

THE VAVENGERS



Support information

www.thevavengers.co.uk

Inside



*"When women rise,
we all rise."*

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What is a Vavengers hub?

The Vavengers pop-up support hubs are safe spaces open to all women affected by or at risk of GBV. The sessions run once a month, on selected days at different pop-up locations across London. They include a well-being session, an educational session, and free supplies for participants. The sessions are run by survivors, campaigners and healthcare and wellness experts, who are trained and ready to provide the necessary support and guidance for whomever may need it.

To book your place at a pop-up hub please visit our website: www.thevavengers.co.uk/services

Who are the Vavengers?

The Vavengers is a UK-based charity that is led by and supports survivors of FGM/C and all other forms of GBV. FGM/C isn't just a singular event; it is part of a greater cycle of oppression with devastating, life-long physical and psychological consequences. We understand that the communities we work with often experience multiple forms of disadvantage so, our work seeks to stop all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

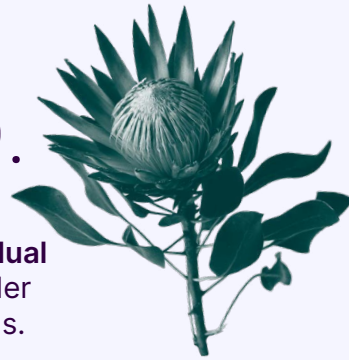
Ending Gender Based Violence (GBV) and supporting those affected requires the energy of everybody, regardless of location and gender.



Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

GBV refers to harmful acts directed at an individual based on their gender (U.N.). It is rooted in gender inequality, the abuse of power, and harmful norms. VAWG is an act of GBV against women and girls.

GBV can include: sexual, physical, mental and economic harm inflicted in public or in private. It also includes threats of violence, coercion and manipulation. This can take many forms such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour crimes'.



Gender-Based Violence can happen to **anyone**.



Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) as:

“All procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons” (2014).

FGM/C is a violation of the child and woman.

It is child abuse and illegal in the United Kingdom (UK). It is mostly carried out by traditional circumcisers, who often play other central roles in communities such as attending childbirths.

Increasingly, however, FGM/C is being performed by health providers in many countries. Around 1 in 4 women and girls who were subjected to FGM/C, had it performed by a health personnel.

Terminology

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Is an advocacy term, used in legal documents including laws e.g. The UK has “The FGM Act 2003”. Some survivors view FGM as a negative term.

Female Genital Cutting (FGC)

is viewed as an alternative option (used primarily by US agencies).

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

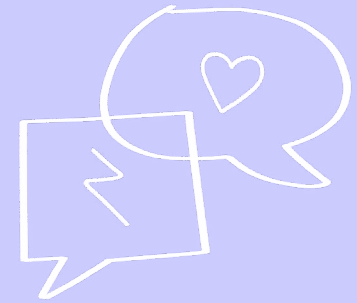
is the inclusive compromise that many organisations, like The Vavengers, choose to use.

Female Circumcision

is an inappropriate term widely used.

Sunna

is another term widely used by communities however, should not be encouraged.



TRIGGER WARNING

The following page contains images that may be disturbing to viewers

For support with anything you find difficult here, visit our website for free wellness techniques:
www.thevavengers.co.uk/wellness

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

FGM/C is the cutting or removal of the external female genitals. FGM/C is often performed by non-medically trained people. It results in lifelong pain, trauma, health and emotional problems.

The 4 main types of FGM/C are below:

If you or someone you know is at risk of FGM/C, please call 999 in urgent and 101 in non-urgent situations.

Alternatively, if you or someone you know is being pressured to perform FGM on a girl or woman, get in touch with us at info@thevavengers.co.uk. We will inform you on support systems, reporting lines and services available.



Type 1
(or Clitoridectomy)

Clitoris or clitoral hood
is cut off.



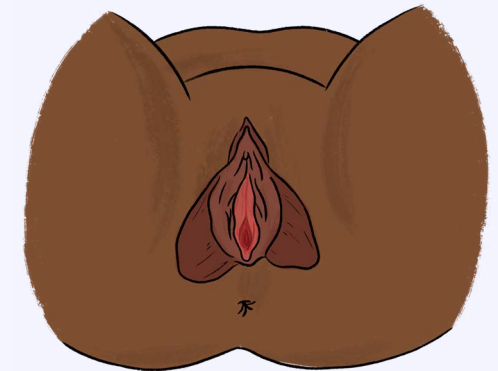
Type 2
(or Intermediate)

Clitoris and inner lips
are removed.



Type 3
(or Infibulation)

Clitoris, inner and outer lips are
removed. The remaining skin
is stitched or sealed leaving
a small opening.

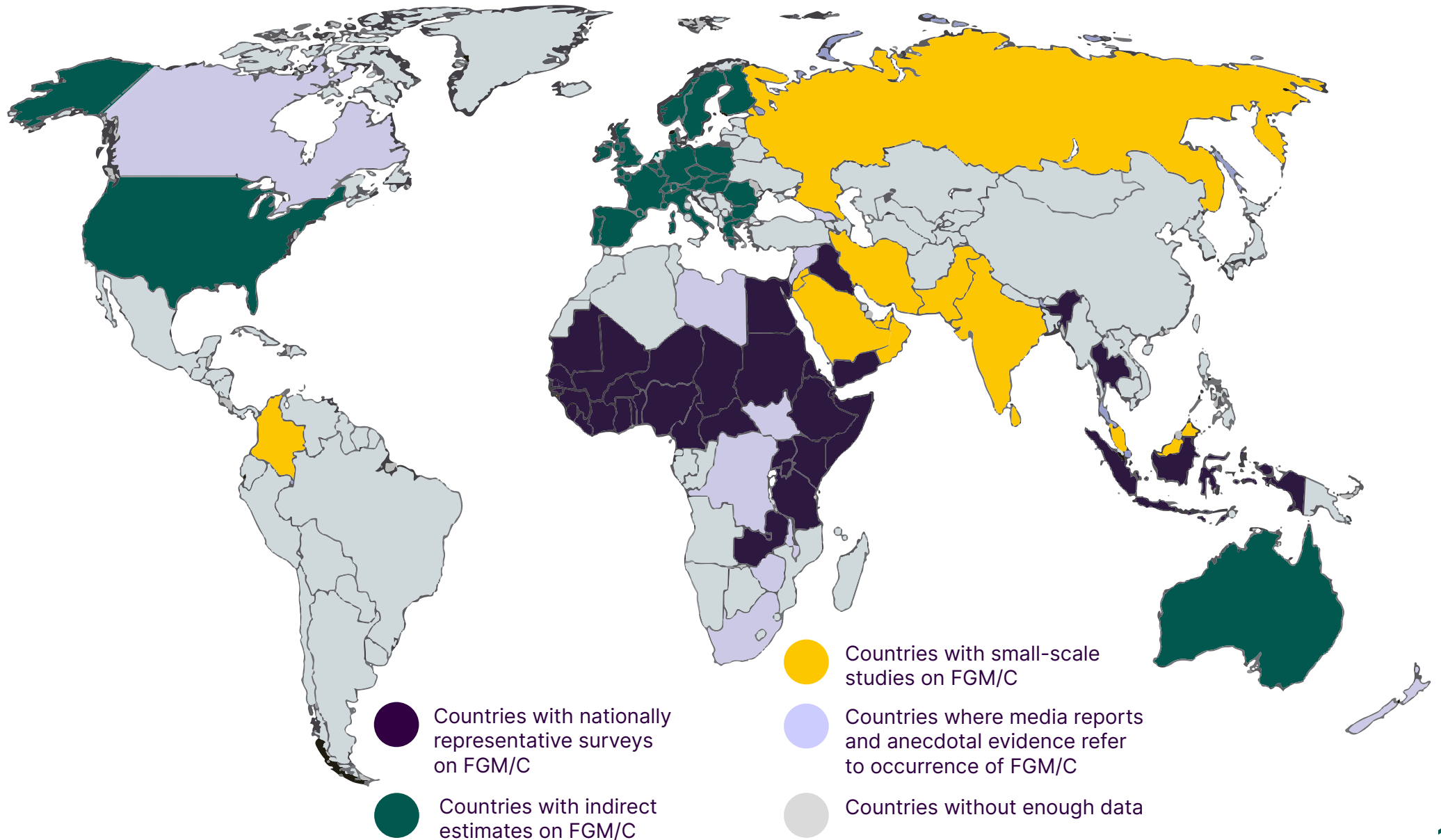


Type 4
(or other harmful procedures)

Including: piercing, pricking,
stretching, scraping, burning,
cutting and introducing
corrosives/herbs.

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

FGM/C is global. It is present in at least 92 countries around the world. However data on FGM/C is underrepresentative of the scale of the issue.



Other forms of abuse →



✘ Economic

Economic violence involves making or attempting to make a person financially dependent by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding access to money, and/or forbidding attendance at school or employment.

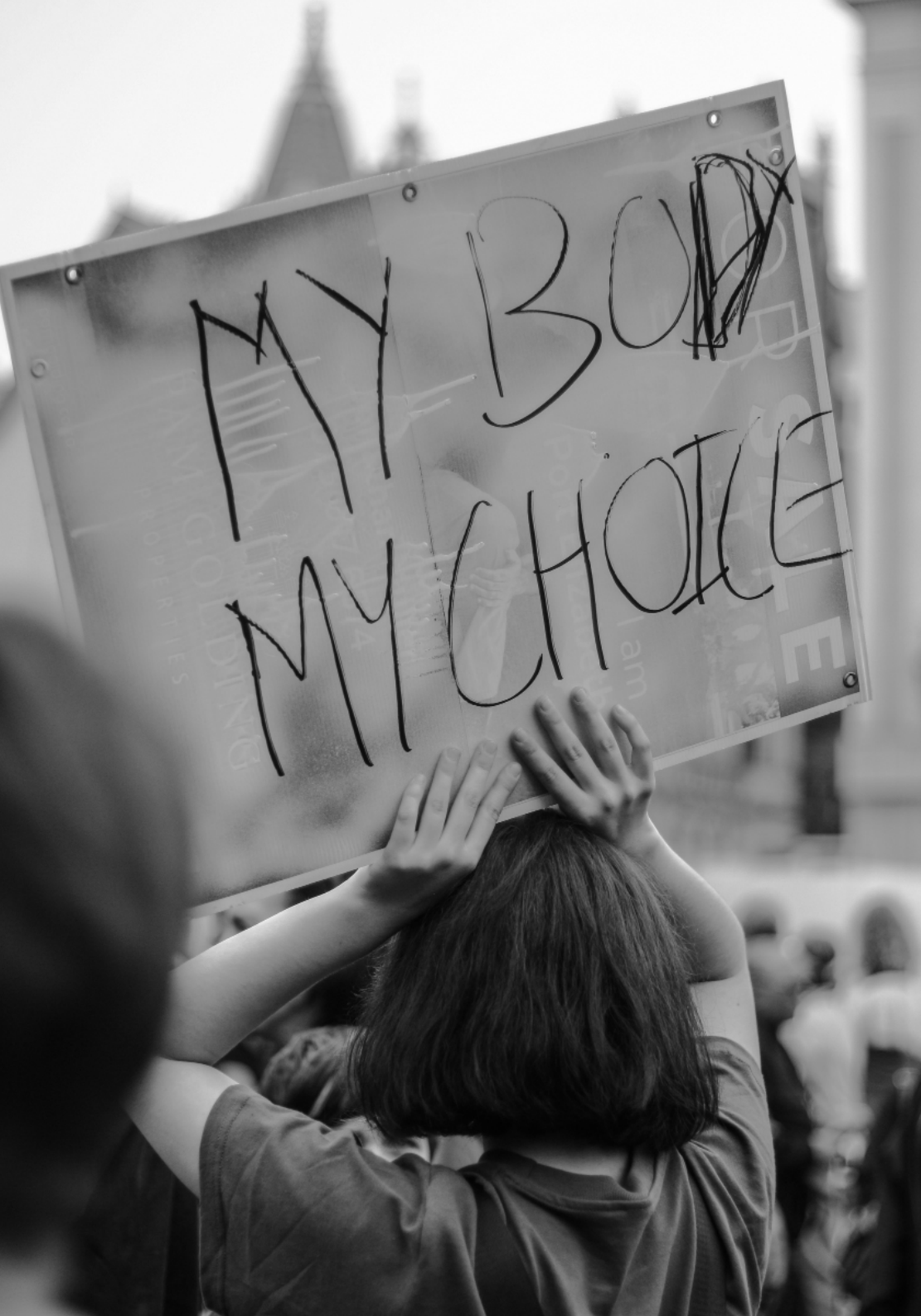


✘ Psychological

Psychological violence involves causing fear by intimidation; threatening physical harm to self, partner or children; destruction of pets and property; "mind games"; or forcing isolation from friends, family, school and/or work.

✘ Emotional

Emotional violence includes undermining a person's sense of self-worth through constant criticism; belittling one's abilities; name-calling or other verbal abuse; damaging a partner's relationship with their children, or not letting a partner see friends and family.



✘ Physical

Physical violence involves hurting or trying to hurt a partner by hitting, kicking, burning, grabbing, pinching, shoving, slapping, hair-pulling, biting, denying medical care or, forcing alcohol and/or drug use, or using other physical force. It may include property damage.

✘ Sexual

Sexual violence involves forcing a person to take part in a sex act when the person does not consent. If the person being sexually abused was quiet throughout the attack, it still counts as abuse - as it's against one's consent.

See more about sexual violence and consent on the following pages.

Sexual violence

Sexual violence is any sexual act committed against the will of another person, either when this person does not give consent or when consent cannot be given because the person is a child, has a mental disability, or is severely intoxicated or unconscious as a result of alcohol or drugs.

Sexual violence can include the following:

- **Sexual harassment**
encompasses non-consensual physical contact, like grabbing, pinching, slapping, or rubbing against another person in a sexual way. It also includes non-physical forms, such as catcalls, sexual comments about a person's body or appearance, demands for sexual favors, sexually suggestive staring, stalking, and exposing one's sex organs.
- **Rape**
is any non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of another person with any bodily part or object. This can be by any person known or unknown to the survivor, within marriage and relationships, and during armed conflict.
- **Corrective rape**
is a form of rape of perpetrated against someone on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is intended to force the victim to conform to heterosexuality or normative gender identity.
- **Rape culture**
is the social environment that allows sexual violence to be normalized and justified. It is rooted in patriarchy and fueled by persistent gender inequalities and biases about gender and sexuality.

Online or digital violence



Online or digital violence against women and girls refers to any act of violence that is committed, assisted or aggravated by the use of information and communication technology (mobile phones, the Internet, social media, computer games, text messaging, email, etc) against a woman or girl based on their gender.

Online violence can include the following:

- **Cyberbullying**
involves the sending of intimidating or threatening messages.
- **Non-consensual sexting**
involves the sending of explicit messages or photos without the recipient's consent.
- **Doxing**
involves the public release of private or identifying information about the victim.

Domestic violence



Domestic abuse, also called “domestic violence” or “intimate partner violence”, can be defined as **a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner.** Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person.

This includes any behaviours that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Anyone can be a victim of domestic violence, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith or class.

Domestic abuse includes: Physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, financial and economic.

Forced marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities or reduced capacity, cannot) consent to the marriage as they are pressurised, or abuse is used, to force them to do so. It is recognised in the UK as a form of domestic or child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

✘ Legislation on forced marriage

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 made it a criminal offence in England, Wales and Scotland to force someone to marry. (It is a criminal offence in Northern Ireland under separate legislation).

This includes:

- taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
- marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they are pressured to or not)

Forcing someone to marry can result in a sentence of up to 7 years in prison. It is also possible for victims or those at risk to apply for a Forced Marriage Protection Order (FMPO). As a civil law measure, an application for an FMPO would be made in the family court.

Scan for more information on forced marriage and your rights in the UK:



Child marriage

Child marriage refers to any marriage where one or both spouses are below the age of 18. It is a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.” Girls are more likely to be child brides, and consequently drop out of school and experience other forms of violence.

Honour-based abuse

Honour-based abuse is a crime or incident committed to protect or defend the 'honour' of a family or community.

If your family or community think you've shamed or embarrassed them by behaving in a certain way, they may punish you for breaking their 'honour' code.

People who carry out honour-based abuse are often close family members but they may also be extended family or community members.

Consent

No means No. Yes means Yes. Consent is an agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity or enter into marriage. It must be freely and actively given and cannot be provided by someone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or by someone underage. Silence does not count as consent.

Consent is specific, meaning that consent to one act does not imply consent to any others, and reversible, meaning that it may be revoked at any time.



Stalking or harassment

Stalking and harassment is when someone repeatedly behaves in a way that makes you feel scared, distressed or threatened. There are different types of stalking and harassment, and anyone can be a victim.

Stalking and harassment are offences under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.

Harassment may include:

- bullying at school or in the workplace
- cyber stalking or harassment (using the internet to harass someone)
- antisocial behaviour
- sending abusive text messages
- sending unwanted gifts
- unwanted phone calls, letters, emails or visits

Sexual harassment is another, serious form of abuse.

Some examples would include:

- sexual comments, jokes or gestures
- staring or leering at someone's body
- using names like 'slut' or 'whore'
- unwanted sexual communications, like emails, texts, DMs
- sharing sexual photos or videos
- groping and touching
- someone exposing themselves
- pressuring someone to do sexual things or offering something in exchange for sex

If you've experienced any of these, **it is not your fault** and you do not have to put up with it.

You can report it to the police. **Call 999 if you or someone else is in immediate danger.** Contact your local police if it's not an emergency.

If you don't feel ready to contact the police yet, you can report anonymously to **Crimestoppers**.



Resources & support



Human trafficking and modern slavery

Human trafficking is the acquisition and exploitation of people, through means such as force, fraud, coercion, or deception. This heinous crime ensnares millions of women and girls worldwide, many of whom are sexually exploited.




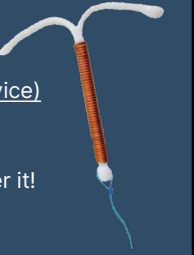


Modern slavery is the illegal exploitation of people for personal or commercial gain. It covers a wide range of abuse and exploitation including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, criminal exploitation and organ harvesting.

In an emergency, call 999

Contraception options

Speak to your doctor, midwife or sexual health nurse about finding an option that suits you.

Source: www.sexwise.org.uk

<p>CONDOMS</p> <p><u>External and Internal</u></p> <p>★★★★☆ Reasonably effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hormones • Remember before sex • Periods won't change <p>✓ Protection from STI's</p> 	<p>INJECTION</p> <p>★★★★☆ Effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hormones • Fit and forget • Periods may be lighter or stop <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p>FERTILITY AWARENESS</p> <p>★★★★☆ Reasonably effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hormones • Remember regularly • Periods won't change <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p>IMPLANT</p> <p>★★★★★ Very effective: no need to remember it!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hormones • Fit and forget • Periods may be lighter or stop <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 
<p>PILLS</p> <p><u>Combined pill (COC)</u></p> <p>★★★★☆ Effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hormones • Remember regularly • Periods regular and lighter <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p>COILS</p> <p><u>IUD (Intrauterine device)</u></p> <p>★★★★★ Very effective: no need to remember it!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hormones • Fit and forget • Periods sometimes get heavier <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p>STERILISATION</p> <p>★★★★★ Very effective: no need to remember it!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hormones • Fit and forget • Periods won't change <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p>VAGINAL RING</p> <p>★★★★☆ Effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hormones • Remember regularly • Periods regular and lighter <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 
<p><u>Progestogen-only pill (POP)</u></p> <p>★★★★☆ Effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hormones • Remember regularly • Periods may be lighter or stop <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p><u>IUS (Intrauterine system)</u></p> <p>★★★★★ Very effective: no need to remember it!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hormones • Fit and forget • Periods may be lighter or stop <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p>PATCH</p> <p>★★★★☆ Effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hormones • Remember regularly • Periods regular and lighter <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 	<p>DIAPHRAGMS AND CAPS</p> <p>★★★★☆ Reasonably effective: <u>best</u> when used perfectly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hormones • Remember before sex • Periods won't change <p>✗ No protection from STI's</p> 

Mental health

Samaritans

If you need someone to talk to, we listen.
We won't judge or tell you what to do.

▶ www.samaritans.org

24hr helpline:

☎ 116123

✉ jo@samaritans.org

Support Services

Charities working to end domestic abuse and violence against women and children. Contact the police on 999 if you think that a girl or woman is in immediate danger of FGM.

Refuge and Women's Aid

▶ refuge.org.uk
womensaid.org.uk

24hr helpline:

☎ 0808 2000 247

✉ helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Solace

▶ solacewomensaid.org

Open Mon - Fri 10am - 4pm

Tues 6pm - 8pm:

☎ 0808 802 5565

✉ advice@solacewomensaid.org

Women and Girls Network

▶ wgn.org.uk

Open Monday-Friday 10am-4pm and late evening
Wednesday 6pm-9pm

☎ 0808 801 0660

✉ info@respectphonenumber.org.uk

FGM/C

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Contact the Foreign and Commonwealth Office if the girl or woman at risk has already been taken abroad.

☎ 020 7008 1500

✉ fcocorrespondence@fco.gov.uk

FGM Helpline (NSPCC)

Project Azure

☎ 0800 028 3550

✉ fgm.help@nspcc.org.uk

Home Office FGM Unit

The Home Office co-ordinates efforts across government and offers outreach support to local areas.

▶ gov.uk/government/collections/female-genital-mutilation

✉ fgmenquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk

FORWARD

Tackling FGM/C, child marriage, domestic and sexual violence, and discrimination.

▶ forwarduk.org.uk

Open Monday to Friday from 9:30am to 5:30pm

☎ 07834 168 141

✉ support@forwarduk.org.uk

WHFS

Women's Health & Family Services

▶ whfs.org.uk

☎ 020 7377 8725

✉ enquiries@whfs.org.uk

FGM clinics - Gynaecological services

National FGM Support Clinics that offer support services for women (18+) with female genital mutilation. Their all-female team provide physical assessment and treatment, emotions support and counselling, general information, access to FGM Health Advocates and a special consultant if needed.

Sylvia Pankhurst (Primrose Clinic)

Open Monday-Thursday: 12pm to 8pm,

Friday: 9.30am to 5.30pm:

☎ 02073777898

📍 E1 4DG

Chingway Medical Centre (The WAHA Clinic)

Open Friday (every 2 weeks), walk-in service

☎ 02084307020

📍 E4 8YD

Christine Benson

Open Monday-Thursday

☎ 02072532288

📍 EC1Y 8RT

SMS Medical Practice (Hibiscus Clinic)

Open Tuesday 10-6 (every Tuesday), walk-in service

📍 HA0 4UZ

Edridge Practice (Calabash Clinic)

Open Monday (every 2 weeks)

📍 CR0 1FE

Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital (The Sunflower Clinic)

Open Fridays from 9am to 5pm

☎ 07730970738

📍 W12 0HS

African Women's Clinic

☎ 02034475241

📍 WC1E 6DB

African Well Woman's Clinic

▶ whittington.nhs.uk/default.asp?c=20021

☎ 020 7288 3482

✉ joy.clarke@nhs.net

📍 N19 5NF

Psychological Support

The Dahlia Project

We want to achieve an end to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) by creating safe spaces to support individuals and societies affected by FGM, protect children from harm and empower communities to lead change.

- ▶ dahliaproject.org
dahlia@manorgardenscentre.org

Safe Spaces for Black Women

A safe space for Black women affected by COVID-19, the current political system, racism, patriarchy and mental health, where Black women can express and explore their experience in the world through virtual meet-ups with a qualified therapist providing support.

- ▶ safespacesforblackwomen.com/
✉ info@safespacesforblackwomen.com

LGBTQ+ support

Gallop

For LGBT+ people who have or are experiencing domestic abuse. We are also here for people supporting a survivor of domestic abuse; friends, families and those working with a survivor.

- ▶ galop.org.uk
Open Monday to Friday 10am – 5pm, Wednesday and Thursday 10am – 8:00pm
☎ 0800 999 5428
✉ help@galop.org.uk

Terrence Higgings Trust

Since 1982 we've been supporting people impacted by HIV and poor sexual health.

- ▶ ttht.org.uk
Open Monday to Friday, 10:00 - 18:00, Saturday to Sunday, 10:00 - 13:00
☎ 0808 802 1221

- ✉ info@ttht.org.uk.

Forced Marriage

Forced Marriage Unit

How to protect, advise and support victims of forced marriage – information and practice guidelines for professionals.

- ▶ gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage
Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
☎ 020 7008 0151
✉ fmu@fcdo.gov.uk

Honour Based Abuse

Karma Nirvana

Working to end Honour Based Abuse in the UK

- ▶ karmanirvana.org.uk
Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
☎ 0800 5999 247
✉ support@karmanirvana.org.uk

Rape

Rape Crisis

Charity working to end sexual violence and abuse

- ▶ rapecrisis.org.uk
Open Monday - Thursday: 1pm - 5pm, 6pm - 9pm, Friday: 2pm - 5pm
☎ 0808 802 9999
✉ rcewinfo@rapecrisis.org.uk

Legal Support

Rights of Women

Legal advice to help women through the law (information on domestic violence, child contact, sexual violence, the criminal justice process, immigration and asylum)

▶ rightsofwomen.org.uk

✉ info@row.org.uk

Affordable Justice

A women-run law firm that specialises in the provision of legal advice, assistance, and representation exclusively to women

▶ affordablejustice.co.uk

☎ 01482 711003

✉ info@affordablejustice.co.uk

Stalking and Harassment

National Stalking Helpline

Our mission is to reduce the risk of violence and aggression through campaigning, education and support

▶ suzylamplugh.org

Open Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4pm (except Wednesday 9:30am to 8pm)

☎ 0808 802 0300

✉ info@suzylamplugh.org

Sexual Health

Sexwise

Here to give you honest advice about contraception, pregnancy, STIs and pleasure.

▶ sexwise.org.uk

Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm, Saturday and Sunday, 11am to 4pm

☎ 0300 123 7123

Children

Childline

Here to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through.

▶ childline.org.uk

Open 24hr

☎ 0800 1111

Employability

Young Women's Trust

A feminist organisation working to achieve economic justice for young women: get free coaching and job application feedback with our Work It Out service.

▶ youngwomenstrust.org

☎ 020 7837 2019

✉ contact@youngwomenstrust.org

Perpetrators

Respect Phonenumber

A confidential helpline, email and webchat service for domestic abuse perpetrators and those supporting them.

► respectphoneline.org.uk

Open Monday–Thursday 10am–8pm, and Friday
10am–5pm

☎ 0808 8024040

✉ info@respectphoneline.org.uk

Sources

Consent
Sexual Violence
Human trafficking and modern slavery
Child marriage
Online or digital violence

www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/faqs/types-of-violence

Honour-based abuse

www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/honour-based-abuse/honour-based-abuse

Other

www.gov.uk



The Vavengers' services

We are a survivor-led organisation, standing with and for every woman affected by Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) – we will help end it together.

We will try to support you with anything you need, whether that means through our own services or connecting you to others in our network.

Our work takes 3 forms:

1

Community outreach hubs in the UK that support vulnerable woman's physical, psychological, and legal needs with a focus on FGM/C and VAWG.

2

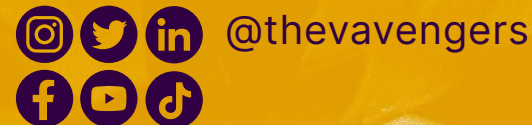
Educational workshops about FGM/C and VAWG with businesses and organisations, including healthcare professionals.

3

National and international campaigns to ensure FGM/C and VAWG is on the political and social agenda.

Get in touch

www.thevavengers.co.uk



To find a support hub near you scan the QR code, or visit:
www.thevavengers.co.uk/services

Hoda Ali,
Co-founder of The Vavengers

“ONCE I HAD
THE *knowledge*
ABOUT FGM/C,
IT WAS LIKE
GETTING
my body BACK.”

