

ECB Guidance on specific concerns arising for children outside of cricket

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILITATION.

There are a number of potential risks to children and young people in society. Through a child's involvement in cricket we may become aware of potential risks for particular children.

Section 2 of the ECB's "Safe Hands Policy and Procedures" includes the document 'Definitions of Abuse, Cricket examples of possible Abuse, and Common Indicators of Possible Abuse'. The indicators that something may be amiss for a child include unexplained or suspicious injuries, unexplained changes in mood or behaviour and things a child may say. A number of other possible indicators are also provided.

The purpose of this guidance sheet is to offer direction around specific risks to some children, things to be aware of or look out for, and what to do if you have concerns.

Female Genital Mutilation

The NSPCC describes Female genital mutilation (FGM) as "the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons" and points out that whilst "religious, social or cultural reasons" are sometimes provided for FGM, it is, nonetheless child abuse. It is dangerous and causes long-term harm to the girls involved. It sometimes referred to as 'female cutting' or 'female circumcision'.

It is illegal in the United Kingdom to carry out FGM, to assist a girl to 'mutilate her own genitalia', to assist a 'non-UK person to mutilate overseas a girl's genitalia' or to 'fail to protect a girl from risk of FGM'.

Approximately 60,000 girls under 15 are at risk of FGM in the UK (www.forward.org.uk)

Anyone involved in cricket may become aware of a potential risk to a girl they know.

The Government guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015" places a duty on Local Safeguarding Children Boards to commission and deliver services for children who have undergone or may undergo female genital mutilation, and to have a clear referral process for concerns.

Is FGM associated with religion?

FGM is not associated with any particular religion nor is it supported by any religious texts. Many religious leaders condemn the practice. However, some people still think the two are linked and claim religious teachings support FGM.

NSPCC Guidance

The NSPCC guidance, at <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-abuse-and-neglect/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/> provides helpful advice on what to look at for and what to do if you have concerns. Our thanks to the NSPCC for the following:

Who is affected?

Most girls are aged 5 to 8, but FGM can happen at any age before getting married or having a baby. Some girls are babies when FGM is carried out.

Putting things in place

Girls living in communities that practice FGM are most at risk. 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 risk of FGM (however, FGM is also practiced in other countries in the Middle East and in Asia)

(House of Commons International Development Committee, 2013)

What to look out for

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*

If you have any concerns that a child may have experienced FGM, or that it may be planned, please share your concerns with the Club or County Welfare officer, the ECB Safeguarding Team, local Children's Services / Police, or the

**NSPCC FGM helpline on
0800 028 3550**