

01 Introduction

FGM involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is prevalent in 30 countries mainly concentrated in the Western, Eastern, and North-Eastern regions of Africa, some countries in the Middle East and Asia, as well as among migrants from these areas. FGM may happen to girls in the UK or they may be sent home to country of origin for the procedure.

02 Legislation

FGM is illegal in the UK and can result in 14 years imprisonment. It is an offence for someone to perform FGM or assist a girl to carry FGM out on herself, both in the UK or abroad. As amended by the Serious Crime Act 2015, the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 now provides lifelong anonymity for victims, FGM Protection Orders and a professional mandatory reporting duty of known cases under 18 years to police.

07 Additional resources and information

National FGM Centre
[National FGM Centre - Developing excellence in response to FGM and other Harmful Practices](#)

06 What to do?

Follow Slough's supporting local FGM pathway found at:
[Slough Safeguarding Children Partnership - Female Genital Mutilation \(sloughsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk\)](#)
If you think a child is in immediate danger don't delay - call the police on 999.

05 Things to consider

Sometime the procedure is only picked up in adulthood during a pre-natal or gynaecological examination. Adults may require psychological support for the trauma of the procedure and should see their GP or health provider.
If you are concerned about a child, please call 999 or 101 or contact Children First on 01753 875362 or outside of office hours please ring 01344 351999.

03 What does FGM look like?

More than 200 million girls and women alive today have been cut. FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls. It has no health benefits but rather immediate and long term physical and psychological consequences. The procedure may be carried out soon after birth, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during a woman's first pregnancy. Girls may be taken to their country of origin during school holidays. FGM can be linked to forced marriage and honour-based violence. The practice is not required by any religion.

04 Signs, indicators, and examples

- Mother has undergone FGM.
- Girl discusses special occasion/ceremony to 'become a woman'.
- Prepares for marriage - long holiday abroad/going 'home' visiting family.
- Unexpected absence from school and is from a practicing community.
- Relative/cutter visiting from abroad.
- Spends longer in bathroom and avoids exercise.
- Recurrent urinary, menstrual or stomach problems.
- Travel vaccine request for country prevalent for FGM.
- Difficulty walking, standing or sitting.
- Reluctant to undergo routine medical examinations.

