

# 1 minute guide: Female Genital Mutilation

## What is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)?

FGM comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genital organs or any other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. FGM is most often carried out on young girls aged between infancy and 15 years old. It is often referred to as 'cutting', 'female circumcision', 'initiation', 'Sunna' and 'infibulation'.

## Spotting the signs

- Suspicions may arise in a number of ways that a child may be at risk of FGM. These include:-
- Knowing that a mother or older sibling has undergone FGM.
- A girl talks about plans to have a 'special procedure' or to attend a special occasion/celebration to 'become a woman'.
- A girl's parents state that they or a relative will take the child out of the country for a prolonged period, or school holidays or when attending for travel vaccinations.
- A girl may talk about a long holiday to her country of origin another country where the practice is present.
- The girl is a member of the community that is less integrated into UK society and whose country of origin practices FMG.

## Signs that a child may have already undergone FGM:-

- Difficulty walking, sitting or standing.
- Spending longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet due to difficulties urinating.
- Soreness, infection or unusual presentation noticed by practitioner when changed a nappy or helping with the toilet.
- Spending long periods of time away from the classroom during the day with bladder or menstrual problems.
- Having frequent unusual menstrual problems.
- Prolonged absence from school or college.
- A prolonged absence from school or college with personal or behaviour changes e.g. withdrawn, depressed.
- Being particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations.
- Asking for help or advice but not being explicit about the procedure due to embarrassment or fear

## What to do if you are concerned or have been made aware FGM has occurred

As FGM is illegal, this should be reported to the Police via 101 non-emergency number. If you believe that a victim or potential victim of FGM is in immediate danger, always dial 999. If you are concerned that a child is at risk you must make a referral to Doncaster Children's Services Trust.

<https://dscp.org.uk/professionals/female-genital-mutilation>

Further Training & Resources:

Home Office FGM eLearning - <https://fgmelearning.vc-enable.co.uk/Register/>

[Female genital mutilation \(FGM\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

<https://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/>

[Female Genital Mutilation - Prevent & Protect | NSPCC](https://www.nspcc.org.uk)

