

CHILDLINE NEWSLETTER



27th April 2020

A Child marriage attempt foiled during lockdown



Child marriage is an evil that continues to thrive in the Indian society. Despite strict laws to ban this practice, several families marry off their children before they become adults. The problem of child marriage persists due to the lack of education, dowry, poverty and superstitious practices. It is a complete human rights violation that has devastating consequences on the physical and mental well-being of a child.

Even though social gathering is strictly prohibited due to lockdown, parents are still getting their children married in hushed-up ceremonies. In April 2020, CHILDLINE 1098 received a call from a concerned adult at 9.40 am to report a 16-year old girl's marriage on the same day at 12.30 pm. Sita aged 16; (*name changed to protect identity*) was residing with her parents in Malali village, Bagalkot district, Karnataka.

Her parents had fixed her marriage with a 36-year old man against her wishes. Upon receiving this information, CHILDLINE quickly alerted the local Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) and District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), police and panchayat development officials. CHILDLINE team members, along with the local authorities reached the place where the ceremony was being conducted.

Post an extensive conversation, the parents agreed to stop the marriage. The family members were counseled about the ill-effects of child marriage on a minor child and punishments under the law, in the event anyone is found guilty of this crime. A written statement was taken from the parents stating that they will not force their child to marry before the age of 18. Meanwhile, CWC (Child Welfare Committee) was informed of this case.

The parents were strictly instructed to attend the CWC proceedings and follow their orders. Currently, CHILDLINE and local authorities are continuously following up with the child. Thus, with timely, intervention a child's future was safeguarded.

During the lockdown period from 20th March to 20th April 2020, CHILDLINE 1098 has answered 6, 04,274 calls and stopped or prevented 898 child marriages.



Resources and information on Covid-19

<https://www.childlineindia.org/a/covid19>

Donate to CHILDLINE and support our efforts to protect and rescue children.

https://www.childlineindia.org/a/fundraiser_campaign/168477