

# Safeguarding Newsletter

10<sup>th</sup> June 2019

## Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is a criminal offence. A forced marriage is one in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities or mental incapacity, cannot) consent to the marriage, and violence, threats, or any other form of coercion is involved. Coercion may include emotional force, physical force or the threat of it, and financial pressure. Forced marriage is a hidden crime, and the data in the report may not reflect the full scale of the abuse.



Remember that an arranged marriage is not the same as a forced marriage. In an arranged marriage, both parties have consented to the union but can still refuse to marry if they choose to.

The government recently published its annual Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) Statistics 2018 which showed that the highest proportion of victims were under-15 (18%). Victims under-18 represented a third of the cases the FMU dealt with, underlining the importance of the role of schools. The highest number of referrals come into the Forced Marriage Unit in July, possibly reflecting this key travel period and the long school holidays. Of the cases where the gender of the victim was known, 17% were male, showing that whilst disproportionately affecting females, men can be forced into marriage too.

In 2018, the Forced Marriage Unit handled cases relating to 74 countries (of all age groups). The six countries with the highest number of cases in 2018 were:

- Pakistan - 769 cases (44%)
- Bangladesh - 157 cases (9%)
- India - 110 cases (6%)
- Somalia - 46 cases (3%)
- Afghanistan - 44 cases (3%)
- Romania - 43 cases (2%)

It should be noted that in 7% of cases, the forced marriage had no overseas element and took place entirely in the UK.

You can download the report here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/804044/Forced\\_Marriage\\_Unit\\_Statistics\\_2018\\_FINAL.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/804044/Forced_Marriage_Unit_Statistics_2018_FINAL.pdf)

## Gaming Disorders (internetmatters.org)

Gaming Disorder has been added to the World Health Organisation's classification of diseases; note this is a 'disorder', not an addiction. The clinical conditions say that: 'Gaming disorder is characterised by a pattern of persistent or recurrent gaming behaviour...' manifested by:



- "impaired control over gaming"
- "increasing priority given to gaming to the extent that gaming takes precedence over other life interests and daily activities"
- "continuation or escalation of gaming despite the occurrence of negative consequences."

Freelance games expert, Andy Robertson, has written an article on the internetmatters.org website that explains 'What you need to know about WHO gaming disorder'. You can read the article here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/guidance/what-you-need-to-know-about-who-gaming-disorder/>