



Anti-female genital mutilation (FGM) training – handout

Facts

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the cutting or removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. FGM has no health benefits and can be very harmful.

There are different terms for FGM, including 'sunnah', 'female circumcision' and 'female genital cutting'/'cutting'.

There are 4 main types of FGM, as classified by the World Health Organization (see WHO website for more info on types). Type 1 and 2 are the most common. These usually include cutting the clitoris. FGM can be carried out on a girl anytime between infancy and age 15, and occasionally on adult women, from FGM-affected communities.

FGM is usually carried out by a female elder, with no anaesthetic and basic tools such as knives or razor blades. However, in some countries, doctors perform FGM as an operation. This is called medicalisation and it is illegal in most countries as it is still extremely harmful.

Law

FGM is illegal in the UK and it is also illegal to take a girl abroad to be cut. Anyone found guilty of an FGM offence – or of helping somebody commit one – faces up to 14 years in prison. Anyone found guilty of failing to protect a girl from the risk of FGM faces up to 7 years in prison.

Further information on the current law can be found [here](#).

Harms

Types of harm that FGM can cause:

- Severe pain and blood loss • Shock
- Difficulty passing urine • Infections
- Back pain
- Infertility
- Risks during pregnancy and birth
- Psychological harm
- Death

Reasons

Reasons for FGM:

- To control female sexuality
- To maintain 'virginity' before marriage
- To prepare for marriage
- To be part of the group
- Pressure from family / community
- Rite of passage and maintaining 'honour'
- 'Out of love'

Safeguarding

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

If you talk to a child about FGM, please bear in mind the following:



If you are concerned that a girl may be at risk / has had FGM then you need to make a report to the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub)/Children's Social Care.

If a girl tells you she has FGM or you see it, call 101 (national crime number). **This is your mandatory reporting duty as a teacher.**

- Find a private space
- Use independent translators (if needed)
- Avoid judgemental language
- Use the same terminology that the girl uses
- Maintain a record of your conversation
- Don't promise not to share information

***N.B.** Never approach the family (unless advised by Social Care).

There may be warning signs that FGM is planned / has been carried out on a girl. Please refer to the National FGM Risk Assessment Tool. This can be found on the Oxford Against Cutting website, [here](#).

Further information and resources can be found also on our website, [here](#).

Communities who practice FGM live mainly in 30 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, and in other countries such as the UK where people have migrated from these areas.

FGM is not a religious practice. It is practiced across all major religions and predates all of them!

More than 230 million girls and women alive today have experienced FGM and it is estimated that there are more than 137,000 girls and women living with FGM in the UK.

Tips for Professionals

Remember the one chance rule

Use a private space

Listen to and believe the victim

Be mindful of translators, do not use children, family members or community members to translate!

Use the same terminology as the victim and avoid judgmental language

Maintain a record of what is disclosed

Minimise who the information is shared with

Don't promise not to share information

Don't approach the family

Keep an open door policy

Keep a safety plan with the victim

Share information regarding support agencies or offer to call specialist support

Link with your Designated Safeguarding Lead

Always follow up a safeguarding referral

Don't forget the mandatory duty to report if you are a teacher

Helpline numbers

Police: **999**

Oxford Rose Clinic, Specialist clinic for FGM survivors - **07767 671 406**

Childline - **0800 1111**

National helpline 24/7

[Female circumcision, FGM, and cutting | Childline](#)

NSPCC FGM Helpline - **0800 028 3550**

Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk



OxfordAgainstCutting
ProtectingGirls&Women

Local Helpline Numbers

Bracknell Forest

MASH / Bracknell Forest Children's Services – **01344 352005** (Emergency Duty Team – 01344 786 543)

Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire MASH - **01296 383 962** (Out of hours – 0800 999 7677)

Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes MASH – **01908 253 169/ 253 170** (Out of hours – 01908 265 545)

Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire MASH – **0345 050 7666**

Slough

MASH / Slough Children's Services Trust – **01753 875 362** (Emergency Duty Team – 01344 786 543)

Reading

Reading MASH – **0118 937 3641**

West Berkshire

West Berkshire MASH – **01635 503 090**

Wokingham

Children's Services Wokingham – **0118 908 8002**

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

MASH / Windsor and Maidenhead Children's Services – **01628 683 150**

Email: info@oxfordagainstcutting.org

Website: www.oxfordagainstcutting.org