

# Female Genital Cutting

English



**Female Genital Cutting (FGC) is against the law in all States and Territories of Australia. It is also against the law to take a girl to another country to be cut. FGC harms the health and wellbeing of girls and women.**

## What is FGC?

FGC is the cutting or removing of part or all of a girl's external genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is sometimes called female circumcision or female genital mutilation.

FGC is usually carried out as part of long-standing tradition and cultural beliefs. Many communities around the world are making it illegal.

## How does FGC affect health?

All types of cutting damages or removes healthy tissue and can cause serious harm in the short term or for life. This may include:

- > pain, bleeding, infection
- > problems passing urine
- > problems with menstrual flow
- > pain during periods and sexual intercourse
- > difficulty having children
- > problems during childbirth
- > emotional and psychological pain or trauma.

**Parents of girls can feel family or community pressure to practise FGC even after coming to Australia. If this happens, remember Australian law always comes first. FGC is a crime and serious penalties apply.**



## Getting help

Get help straight away if anyone you know is at risk of being cut or taken to another country to be cut. You could:

- > contact a service. They are confidential. You can ask for a female interpreter
- > call the Police. You can talk to a policewoman
- > call the Child Abuse Report Line.

If you have been cut or are not sure if you've been cut, you can talk to your doctor, women's health service or health worker about:

- > any physical, emotional or other concerns
- > treatment options
- > being pregnant or planning a pregnancy
- > getting a check-up.

Seek help straight away if a girl is at risk of being cut. There are services that can help.

## Services

### If you are worried about someone's safety

#### Police

000 if someone is in danger right now  
13 14 44 if there is danger, but not right now

#### Child Abuse Report Line

13 14 78 any time day or night  
If a girl you know may be at risk  
[www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse](http://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse)

#### Domestic Violence Crisis Line

1800 800 098 any time day or night  
Help with violence, emergency accommodation and referrals  
[www.womenssafetyervices.com.au](http://www.womenssafetyervices.com.au)

#### Legal Services Commission of SA

Advice Line 1300 366 424, 9am-4.30pm, Mon to Fri  
Free, urgent and general legal advice [www.lsc.sa.gov.au](http://www.lsc.sa.gov.au)

#### Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

13 14 50 for free phone interpreter any time day or night  
[www.tisnational.gov.au](http://www.tisnational.gov.au)

### If you need health care, support, information or advice

#### Refugee Health Service

8237 3900 or 1800 635 566 (country callers) 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
21 Market Street, Adelaide  
Health service for newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers

#### SHINE SA

Sexual Healthline 1300 883 793 or 1800 188 171 (country callers)  
9am-12.30pm, Mon to Fri for confidential advice  
Information in a number of languages [www.shinesa.org.au](http://www.shinesa.org.au)

#### Women's Health Service

8444 0700, 9am-5pm, Mon to Fri  
47 Dale Street, Port Adelaide (also at Elizabeth and Hillcrest)  
Free, confidential women's health clinics [www.whs.sa.gov.au](http://www.whs.sa.gov.au)

#### Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

1300 555 135 any time day or night if you are in Australia and need help  
+61 2 6261 3305, SMS +61 421 269 080 if you are overseas  
<http://dfat.gov.au>

#### Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

The National Education Toolkit for Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Awareness (NETFA) [www.netfa.com.au](http://www.netfa.com.au)

This Parent Easy Guide is one of 9 developed by Parenting SA for families from new and emerging multicultural communities in South Australia. We would like to thank the many services and families that generously contributed their knowledge and expertise to the Guides, especially families and staff members whose photographs appear in them.

Parenting SA is a partnership of the Department for Education and the Women's and Children's Health Network.

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[www.parenting.sa.gov.au](http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au)

Parent Easy Guides are free in South Australia

Important: This information is not intended to replace advice from a qualified practitioner.

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