



# Your team task

Team: 'The Legal Eagles'

## Team: 'The Legal Eagles'

**Your brief is to raise awareness and get across important points related to FGM and The Law. Some background information is provided to help you create your presentation.**

**You can choose how to present this – here are a few ideas:**

- As an interview or report for the news on TV
- As a very short scene from a police or courtroom drama or other role play
- By writing, as a team, a leaflet on 'FGM and The Law' and reading it out
- By creating an info graphic to go on a website – use the flipchart paper and markers to create a draft version you can present.
- Be creative, but work fast! You only have 10 minutes to put it together and only 4 minutes max to present it! Use your own language but be accurate.

**Some questions you need to answer:**

- ? If this was part of a campaign, who would need this information? What would you want it to achieve? So what are the most important points to make?

**Some background information:**

- **FGM is illegal in the UK.**
- That means mutilation of the whole or any part of a girl's or woman's genitals. (NB this doesn't mean surgical procedures for genuine medical reasons).
- **It is an offence for any person (regardless of their nationality or the country they live in) to:**
  - perform FGM;
  - assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself ;
  - assist (from inside the UK) a non-UK person to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or UK resident.
- **If it takes place here, the nationality of the victim is irrelevant and the country they live in is also irrelevant – it's a crime.**
- If FGM is committed against a girl **under the age of 16**, each person who is responsible for the girl at the time the FGM occurred could be guilty of the offence of **failing to protect her** from risk of FGM.
- **It is also a crime for a UK national or UK resident to do these things abroad, even in countries where FGM is not illegal:**
  - perform FGM abroad, or assist a girl to perform FGM on herself outside the UK
  - assist (from **outside the UK**) a non-UK person to carry out FGM outside the UK on a UK national or UK resident.
- **'Failing to protect a girl from risk of FGM' can be committed wholly or partly outside the UK** by a person who is a UK national or UK resident.
- These offences are intended to cover taking a girl abroad to be subjected to FGM.

**Example 1:** A person who arranges by telephone from England for his UK national daughter to have FGM carried out abroad by a foreign national (who does not live permanently in the UK) is committing an offence.

**Example 2:** If a person in the UK advises his UK national brother over the telephone how to carry out FGM abroad, he is guilty of an offence.

**Example 3:** A permanent UK resident who takes his permanent UK resident daughter to the doctor's surgery in another country so that FGM can be carried out, is guilty of offence.



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- **Anyone who commits FGM faces up to 14 years in prison, a fine, or both.**
- **Anyone found guilty of failing to protect a girl from risk of FGM faces up to 7 years in prison, a fine, or both.**
- There is general law that applies to all criminal offences. As it applies to FGM, it is also an offence to:
  - aid, abet, counsel or procure a person to commit an FGM offence;
  - encourage or assist a person to commit an FGM offence;
  - attempt to commit an FGM offence; conspire to commit an FGM offence
- **Any person found guilty of these offences faces the same maximum penalty.**
- **The law also guarantees lifelong anonymity for victims of FGM. So it's illegal to publish anything that could identify somebody as a victim of FGM,** even if there is no eventual court case.
- The law introduces FGM Protection Orders – new civil orders to protect victims or potential victims of FGM.

**Example:** An order could include, a requirement for a passport to be surrendered to prevent a girl being taken abroad for FGM.

- **The law also requires health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s to the police** ('mandatory reporting duty'). The duty came into force on 31 October 2015. (The corresponding law in Scotland doesn't include this).
- **NB FGM is not the same as male circumcision,** where a small piece of foreskin covering the end of the penis is removed, without harm to the penis. **Male circumcision is legal.**



# Your team task

Team: 'The Medics'

## Team: 'The Medics'

**Your brief is to raise awareness and get across important points related to the physical aspects of FGM and its health consequences and dangers. Some background information is provided to help you create your presentation.**

**You can choose how to present this – here are a few ideas:**

- As an interview or report for the news on TV
- As a very short scene from a police or courtroom drama or other role play
- By writing, as a team, a leaflet on 'FGM and Health' and reading it out
- By creating an info graphic to go on a website – use the flipchart paper and markers to create a draft version you can present.

Be creative, but work fast! You only have 10 minutes to put it together and only 4 minutes max to present it! Use your own language but be accurate.

**Some questions you need to answer:**

? If this was part of a campaign, who would need this information? What would you want it to achieve? So what are the most important points to make?

**Some background information:**

- The term FGM covers all harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes.
- There are four types – all have serious health risks.
- FGM ranges from pricking or cauterising (burning) the genital area, through partial or total removal of the clitoris, cutting the labia (vaginal 'lips') and narrowing the vaginal opening.
- Even partial removal or 'nipping' can risk serious health problems for girls and women.
- FGM is usually performed by someone with no medical training.
- Girls are given no anaesthetic, no antiseptic treatment and are often forcibly restrained.
- The cutting is made using instruments such as a knife, pair of scissors, scalpel, glass or razor blade.
- FGM can be extremely painful and dangerous. It can cause:
  - severe pain
  - shock
  - bleeding
  - infection such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
  - organ damage
  - blood loss and infections that can cause death in some cases
- There are serious long-term effects. Girls and women who have had FGM may have problems that continue through adulthood, including:
  - difficulties urinating or incontinence
  - frequent or chronic vaginal, pelvic or urinary infections (affecting the bladder and/urethra – the 'tube' you pee through)
  - menstrual problems (problems with periods)
  - kidney damage and possible failure
  - cysts and abscesses
  - pain when having sex
  - infertility
  - complications during pregnancy and childbirth
  - emotional and mental health problems\*.
- **FGM has no health benefits at all**

\* Another team is dealing with this.



# Your team task

Team: 'The Counsellors'

## Team: 'The Counsellors'

**Your brief is to raise awareness and get across important points related to the psychological/emotional aspects of FGM and its consequences. Some background information is provided to help you create your presentation.**

**You can choose how to present this – here are a few ideas:**

- As an interview or report for the news on TV
- As a very short scene from a drama (or other role play) where a survivor of FGM is talking about the effects and their feelings.
- By writing, as a team, a leaflet on 'FGM and psychological health' and reading it out.
- By creating an info graphic to go on a website – use the flipchart paper and markers to create a draft version you can present.

Be creative, but work fast! You only have 10 minutes to put it together and only 4 minutes max to present it! Use your own language but be accurate.

### Some questions you need to answer:

? If this was part of a campaign, who would need this information? What would you want it to achieve? So what are the most important points to make?

### Some background information:

- FGM is child abuse – both physical and emotional abuse.
- As well as the physical effects of FGM there are major psychological and emotional effects
- Young girls are often terrified by the experience which stays with them into adulthood
- Women who are survivors of FGM often suffer severe psychological trauma, including:
  - Having 'flashbacks' (where they 're-live' the experience)
  - Depression
- Psychological/emotional distress can be caused both by the extreme pain, fear and often humiliation felt at the time and the inability to talk about it afterwards.
- They might have a feeling of shame or fear the consequences of speaking about it.

**The following account of one woman's experience as a child and the effect it had on her is a short extract from a 'case study' from 'Female Genital Mutilation (fgm) The facts' published by the Home Office:**

*"When I was 'circumcised' I was five or six. It started as a ceremony – I was bought clothes, gold earrings and bangles. I had henna put on my hands and feet, it was like a celebration and I was the centre of attention.*

*The equipment they use is handmade: a sharp curved knife which is not sterilised. And I was given no anaesthetic. They left a little hole for urination. There were no stitches but they treated the wound with herbs, salt and water. It bled a lot and I was in great pain. I was horribly frightened and crying."*

### She goes on to say...

*"Many families in Britain take girls to their country of origin to have FGM carried out. It is a holiday, they see family and the countryside and are then 'circumcised'. When they return, they tell the girl not to talk about it. They say the Government will take her away from her family, and that she will lose all she has in the UK."*

Visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for female genital mutilation

- Women who survive FGM can suffer long-term effects on their relationships – both sexual relationships and others.
- They might be angry at family members involved in their FGM.
- There might be mixed feelings. For example she might still love her mother, perhaps accepting that she was under pressure, maybe recognising that she thought she was doing the right thing for her daughter – but at the same time could feel really angry at what her mother caused or allowed to happen.
- **Many people say it never goes away.**

*Thanks to NSPCC, FORWARD, GOV.UK publications, FGM National Clinical Group for material used to create these handouts*



# Your team task

Team: 'The Culture Crew'

## Team: 'The Culture Crew'

**Your brief is to raise awareness and get across important points related to the traditional, cultural and (non) religious aspects of FGM. Some background information is provided to help you create your presentation.**

**You can choose how to present this – here are a few ideas:**

- As a very short scene from a drama or other role play where a survivor of FGM is talking about the situation in which their FGM took place e.g. related to their family, cultural traditions.
- By writing, as a team, a leaflet on 'FGM tradition, culture and faith' and reading it out.
- By creating an info graphic to go on a website – use the flipchart paper and markers to create a draft version you can present.

Be creative, but work fast! You only have 10 minutes to put it together and only 4 minutes max to present it! Use your own language but be accurate.

### Some questions you need to answer:

- ? If this was part of a campaign, who would need this information? What would you want it to achieve? So what are the most important points to make?

### Some background information:

- **The practice is supported by traditional beliefs, values and attitudes.**
- FGM is practised in more than 28 countries in Africa, parts of the Middle East, South East Asia, Europe, America and other countries where migrants from FGM-affected communities live. FGM is also practised in the UK on girls from FGM affected communities.
- In the UK, the Home Office has identified girls from the Somali, Kenyan, Sudanese, Sierra Leonean, Egyptian, Nigerian, Eritrean, Yemeni, Kurdish and Indonesian communities as most at risk.
- It is common for it to happen to girls aged 5 to 8 but also happens to teenagers – it can also happen at any age before getting married or having a baby. It is estimated that 23,000 girls under 15 could be at risk.
- Usually it is a girl's parents or her extended family who are responsible for arranging FGM.
- **Some of the reasons given for the continued practice of FGM include:**
  - Protecting family honour
  - Preserving tradition
  - Ensuring a woman's chastity
  - Cleanliness (\*NB it is a **myth** that the vagina will be 'dirty' without FGM. In fact FGM can make the vagina less hygienic)
  - As a preparation for marriage.
- In many countries FGM must happen before a woman can marry and marriage is vital to a woman's social and economic survival. It is believed by some African women that if their daughters are not circumcised they won't get a husband.
- So, families often see FGM as an act of love, rather than cruelty – but it causes significant harm and is physical and emotional abuse. FGM is considered to be child abuse in the UK and is a violation of the child's right to life, their bodily integrity as well as of their right to health.
- **FGM is not only illegal in the UK but it is also illegal in a growing number of countries where this cultural practice has been common, such as:** ● Benin ● Central African Republic ● Chad ● Cote d'Ivoire ● Djibouti ● Egypt ● Eritrea ● Ethiopia ● Ghana ● Guinea ● Kenya ● Niger ● Nigeria ● Senegal ● Tanzania ● Togo ● Uganda
- **So, FGM is rooted in culture. Some believe it is done for religious reasons, but FGM is not supported by any religious teaching.** It has not been confined to a particular culture or religion.



## Your team task Team: 'The Culture Crew'

- **Any kind of FGM, including a symbolic prick to the clitoris, has no link with Islam.** It has not been mentioned in the Qu'ran and is neither a requirement nor a 'Sunna' in Islam. Globally most Muslims do not practise FGM.
- In fact The Islamic Shari'a Council, the Muslim College and the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) have condemned the practice of FGM within the Muslim community.
- Here is a quote from an Islamic leader:

*"In Islam it is forbidden to mutilate the body, in this sense Female Genital Mutilation is condemnable as it irreversibly harms the woman. It is also prohibited to compel an individual to undertake this operation."*

### **Imam Abu Sayeed Chairman of the Islamic Shari'a Council**

- FGM is not supported either, by Christian or Jewish teachings, or the Bible or Torah (Jewish law).
- **FGM is not the same as male circumcision**, where a small piece of foreskin covering the end of the penis is removed, without harm to the penis. **Male circumcision is legal.**
- **So, contrary to what many people think, FGM is not a religious requirement or obligation.**



# Your team task

Team: 'The Protectors'

## Team: 'The Protectors'

**Your brief is to raise awareness, get across important points and to come up with some ideas for this school related to preventing FGM and protecting girls and women. Some background information is provided to help you create your presentation. You can choose how to present this – here are a few ideas:**

- As an interview or report for the news on TV .
- As a very short scene from a drama set in a school or other role play where a class is being taught about FGM, students are planning a campaign or staff are responding to FGM.
- By creating an info graphic to go on a website – use the flipchart paper and markers to create a draft version you can present.
- **NB: Your presentation should give ideas for what could be done in this school and other schools to help people get educated and to prevent FGM & protect girls – even in an all boys school.**

Be creative, but work fast! You only have 10 minutes to put it together and only 4 minutes max to present it! Use your own language but be accurate.

### Some questions you need to answer:

- ? If this was part of a campaign, who would need this information? What would you want it to achieve? So what are the most important points to make?

### Some background information:

- **What to look out for before FGM happens:**
- A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about:
  - being taken 'home' to visit family
  - a special occasion to 'become a woman'
  - an older female relative visiting the UK.
- She may ask a teacher or another adult for help if she suspects FGM is going to happen or she may run away from home or miss school.
- **Suspicious may arise in a number of ways that a child is being prepared for FGM to take place abroad. These include:**
  - knowing both that the family belongs to a community in which FGM is practised and is making preparations for the child to take a holiday, arranging vaccinations or planning absence from school.
- The child may also talk about a special procedure/ceremony that is going to take place.
- **What if it might have already happened and she needs help?**
- A girl or woman who's had FGM may:
  - have difficulty walking, sitting or standing
  - spend longer than normal in the bathroom or toilet
  - have unusual behaviour after an absence from school or college
  - be particularly reluctant to undergo normal medical examinations
  - ask for help, but may not be explicit about the problem due to embarrassment or fear.
- If a child has already undergone FGM she should be offered medical help and counselling. Professionals should also take action to protect any other children in the family and to investigate possible risk to others in the community.
- **What do you do if you are concerned about someone who is at risk of FGM?**
  - FGM is child abuse and against the law. Professionals and other people who are worried a child is at risk can call the FGM Helpline on **0800 028 3550**.
  - Families who practise FGM don't think of it as abuse. Professionals need to give families advice and information that is sensitive to their culture and beliefs, but they need to make clear that FGM is illegal.



## Your team task Team: 'The Protectors'

- If a local authority has reason to believe a child is likely to suffer FGM it can apply for a court order to prevent the child being taken abroad for mutilation. This should be to prevent the child from undergoing FGM rather than removing her from her family.
- It is the law that all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales. must make a report to the police, if, in the course of their duties they are informed by a girl under the age of 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM or they observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.
- **What should a girl do if she is worried she may be at risk of FGM?**
  - Talk to someone she trusts, maybe a teacher or a school nurse. They are here to help and protect her.
  - She should remember that no one is allowed to hurt her physically or emotionally, and FGM is not allowed in this country. Also nobody is allowed to take or send girls out of the country for FGM.
  - She can get help: **call the NSPCC FGM Helpline on 0800 028 3550 for more information or email them at [fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk)**
- **NB** FGM is a term used by most health professionals. Women themselves may however refer to it as circumcision – although it is not like male circumcision. Although “mutilation” is accurate can be seen as judgemental and can be offensive and in some situations the term Female Genital Cutting is a more sensitive term to use.