

- Understand which communities across Bristol are affected by FGM, and engage these communities in raising their awareness of FGM and UK law.

**If you work in a school ensure that**

- Someone has had further training on FGM
- Have a strategy so parents are aware of UK law around FGM and staff know how to have appropriate conversations where needed
- FGM is treated as any other child safeguarding issue
- You know which of your pupils may be at risk

**If you work in the Health Sector ensure that:**

- Someone in your team has had FGM training.
- If you see someone from an FGM affected community you should talk about the health issues of FGM for them and their family
- If a woman or a girl attends a health practitioner with any Gynaecological or urinary problems then FGM should be considered as a potential risk.

- If a woman has had FGM and she is pregnant or has children you must consider the safeguarding risk of the unborn or girls in that family.

**Find out more through FGM awareness training for professionals – see the Bristol Safeguarding Children Board website.**

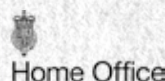
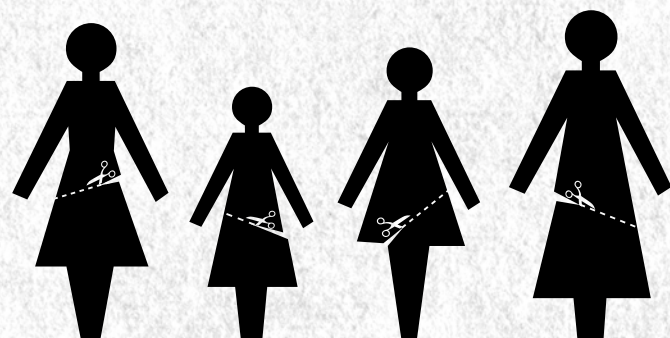
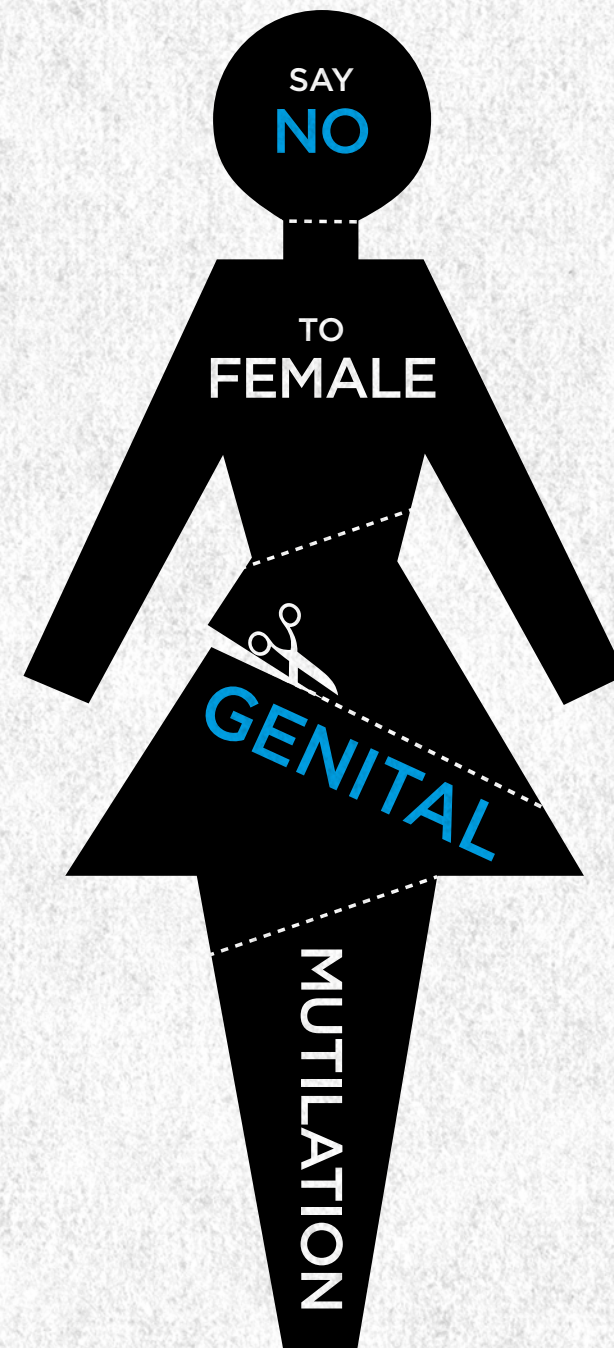
[www.bristol.gov.uk/page/children-and-young-people/bscb-training](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/children-and-young-people/bscb-training)

To make a child protection referral, contact your local area social work office. You can find contact details on the FGM page of [www.bava.org.uk](http://www.bava.org.uk)

**FGM and the Law**

See [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)  
 It is 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 FGM. It is illegal for anyone to circumcise women or children for cultural or non-medical reasons.  
 A person convicted of an offence under the FGM Act 2003 is liable to imprisonment for up to 14 years.

[www.bava.org.uk](http://www.bava.org.uk)



**PROFESSIONALS**



## What is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)?

Female Genital Mutilation is any procedure which involves the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

### Types of FGM

#### FGM Type 1

Is the partial or total removal of the clitoris

#### FGM Type 2

Excision - removal of the clitoris with partial or total excision of the labia minora

#### FGM Type 3

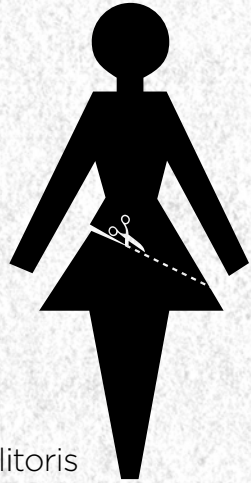
Infibulation - removal of the clitoris and labia minora with narrowing by stitching of the vaginal opening

#### FGM Type 4

All other types of harmful traditional practices that mutilate the female genitalia, including pricking, cutting, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterisation

### Health Implications

**Short term:** severe pain and shock; broken limbs from being held down; infection; increased risk of HIV, AIDS; urine retention; injury to adjacent tissues and immediate fatal haemorrhaging.



**Long term:** 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.

### Who is at risk?

Any girl or woman of any age including babies and adult women from an FGM affected community but especially school-age girls.

FGM is a tradition practised in 28 African countries as well as Middle Eastern communities such as Kurdish, Yemeni, Indonesian and Malaysian.

### What are the warning signs?

**Below are some warning signs that MAY indicate a girl is at risk of FGM.**

- Parents requesting an extended leave from school on top of school holidays
- If the girl comes from a country that has high prevalence of FGM
- Mother and other siblings have already undergone FGM
- Child may indicate that they are going for a special event

#### Girls who have recently undergone FGM may:

- spend a long time in the toilet
- be in pain
- Exhibit symptoms of abuse and/or a change in behaviour.

### How and where may it happen?

School holidays are seen as a key time when daughters may be taken abroad with the intention of subjecting them to FGM. Or an elder could be flown into the UK to perform FGM on many girls together.

A woman may ask to be closed/ re-sutured following the birth of her child. These are all illegal under UK law.

### What can you do?

**Professionals and volunteers from all agencies have a statutory responsibility to safeguard children from being abused through FGM.**

If you are concerned that a girl is at risk of FGM, this is a child protection issue and must be shared with CYPS, and / or the Police Child Protection team. You can dial 101 to report to the Police

#### As a professional you should:

- Familiarise yourself with the warning signs and know how to make a child protection referral
- Get further training around FGM and Safeguarding children
- Ask for help from other organisations and the Bristol FGM Delivery and Safeguarding Group

