

CHILD MARRIAGE

Child Marriage is the marriage of a girl or boy before the age of 18. Child marriage violates children's rights and places them at high risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse.

Causes of early and child marriage

1. Poverty and economic transactions
2. Notions of morality and honour
3. Protecting 'chastity'
4. Subjugation of women
5. Culture and Tradition
6. Children considered to be a "Burden"
7. Lack of awareness about the dangers of early marriage
8. Parents' fear of their daughters' being unmarriageable after the age of 14
9. Parents' desire to secure their daughters' future
10. To strengthen ties between the marrying families for social as well as economic protection and security
11. Parents' desire to see their children married and settled before passing away or becoming old.



Source: UNICEF India (Art by student artist Akashdeep from Jharkhand)

Stop child marriage

Why does child marriage happen?

Families see child marriage as a way to cope with growing economic hardship. Parents marry their daughters because they think it will protect them from increased or generalised violence, including sexual violence. Child marriage is used as a weapon of war and to hide human trafficking and sexual abuse.

How does it impact children and their lives?

Child marriage is often the result of entrenched gender inequality, making girls disproportionately affected by the practice. Child marriage robs girls of their childhood and threatens their lives and health. Girls who marry before 18 are more likely to experience domestic violence and less likely to remain in school.



Source: Jackie Ash (illustration of Uma in R N Tagore's Khata)