



Community Conversations:
An Introduction to Female Genital Cutting (FGC)



www.brycs.org

1



Welcome!

Thank you for participating in this peer exchange and your interest in this topic!

- If you need help trouble shooting during this presentation, email info@brycs.org.
- This Webinar will be recorded and archived and all participants will receive a follow-up email with a short evaluation. A copy of the slides can be downloaded from the bottom right of the screen.
- As a courtesy, moderators have muted all phone lines.
- During the Q&A session, please use the chat pod on the left to submit your questions. Any unanswered questions will be posted and responded to on BRYCS Blog: <http://brycsblog.blogspot.com/>

This project is made possible with funding from grant no. 1-ASTWH160046-01-00 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health. The materials presented are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health. Models used for illustrative purposes.

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018



Jennifer Siegel, MSW
-Consultant and PhD Student



www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

3




Agenda

- Description of FGC
- Cultural and historic background
- Types of FGC and health consequences
- Laws covering FGC
- Culturally competent responses to FGC
- Prevention efforts
- Alternative Rites of Passage

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018




"There is such a culture of silence about FGM. If you stand up and say, 'this happened to me,' people will scrutinize you, but someone has to stand up and say, 'this can't go on happening.' This is a human rights abuse and it has to stop. Until the education of a girl is a right and not a privilege we are failing our women."

-Jaha Dukureh

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018



What is Female Genital Cutting (FGC)?

- The cutting, pricking, removing, or sewing closed all or part of a woman or girl's external genitals
- Called many different things all around the world including Female Genital Mutilation, sunna, khatna, excision, infibulation, etc.
- Considered a violation of human rights, gender-based violence, and child abuse

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Where is FGC Practiced?

- Practiced in approximately 30 different East and West African countries, parts of the Middle East, and some Asian Countries
- Also in Europe, Australia, Canada, and the U.S.
- 200 million women and girls affected worldwide
 - 513,000 girls at risk in the U.S.

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Women's Stats Project: <http://womanstats.org>

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Reasons for the Practice

- Cultural norms and traditions
- Promotes chastity and marriageability
- Preserves family honor
- Economic and public participation
- Marks a rite of passage into womanhood

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Reasons for the Practice (con't)

- Motivated by love and not harm
- Fear of being ex-communicated from community
- Fear of daughter not being able to marry

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Types of FGC

Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
• Clitoridectomy	• Excision	• Infibulation • Most severe form	• Piercing, pricking or cauterizing genital area

Medicalization of FGC

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Short Term Health Implications

- Excessive bleeding
- Shock
- Extreme pain
- Infection including sepsis or tetanus
- Urinary problems
- Death

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Long Term Health Implications

- Chronic infection
- Obstructed urinary and menstrual flow
- Cysts
- Pelvic inflammatory disease
- Difficulty or pain during intercourse
- Infertility
- Complications during childbirth
- Obstetric fistula

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Psychological Implications of FGC

- Depression, anxiety, PTSD
- Fear of sex or of childbirth
- Shame, resentment, powerlessness
- Confusion after migration

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

U.S. Laws Regarding FGC

- Federal laws against FGC and 'vacation cutting'
- 26 states have separate laws addressing FGC
 - [Equality Now](#)
- Someone who has already been cut and is living in the U.S. is not breaking the law


www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Women and Girls Affected by FGC in the U.S.

- Understanding laws of FGC in the US
- Navigating a new culture, preserving aspects of their own culture
- Continued pressure
- Feelings of confusion
- Discrimination and stigmatization




www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Experiences at the Doctor

- Shame or embarrassment
- Not sure how to communicate about FGC
- Difficulty accessing trained interpreters
- Lack of cultural sensitivity with medical staff



www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Culturally Competent Medical Care

- Access to trained interpreters
- Provide ample explanation of procedures and anatomy
- Learn more about FGC and refer out when necessary
- Seek permission
- Focus on FGC *and* overall health
- Ask parents their intentions with daughters

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Culturally Competent Services

- Examine your own beliefs
- Learn more about FGC
- Create safe environments for woman and girls affected by FGC
- Work against stigmatization and discrimination in service delivery
- Offer mental health services

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Risk Factors of FGC	Evidence of FGC
Visitor from abroad	Difficulty walking, sitting, or standing
Planned trip abroad for ceremony to become a woman	Frequent trips to bathroom
Unexpected/prolonged absence	Avoidance of medical exams

Guard against stereotypes! Just because someone is from a country where FGC is practiced does not mean it is viewed favorably

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

What To Do If You Suspect FGC

- Responsibility to protect
- Mandated reporting
- Work collaboratively with child protection, the child's parents, and cultural community
- Intervention should be culturally informed
- Focus on prevention


www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Alternative Rites of Passage

- Prevention of harmful FGC practice
- Preservation of positive traditional aspects
- Honors child's passing into womanhood



www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Raising Awareness and Prevention Efforts

- Work with those most affected by FGC
- Elevate voices of community leaders and women
- Empower communities
- Educate and collaborate with teachers, child protection staff, medical professionals, cultural mediators, and more!

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

BRYCS
Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Programmatic Efforts

- Women's groups for dialogue and support
- Health seminars for women affected by FGC
- Cultural competency training for medical professionals and social service providers
- Alternative rites of practice
- Educational and empowerment programs for young girls

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

 Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Resources


[BRYCS Community Conversations](#)

[Office of Women's Health](#)


[World Health Organization](#)

www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

 Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Questions?



www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018

 Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services

Contact Us

www.brycs.org

info@brycs.org

1-888-572-6500



www.brycs.org

Intro to FGC, March 2018