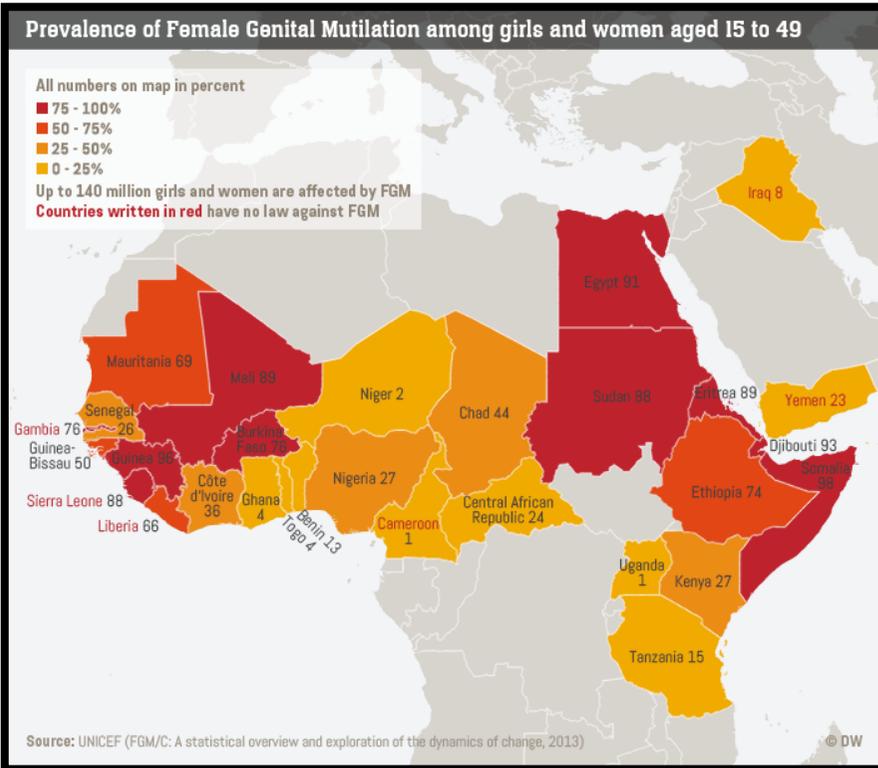


Female Genital Mutilation - FGM

FGM is a procedure where female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed but there is no medical reason for this to be done – normally carried out before puberty.

FGM is illegal in the UK. It is a practice which takes place worldwide in at least 30 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. It also takes place within parts of Western Europe and other developed countries.



Different Types of FGM

INFIBULATION

The most severe form of FGM. This involves removing the external genitalia and suturing/narrowing the vaginal opening.

CLITORECTOMY

This is the partial/total removal of the clitoris and/or hood.

EXCISION

This is the partial or total removal of the clitoris and labia minora (inner folds of the vulva). The outer folds may also be removed.

FGM also includes other harmful procedures like pricking, piercing, scraping, cauterising.

By law, if a child discloses that she is a victim of FGM or might be, teaching professionals must report it to the MASH & the police. Normal safeguarding procedures should be followed too: green form completed and immediately shared with the DSL.

Statistics

Estimated over 200 million worldwide have undergone some form of FGM. Estimated that 103,000 of females aged 15-49 who have emigrated to UK live with the consequences of FGM.

First conviction in UK was in 2017 when a mother was found guilty of cutting her daughter in London.

Video links for further information

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNCQA9GMYPs>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HN1mulgwv5g>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKT1MX-RnmU>

England and Wales

Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 - Illegal for UK Nationals or Permanent UK Residents to perform FGM on a girl overseas or aid/abet a UK national to undergo FGM in the UK or abroad.

Serious Crime Act 2015 - Extended FGM Act 2003 protection to include UK habitual residents, Mandatory Reporting (for teachers, social workers and health professionals); Introduction of FGM Protection Orders and lifelong anonymity for survivor.

Maximum penalty: 14 years in prison.

Failure to protect a girl: (parental responsibility) 7 years in prison.

Breach of FGM Protection order: 5 years in prison.

Myths that sustain FGM:

- The clitoris is dangerous and should be removed for health reasons
- Men can become impotent if they have contact with the clitoris
- FGM prevents vaginal cancer
- FGM makes a woman's face more beautiful
- Unmodified clitoris leads to masturbation and lesbianism
- Makes childbirth safer

Pay attention to:

- if a special occasion is taking place where a 'girl becomes a woman'
- long holidays abroad to certain locations
- long absences and appearing different on return
- a reluctance to go to the doctors
- a relative visiting for a special ceremony
- parents requesting child to be removed from PSHE/ Relationship Education session

Signs FGM has happened:

- Difficulty in sitting, walking, standing
- Spending longer in the bathroom
- Appearing withdrawn
- Urinary problems
- Infections