

EXCISION YANKAN GISHIRI
SUNNA PHARAONIC KHITAN
BOLOKOLI IB ISA ARU
ABSUM HALAYS FEMALE TAHRUR
GENITAL BONDO SUNNA
MUTILATION
MEKHNISHAB MEGREZ
GUDNIIN TAHOOR KUTAIRI
FEMALE CIRCUMCISION

Keeping your girls
safe from FGM:

Summer holidays, the law and YOU

What is female genital mutilation (FGM)?

Female genital mutilation (FGM), also known as female genital cutting (FGC) or circumcision, is the altering, removal or cutting of any part of the female genitals for non-medical reasons. This can mean anything from a prick to stretching, removal of the clitoris and/or labia minora/majora and stitching up. Depending on the community and the spoken language, FGM will be known by different terms, such as tahoor, khitan, gudniin, absum, ibi, bondo, halalays, sunna, kutairi among many more.

FGM IS A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION THAT IS HARMFUL TO THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF GIRLS AND WOMEN.

Why are summer holidays important?

Summer holidays are a time when girls are at high risk of undergoing FGM. This is because some families choose to do FGM over the summer holidays in the UK or may go abroad to have the practice done. This is also the time when families may come under pressure from relatives or friends in the UK or at home to have their daughters cut.

As a parent, guardian or professional, you have a legal duty to protect girls at risk from FGM at all times. This booklet will help you understand the laws on FGM in the UK and what you can do to help protect girls.



What is the UK law on FGM?

FGM has been illegal in the UK since 1985. It is illegal to perform FGM in the UK or help arrange for FGM to be done. It is also illegal to take a British national or habitual resident to another country to have FGM done.

Anyone caught doing or arranging FGM can be sentenced to up to 14 years in prison and/or fined.





**FGM is prohibited by
many international
and regional human
rights conventions
that protect women
and children from
cruelty and violence
as well as protecting
them from harmful
traditional practices.**

- Dr Yunes Teinaz
Fellow, Royal Society for Public
Health and FORWARD Trustee

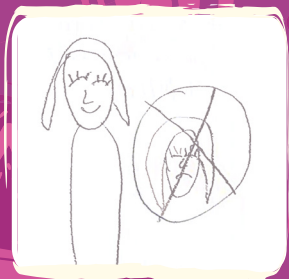
What is the UK law on FGM? Part 2

In 2015, new changes were made to the law on FGM. These changes include:

Mandatory Reporting Duty - this requires all regulated professionals, including teachers, social care and healthcare professionals to report to the police on 101 when a girl under 18 has disclosed that she has had FGM or it is seen by professionals in the course of their work.

Failure to Protect - parents have a legal duty to protect their daughters from FGM. This means that parents can be prosecuted if they do not prevent FGM happening to their daughter. For example, it would not be acceptable to leave a girl with a relative when you know or think FGM could be a risk.

**I think FGM should
not be happening so we
should prevent this from
happening. To do this, we
should work together.
I think all adults should
know about this too.
(Just in case!) This should
stop in the UK!**



- Girl, 8 years old, London

What is the UK law on FGM? Part 3

FGM Protection Orders – anyone can ask for a court to issue a protection order if they think that a girl is at risk of FGM. If the court believes that a girl is at risk, they can give instructions to the family to protect that girl. For example, the courts may:

- Seize passports to stop the family from travelling abroad
- Request that a girl is brought back to the UK if she is already abroad
- Request for the girl to be medically examined on her return from a holiday to deter families from carrying out FGM
- Temporarily remove the girl from her family setting until there is a guarantee that she is safe in her parents' or guardians' care

Anonymity – a girl or woman's identity would not be made public should she choose to report her case to the authorities.

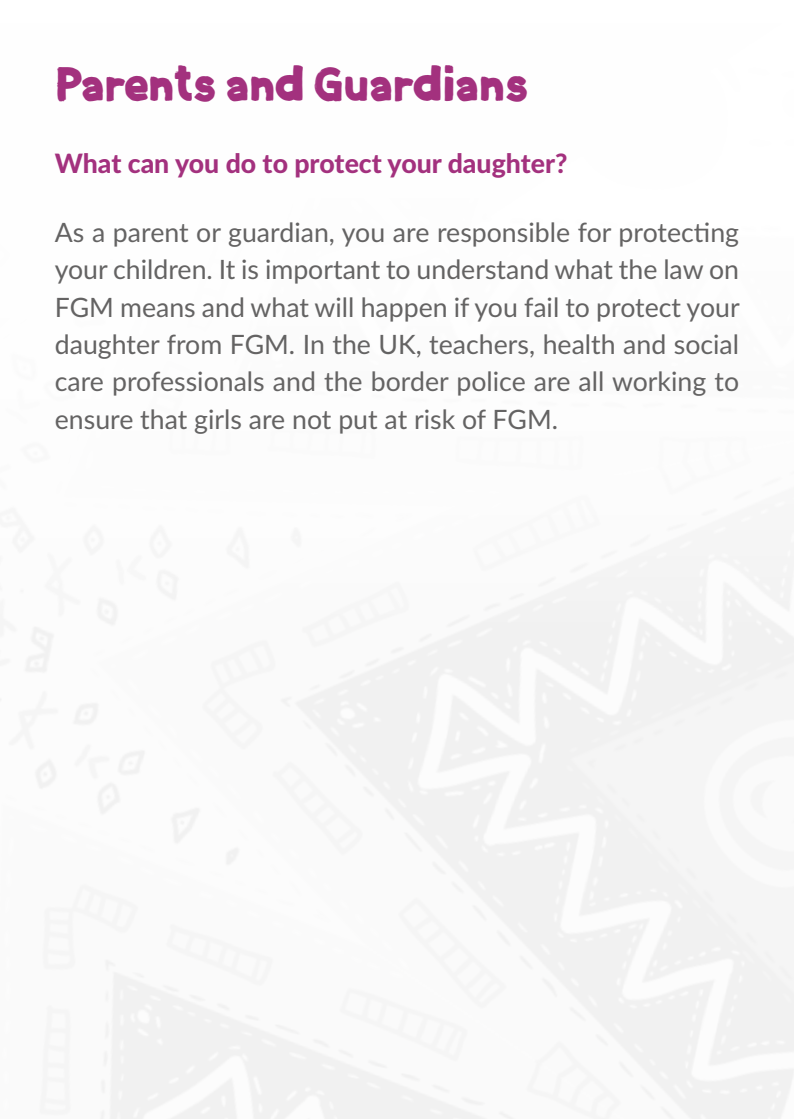
**It is not helpful
to define degrees
within the practice
of female genital
mutilation (FGM).
Nothing is acceptable,
not even a symbolic
scratch, since that
would be the start of
a slippery slope.**

**- Mrs Unaiza Malik, Assistant Treasurer,
Muslim Council of Britain & President
of Muslim Women's Association.**

Parents and Guardians

What can you do to protect your daughter?

As a parent or guardian, you are responsible for protecting your children. It is important to understand what the law on FGM means and what will happen if you fail to protect your daughter from FGM. In the UK, teachers, health and social care professionals and the border police are all working to ensure that girls are not put at risk of FGM.



What can you do to ensure that your daughter is safe from FGM over the summer holidays and at all other times?

- Speak to your extended family to make sure they know about the UK law and the legal consequences that doing FGM to your daughter will have for you
- Share this leaflet with your family and friends
- Discuss the health risks of doing FGM with all family members to ensure they understand and are able to protect your daughter/s from FGM
- Make sure you do not leave your daughter with people or in places where she may be at risk of FGM
- Talk to your daughter so that she understands what FGM is, that no one is allowed to do it to her and that she must inform you if she thinks she is at risk of FGM

Professionals

What can you do?

If you believe that a girl is at risk of FGM, you can take a number of steps to protect her:

- Follow the safeguarding procedures in your workplace and share your concerns with the safeguarding lead – always document your discussions and actions
- Call the local children's social care service to make a referral
- If a girl under 18 has disclosed that she has had FGM or you see physical signs of FGM in your line of work, you must report this to the police on 101 within 1 month
- Prepare your setting to engage with your local community on FGM

If a girl is at immediate risk, call the police on 999 instead of 101.

What can you do if you feel you are at risk of FGM?

If you feel you are at risk of FGM or you want to help protect a family member or a friend from going through the practice, there are a number of places you can get help. You can talk to your **teacher, GP** or **school nurse** about your concerns.

If you are in the UK you can ring **FORWARD**, the **FGM helpline** or the **police** on **101** for advice and support. See the back of this leaflet for contact details and information.

If it is an emergency and you think you are or someone you know is at immediate risk of going through FGM, ring one of the numbers above or the police on **999**. If you do not have access to a phone, tell an official at the airport before you leave the country (if you are travelling).

What can you do if you feel you are at risk of FGM? Part 2

If you are abroad and think you are at risk of FGM then tell a trusted adult that it is illegal to force anyone to go through FGM and show them this leaflet. If you are able to get the number for the British High Commission for the country you are in, ring them and tell them about your situation. They have a duty to protect you from FGM in any country. You can find a list of High Commissions and their phone numbers on this website: www.gov.uk/government/world/organisations.

You can also seek help from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the UK.

You can find all contact details on the back two pages of this booklet.

Contact details to access support and advice on FGM

Angelou Centre – Organisation that provides advice on FGM in Newcastle and Northeast region

0191 226 0394

www.angelou-centre.org.uk | admin@angelou-centre.org.uk

Muslim Women's Network UK – Organisation that provides advice on FGM in Birmingham and the West Midlands

0800 999 5786 (Helpline) | 0303 999 5786

www.mwnuk.co.uk | contact@mwnuk.co.uk

NESTAC (New Step for African Community) – Organisation that provides advice on FGM in Manchester and Northwest region

0170 686 8993

www.nestac.org | info@nestac.org.uk

Refugee Women of Bristol – Organisation that provides advice on FGM in Bristol

0117 941 5867

www.refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk | info@refugeewomenofbristol.org.uk

Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the UK – Government department responsible for protecting and supporting UK citizens (in the UK and abroad)

+44 (0) 207 008 1500

Contact details to access support and advice on FGM

ChildLine – Helpline providing support and advice to those aged 18 and under

0800 1111 (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

FORWARD – African women-led organisation that provides support and advice on FGM

0208 960 4000 (ext. 1) (open Mon-Fri, 10:00 – 17:30)

www.forwarduk.org.uk | support@forwarduk.org.uk

NSPCC – The UK's children's charity

FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550 (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

www.nspcc.org.uk | fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

Police – For reporting when you know a girl is at risk of FGM

101 – non-emergency number (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

999 – emergency number (open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)



FORWARD
Safeguarding rights & dignity



Department
for Education



**The Angelou
Centre**



Thank you to the Department for Education for funding this booklet