red flags.

5. In the scenario it says 'she has been absent for 4 days' and 'she looks like she hasn't slept' – what might be the physical signs of honour-based abuse?

Suggestions may include: Absence of association with normal groups/activities (such as school, sports clubs, outings with friends), physical confinement, more often than normal attendance at religious sermons, frequent prayer and religious activities, unexplained marks or bruises, weight loss etc.

6. What might be the non-physical signs of someone experiencing honour-based abuse?

Suggestions may include: Decline in performance at school, sports, clubs, Depression, anxiety or suicidal thoughts, Decline in mental health, Dissociation/Zoning out from otherwise normal conversations etc.

7. Is it OK for parents to choose your boyfriend/girlfriend for you?

- ➔ A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of some people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or duress is used. Forced Marriage is breach of human rights and a criminal offence in the UK.
- ➔ Arranged marriage is common in many cultures and can be a good way of getting to know someone who is likeminded and who complements your attributes. The individuals have a choice at all times and the marriage will only go ahead with the full

consent of both parties. If a person feels pressured or is expected to marry against their wishes, this is a forced marriage.

8. If you're looking out for your friend and your concerns about honour-based abuse turn out to be untrue, could there be any negative repercussions from this?

Her parents may be surprised and a little embarrassed that you've highlighted their strict approach to parenting, but ultimately you are looking out for their daughter and they should understand that it's better to be safe than sorry in this situation.

Responsibility

Refer to the scenario, still on slide 11, and ask the group:

1. Do we have a responsibility to do something here?

2. Who do we have a responsibility to?

You may need to prompt the group –

Do we have a responsibility to the girl? Why?

She may be scared, hurt or worried. She may feel trapped or unaware of what to do. Abuse is wrong and she needs to know others support her and that this isn't a healthy relationship with her parents.

Do we have a responsibility to your friend's parents? Why?

They need to know that there is a potential for honour-based abuse or illegal behaviour, as well as denying their daughter her human rights. They may not know this/may just assume it's religious custom.

Do we have a responsibility to ourselves?

We have a responsibility to keep ourselves safe, and to be able to say if we don't agree with something.

Explain to the group we are now going to explore some of the things we could do in this situation.

Options (10 minutes)

If you have time you might ask the group to consider the pros and cons of these options in small groups first, before you discuss as a larger group.

Show slide 12. When discussing options, consider the following:

OPTION 1: Do nothing. It's none of your business.

Ask the group:

1. Is this an option that some might consider using?

We have already identified some of the reasons people might give for not getting involved (refer to bystander theory – barriers to intervention).

2. What might happen if you do nothing?

Responses may include: It could get worse, the girl might feel isolated and unsupported etc.

3. What does doing nothing say to the girl in this scenario? Her parents?

That their behaviour is acceptable/you don't care about how she feels or is treated.

OPTION 2: Change the subject whenever she gets upset and worried about her family – you don't want her to feel sad.

Ask the group:

1. What could you say to change the subject?

Come up with a couple of your suggestions ahead of the session in case you need to prompt the group. Suggestions may include: talk about your own parents, make plans for after school/the weekend, make a joke, discuss a good TV show

2. Can anyone think of any possible consequences of changing the subject here?

Examples: Your friend might think you don't care about what she has to say, you don't care about what's going on in her life, her feelings aren't valid

3. What doesn't happen if you choose this option?

The behaviour hasn't been challenged so it may continue.

OPTION 3: Agree with her that she should be worried about how her family feels but don't question why she feels she is dishonouring them.

Ask the group:

1. How do you feel about this option? Is this safe?

This option might make your friend's worries or concerns more prevalent, might make her think that she is right to worry and amend her behaviour to please them.

OPTION 4: Explain that you're worried for her wellbeing and signpost her to some helplines and websites.

Ask the group:

1. Why might this help the situation?

Replies may include: maybe she needs to know others don't think what's happening is right, maybe she needs to know others can support her, maybe she needs help to figure out what to do, professional helplines/websites will be able to advise and support her appropriately

2. What could you say to the girl?

Take suggestions. Telling the girl that what she is doing is not wrong, that she has the right to associate with whoever she chooses, that she shouldn't feel she's bringing dishonour on her family because she's behaving as a normal teenager would, that hearing from professional bodies/specialist organisations from allied groups (such as Shakti Women's Aid) may help her to approach this issue safely.

OPTION 5: Contact a professional organisation/allied body (such as Shakti Women's Aid) to get advice on what to do.

Ask the group:

1. What does this option not do?

It doesn't let your friend know that you're concerned for their wellbeing, it could be seen as 'going behind her back'.

2. Why would this be better than speaking to your friend's parents directly?

You might risk making the situation worse for your friend without being sure there is a support system/strategy in place. Your friend's parents might react unexpectedly. At least by getting advice from an allied body they will be able to advise based on their experience and expert knowledge.

OPTION 6: Talk about this with a parent/carer, a teacher/adult you trust or an MVP mentor, and ask their advice on what to do.

Ask the group:

1. What might stop someone from talking to a teacher or someone at home?

Suggestions may include: don't want to get involved, don't want to be a 'grass', don't want to be targeted etc. Remind the group that telling an adult about a behaviour which potentially puts someone else at harm (in this case the girl might get hurt and her parents might get into trouble) is about being a good friend.

2. Might speaking to an MVP Mentor be an option here? Why?

It might be easier to speak to a Mentor about it. They might have knowledge or experience of similar scenarios and able to advise, they might know the girl or her family and can seek help from other family members safely.

OPTION 7: Personal Option

Ask the group:

1. Is there anything else you could do?

Remember to explore the possible consequences for any additional options.

Thank the group for their answers and ideas.

Accessing support (1 minute)

Show slide 13 - this highlights places and organisations where learners can access support if they have been impacted by the lesson in any way or are worried about a friend.

Ensure that in-school supports are discussed, but make the mentees aware of where they can get support outside of school, so that they have a range of options.

You can add local supports to the slide, alongside the national ones already included, that you feel are relevant to your community/area. You can also discuss this with your supports in school and also partners.

Conclusion (1 minute)

Show slide 14 and let the group know that as leaders, they have the opportunity to make sure their school and community are safe, respectful and supportive.

Ask the group:

What have you learned from today's session?

You might want to note responses on flipchart.

Refer back to the **Success Criteria** and also reinforce key messages from discussion to include:

- ✓ Any form of abuse in any relationship is wrong.
- ✓ Children and young people have the right to free association with whoever they choose.
- ✓ There are a number of options we can choose from to challenge behaviour when we don't agree with it or are concerned for someone's safety.
- ✓ We have a responsibility to help our friends and keep ourselves safe.

Accessing support (1 minute)

Show slide 15 which is a repeat of slide 13. This is the last slide and should be left up as pupils/mentees leave the room.