



MY BODY, MY RULES



**Information about
Female Genital Mutilation
(FGM)**

MY BODY MY RULES



I am in charge of my body.



I have a right to choose, to say yes or no.

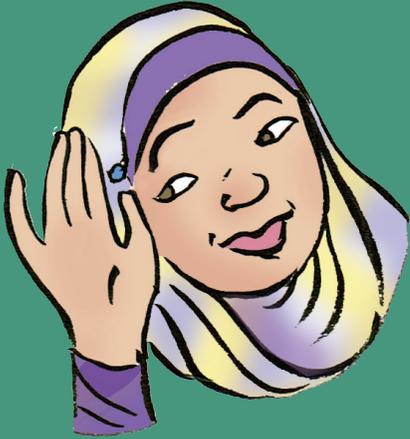


I have a right to be safe.



No one has the right to touch or change my body unless I agree.

SURPRISES or SECRETS

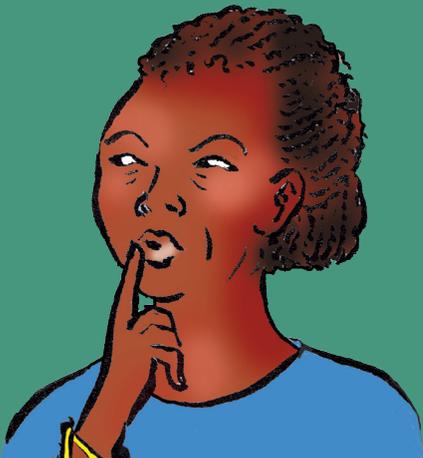


SURPRISES are things that people will find out soon, like a special trip, birthday presents or a new baby coming. Surprises can be fun and make you feel happy and excited.

SECRETS are things that people tell you that you would be scared to tell someone else. Secrets can make you feel worried or sad or frightened.



Someone might tell you they will harm you if you do not keep the secret. **THIS IS WRONG.**



This booklet is about FGM – Female Genital Mutilation – which is often kept secret.

WHAT IS FGM?



F: Female: it only happens to girls and women.

G: Genitals: the vulva, the area between a girl's legs.

M: Mutilation: when someone changes the vulva in a way that hurts.



FGM is abuse.

The vulva

opening to the **urethra** (where urine comes out)

clitoris (sensitive bump)

labia (lips) surround the opening to the **vagina**

vagina (where babies are born from)



WHAT HARM DOES FGM DO?

FGM makes it hard to go to the toilet.

FGM hurts women throughout their life.

FGM can make it difficult to have a baby.

FGM is dangerous.



FGM happens in **Africa**, parts of the **Middle East** and **South East Asia**. Some FGM happens in **England**, or to girls and women who live in England.

Sometimes girls are taken away for a holiday and it happens then.

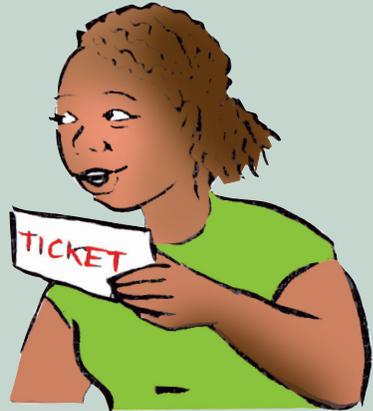
Girls are sometimes asked to keep these trips a secret.



FGM IS ILLEGAL

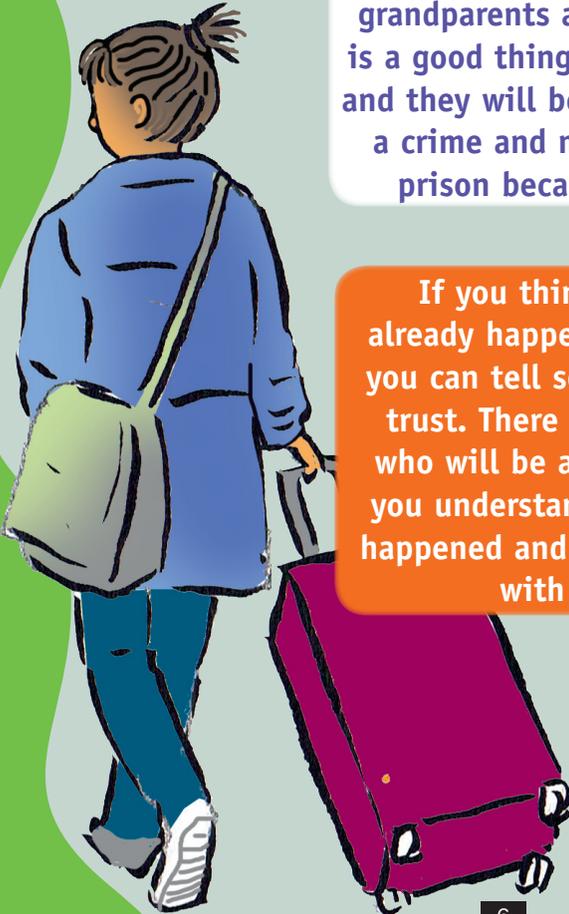
It is against the law to carry out FGM on any girl or woman in the UK.

It is also against the law to make any arrangements around it, like booking the flights to go to a country where it will happen.



So even if parents or grandparents are saying it is a good thing, it is illegal and they will be committing a crime and might go to prison because of it.

If you think it has already happened to you, you can tell someone you trust. There are people who will be able to help you understand what has happened and how to deal with it.



BREAKING A SECRET



If you are a girl who has been asked to keep a secret about where you are going on holiday **it is ok to break this secret** because you are protecting yourself.

If you have a friend who has told you they have been asked to keep a secret about going away it is ok to break this secret too because you are protecting your friend from being hurt.



DEPARTURES



If you think FGM has already happened to you or someone else, you can still get help now.



WHO CAN WE TELL?

Talk to an adult you trust. This could be a teacher or another adult at school, a doctor or youth worker.

Phone the FGM Helpline on 0800 028 3550. This is a bit like Childline, you can tell the adults you talk to here anything.

If words are hard to find, write it down. You can write it in a letter and give it to someone you trust.

People WILL believe you and they will help you, or your friend.



CONTACTS

FORWARD:

www.forwarduk.org.uk

NSPCC FGM Helpline: 0800 028 3550

Daughters of Eve:

www.dofeve.org

Integrate Bristol: www.integratebristol.org.uk

The Orchid Project:

www.orchidproject.org



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