



CHILDREN'S
AID SOCIETY
of TORONTO

Because children depend on all of us

Honour Based Violence: Child Protection Standpoint

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CAS Role and Mandate:

- Protecting children/adolescents from abuse and neglect
- Working with families, supporting them/advocacy
- Risk Assessment- recognizing and identifying risks
- Strength based perspective
- Empowering families & Establishing supports
- Safety Planning
- Preserving the family unit

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Types of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse

• **Exposure to adult conflict/ domestic violence is harmful to children and their development**

Any professional or person working with children/adolescents in any capacity has a legal obligation to report any suspected abuse or neglect to their local Child Protection Agency

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Case Examples:

- 7 year old girl:
"My mom says that I will meet my husband when I turn 10".
- 14 year old boy:
"My dad wants me to meet this girl and get to know her so I can get married when I turn 16. I don't want to get married but he says that's what I have to do".
- 17 year old girl:
"My dad and brother had a GPS tracker on my laptop and I couldn't go anywhere after school without their permission".

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"Cultural Practice" - seen as such by families:

- Honour Based Violence (HBV) is **not** a personal/family matter
- HBV is not a religious practice
- HBV is a collective form of abuse
- Perpetrators are family members (mostly male)
- HBV is a violation of human rights
- HBV/Forced marriage is a criminal matter
- HBV is underreported- fear and dependence

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Addressing and Prevention:

- Collaboration → Transparency
- Community Awareness (schools, front line, Police)
- Meet with the individual at a safe place
- Don't pressure him/her to speak unless they are ready
- Don't approach their family and don't assume it's safe
- Create a safety plan
- Involve people and professionals who the individual deems as safe

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Working With HBV Clients:

- Cannot assume that their community or religious leaders are “support people”
- Involve the individual in the safety planning
- Reassure the individual; follow through with the plans
- Don't coerce or convince the individual to report
- Assess safety for younger siblings
- Acknowledge and Validate their feelings/fears

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Challenges in the work:

- Individuals fearful of reporting their experiences
- Placing individuals in our care if we determine they are unsafe and at risk
- Assessing Kinship options may not work
- Cultural match- different cultures within homes and group homes
- Causes isolation/anxiety and depression
- No way back for them – can increase risks

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QUESTIONS?



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