

What should you do?

If you are concerned that a girl is at risk of FGM, this is a child protection issue and must be immediately shared with Children's Social Care, and / or the Police Child Protection team.

If you work in a school ensure that parents are aware that FGM is illegal in the UK regardless of the country in which it is performed.

FGM Helpline

Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 028 3550

In an emergency dial 999 or contact your local Police Station

Training

As part of the NSCB suite of eLearning courses the course 'Female Genital Mutilation – Recognising and Preventing FGM' is available for practitioners to take free of charge. Visit <http://www.northamptonshirescb.org.uk/about-northamptonshire-safeguarding-children-board/training/e-learning/> for more details and to take the course

Contact Us

The NSCB Business Office can be contacted via the details below:

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Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Information Leaflet



This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

What is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)?

Female Genital Mutilation comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or injury to the female genital organs for non medical reasons. The age at which FGM is conducted varies from a few days old to adulthood depending on the geographical area and community but usually between the ages of 5 to 14 years. Not only are there long term serious physical health consequences of FGM.

FGM is extremely traumatic & can have lifelong consequences for mental health.

Different words are used by different communities and countries, not many girls or women know of the term Female Genital Mutilation. Traditionally, there have been four types of female genital cutting, varying in intensity and overall damage to young girls' and sometimes young women's genitalia. **All these forms of FGM have been found in the UK.**

Who is at risk?

The World Health Organisation estimates that 3 million girls undergo some form of the procedure every year. It is practiced in 28 countries in Africa and some in the Middle East and Asia. FGM is also found in the UK amongst members of migrant communities. It is estimated that up to 24,000 girls in the UK, under the age of 15 are at risk of FGM.

25 new cases of FGM were identified by Northampton General Hospital during the period Sep 2014 – Feb 2015.

Female Genital Mutilation and The Law

All types of FGM have been illegal in the UK since the 1985 Female Circumcision Prohibition Act.

The new Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Act 2003 updates and extends the original act. It is now 'an offence to take UK nationals and those with permanent UK residency overseas for the purpose of circumcision, to aid and abet, counsel or procure the carrying out of Female Genital Mutilation (all types of circumcision). It is illegal for anyone to circumcise women or children for cultural or non-medical reason'. A person convicted of an offence under the FGM Act 2003 is liable to imprisonment for up to 14 years.

Recognise the signs of Female Genital Mutilation

Girls and women from practising FGM communities talking about holidays where they will 'become a woman' or 'become just like my mum and sister'.

If women in the family have already undergone FGM then there is an increased risk to other girls in the family.

Girls who have had the procedure performed will often avoid exercise on their return to school, ask to go to the toilet more often, find it hard to sit still for long periods or may have further time off school due to problems related to the procedure.

It's essential that teachers, doctors and other professionals learn the warning signs that a girl might be at risk.

Health Implications

Short term health implications include:

- Severe pain and shock
- Broken limbs (from being held down)
- Infection
- Increased risk of HIV and AIDS
- Urine retention
- Injury to adjacent tissues
- Immediate fatal haemorrhaging

Long term health implications include:

- Uterus, vaginal and pelvic infections
- Cysts and neuromas
- Infertility
- Increased risk of fistula
- Complications in pregnancy and child birth
- Sexual dysfunction
- Difficulties in menstruation
- Considerable psycho-sexual, psychological and social consequences
- Trauma
- Flashbacks and depression

An estimated 10% of victims die from short term effects and 25% from recurrent problems.