



# Protecting children and adults from abuse in the UK and abroad

Female Genital Mutilation

Forced Marriage

Travel to War Zones

Modern Slavery

Human Trafficking



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## Foreword

The lead up to key holiday periods are very important times to raise awareness about a number of safeguarding issues which may affect children, young people and adults who may be subjected to abuse in the UK or abroad.

This booklet has been developed by the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) and Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to raise awareness of Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Travel to war zones and Modern Slavery & Trafficking. It provides you with contact details for a number of agencies who can help or advise.

Please take a moment to review the information contained in this booklet which should enable you to know what to do, should you become aware of any safeguarding concerns, that you follow the advice and contact the appropriate agency to make them aware of your concern.

The WSCB is committed to raise awareness and identify and support children, young people or vulnerable adults who may be vulnerable to abuse while abroad or within the UK.

# FGM

## What is it?

FGM is a procedure which involves cutting, removing, pricking or piercing the external female genitalia or any other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons.

FGM is an extremely harmful practice with serious health consequences for girls and women. Some girls die from blood loss or infection as a direct result of the procedure. Survivors face long term health risks including mental health problems and difficulty in childbirth.

## Why is it performed?

Generally, it's performed for cultural reasons. Those who perform it may use religion as a justification for it, however, the practice is not related to male circumcision, is not accepted in any major religion and is illegal in most parts of the world.

## What else is it known as?

FGM is also known as Female Genital Cutting or Female Circumcision. Those who practice it would generally refer to it in local names, such as: Sunna, Gudiniin, Tahara, Bondo.

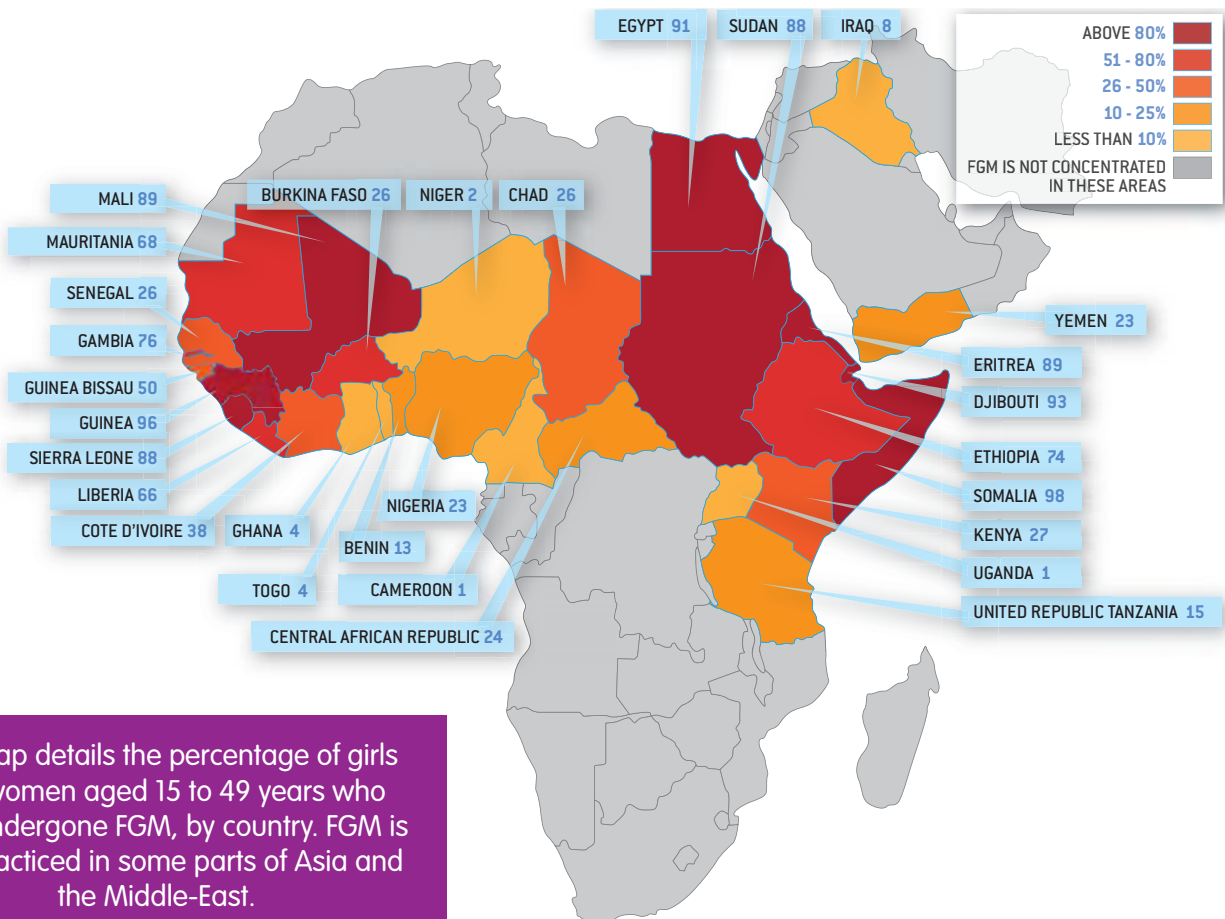
## The law

The FGM Act 2003 makes it a criminal offence with up to 14 years in prison, a fine, or both, to:

- Carry out or assist with carrying out FGM in the UK;
- Assist a girl to carry out FGM on herself in the UK; or to
- Assist someone from outside of the UK to carry out FGM on a UK national or permanent UK resident.

## Is FGM performed in the UK or abroad?

Because FGM is illegal in the UK and any person found guilty of the offence faces up to 14 years in prison, many girls are taken abroad for the procedure (which is illegal too). This doesn't mean that FGM doesn't occur in the UK; sometimes a 'cutter' travels from a high risk country to the UK for the purpose of performing FGM on a number of girls at the same time.



This map details the percentage of girls and women aged 15 to 49 years who have undergone FGM, by country. FGM is also practiced in some parts of Asia and the Middle-East.

## FACT BOX

Around 140 million women across the world are living with the consequences of FGM and over 24,000 girls in the UK under the age of 15 are at risk each year of the most severe type of FGM

### A typical girl at risk:

- Is from one of the 'high risk' countries where FGM is practiced
- Has a mother, sister or other relative who has undergone FGM
- Is under the age of fifteen
- Is travelling to a country where FGM is practiced

### Highest risk countries

- Somalia, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea

### Once abroad

The girl could have FGM performed as part of 'a ceremony' where other girls are also victims. She is likely to have the procedure performed by non-medically qualified members of the community in dirty conditions using unsterile equipment, which increases the risk of infection or even death.

### Signs a girl may have undergone FGM:

- She has returned from 'a ceremony' abroad
- She has been showing signs of stress, anxiety or depression
- She has been avoiding physical education or missing school
- She is constantly using the toilet

### Has a child from an 'at risk' background told you...

...she is going abroad for a 'special ceremony or party'?

...she is going abroad to 'become a woman'?

...she is about to undergo FGM (or any other name for FGM)?

...that her sister or friend is going or has gone abroad for FGM?

### ...she, or another child may be at immediate risk of harm

### Follow the guidance in the table below

### Steps to take...

Is someone at immediate risk of harm?	Call 999
Is someone 'at risk' about to travel abroad?	Call Children's Social Care (MASH) on 020 8871 6622 or the Police: 101
Is a UK national or permanent resident you suspect as 'at risk' abroad already?	Call the Foreign & Commonwealth Office: 020 7008 1500
Has a child undergone FGM?	Call Children's Social Care (MASH): 020 8871 6622 or e-mail <a href="mailto:mash@wandsworth.gov.uk">mash@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Is a woman who has undergone FGM suffering from health problems?	Advise her to visit her GP or call the Opal Clinic at St. George's Hospital: 020 8725 5949
Are you unsure or would like to find out more?	Call the NSPCC FGM Helpline: 0800 028 3550
Would you like to provide information about FGM to a parent?	Download the 'FGM Advice for Parents' leaflet from <a href="http://www.wandsworthfgm.org.uk">www.wandsworthfgm.org.uk</a> or call 020 8871 6437 if you would like physical copies
Would you like to see our guidelines and pathways for professionals on FGM?	Visit <a href="http://www.wandsworthfgm.org.uk">www.wandsworthfgm.org.uk</a>

## Forced Marriage

### What is it?

A marriage is forced if one or both spouses do not consent. Some people will not be able to consent, for example if they have a learning disability.

Sometimes, forced marriage is confused with arranged marriage. The main difference is that both people in an arranged marriage consent and can say no without any physical or emotional consequences.

### Why would someone be forced into marriage?

There are a number of reasons why forced marriages take place, it could be because:

- The victim has broken a certain set of rules, traditions or customs and brought perceived 'shame' on their family
- The victim has rejected an arranged marriage proposal
- The victim is in a relationship which the family object to, especially if they are lesbian, gay or bisexual
- The victim's family want to have their son or daughter marry for the purpose of money, power, land or status
- The victim will be used to bring someone into the country (using a spousal visa)

### A typical victim at risk could be male or female, and...

- ...Could be of any age, but the highest risk age group is 16-25
- ...Could be from any country, but the highest risk countries are in South Asia and the Middle East
- ...Could be forced to marry in the UK, or abroad

### How can you tell if someone is at risk?

Forced marriage affects a range of cultures and communities. In some cases, it's difficult to know that someone is at risk - he or she could find themselves in a situation abroad where there is no choice but to agree to marriage. However, in most cases, the victim could be displaying signs of **honour based violence\*** or know that they are at risk of forced marriage.

### The law

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 makes it a criminal offence with up to 7 years in prison, a fine, or both, to:

- Force (or take someone abroad to force) them to marry
- Marry someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent – for example if they have a learning difficulty
- Breach a Forced Marriage Protection Order (5 years maximum imprisonment)

### Protection *might* be available abroad

The Forced Marriage Unit, a division of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office may in extreme cases undertake a 'rescue' of a British national in need of assistance abroad. However, some areas lack embassy presence or there is civil unrest which means a rescue isn't possible. It's advisable that anybody at risk seeks help whilst in the UK and avoids crossing British borders. The UK will only provide assistance to British passport holders.

**Forced Marriage Unit (020) 7008 0151**

### FACT BOX

It is estimated that over 100,000 marriages in the UK today could have been forced.

Each year, around 8,000 British nationals are forced into marriage.

### \* Honour based violence

Forced marriage is a form of honour based violence. Victims of honour based violence suffer from a range of controlling behaviours, often by family or community members, such as:

- Not being allowed to go outside
- Not being allowed to have a mobile phone, choose what to wear or spend time with friends
- Not having the freedom to make choices such as going to college or having a job

For information about honour based violence visit [fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/honourviolence](https://www.fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/honourviolence)

## Common risk indicators

- They talk about or make passing comments about their frustrations at how strict their parents are
- They are worried about going on holiday because they think they may be asked to get married or left there
- They are constantly showing signs of fear of their relatives or community members
- They talk about their aspirations and choices but feel they are unable to achieve them because their family have already planned out their future
- They have been forced by their family to break up with a boyfriend or girlfriend
- They are forced to stay away from certain friends and not allowed to leave their home
- Their older siblings have been taken abroad and married a stranger
- They are from a background which is commonly affected by forced marriage (have a look at our risk map for forced marriage)
- They are from a strict religious background and are gay, lesbian or bisexual

[fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/forcedmarriage](https://www.fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/forcedmarriage)

## Once abroad

The victim could find themselves:

- Without access to a phone or the internet
- Locked up and strictly supervised by family members
- At risk of domestic and sexual abuse

Forced marriage can occur in any community. However, the highest number of referrals to the Forced Marriage Unit are from UK communities from parts of the world outlined in red.



**WARNING**  
You should never approach the family, relatives or friends of somebody who discloses that they are at risk of forced marriage. This could place a victim at risk of violence. Seek specialist advice first.

## Steps to take...

Is someone at immediate risk of harm?	Call 999
Is someone 'at risk' about to travel abroad?	Call the Forced Marriage Unit: 020 7008 0151 or the Police: 101
Is a UK national or permanent resident you suspect as 'at risk' abroad already?	Call the Foreign & Commonwealth Office: 020 7008 1500
Has a child under the age of 18 disclosed they are at risk of being forced to marry?	Call Children's Social Care (MASH): 020 8871 6622 or e-mail <a href="mailto:mash@wandsworth.gov.uk">mash@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Has somebody been through a forced marriage and is suffering abuse?	Call the Wandsworth Safety Net (IDVA Service for Wandsworth): 020 7801 1777
Are you unsure or would like to find out more?	Call Karma Nirvana: 0800 5999 247 (independent national charity) or visit <a href="https://www.fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/forcedmarriage">fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/forcedmarriage</a>

## Travel to War Zones

### There are three main reasons a UK national may travel to a war zone like Syria or Somalia.

They could be:

#### Extremists

Those that join terrorist groups like Islamic State

#### Humanitarian workers and journalists

Those that want to help victims of war or want to report on war

#### Anti-terrorist groups

Those that join groups which fight against terrorist and extremist movements

### The risk to Humanitarian workers and Journalists

There are many people who either travel or want to travel to conflict zones, like Syria, to provide help to victims of war or report news from the ground - but terrorist groups use aid workers and journalists as hostages and torture or even kill them. The British government won't pay any money to secure a release as this may lead to more hostages being taken.

### The risk to Anti-terrorist fighters

Those who travel to areas like Syria are at high risk of being captured by terrorist groups. If the purpose of travel is to join anti-terrorist groups, there is no protection offered in extremely dangerous conditions.

The best way to 'help' is to make a donation to charities like Oxfam or UNICEF. These organisations use safe distribution channels to make sure that your aid goes to those who need it most.

**For information about travel to Syria visit the Metropolitan Police website: [met.police.uk/Syria](http://met.police.uk/Syria)**

### Groomed to Extremism

International terrorist groups like Islamic State use the internet (especially social networks like Twitter and messaging services like WhatsApp) to attract young people and encourage travel to areas such as Syria to join them. They use a range of tactics like promises of a better life and a guaranteed place in paradise. They misrepresent and manipulate religious text to suit their purpose and use carefully constructed propaganda against the West.

#### Who is at risk of becoming an Extremist?

People who are going through a time of hardship like failing school, finding it difficult to make friends, are grieving the loss of a loved one, serving time in prison or are simply feeling confused about their religious views are especially vulnerable to being groomed by extremists. Islamic State commonly preys on young people by playing with their emotions, manipulating them and giving them a sense of 'purpose' – many young people are encouraged to travel to Syria by Islamic State for humanitarian reasons.

#### Transit routes

Because air travel to places like Syria isn't easy, it's common to use transit routes like Turkey. Islamic State militants have smugglers that help foreigners who want to join them to cross the Turkey-Syria border.

### Once abroad

There is often no way of return. If somebody who does return is found to have conspired with or joined a terrorist group, they could face prosecution in the UK. Those that go for humanitarian purposes without protection from the Red Cross could find themselves in extremely dangerous situations. In Syria, foreigners are targets for Islamic State fighters.

- Men could find themselves in extremely violent situations.
- Women are likely to become victims of violence, sexual exploitation and imprisonment.
- Young girls that travel to join Islamic State quickly get married; if their 'husband' dies in war they could be auctioned to other men.



## Common signs that somebody may be going through a radicalisation process:

### Physical changes:

- They unexpectedly or suddenly begin to wear religious attire, grow a beard or shave their head
- They get tattoos displaying various messages
- They come home with unexplained gifts and clothing (groomers will sometimes use gifts such as mobile phones and clothing to bribe a young person)
- They've been influenced by extremist preachers in prison

### Social, emotional and verbal changes:

- They begin to complain, often with anger, about governmental policies, especially foreign policy
- They advocate violence or criminal behaviour, talk about 'seeking revenge' or exhibit erratic behaviour such as paranoia and delusion
- They sympathise with radical groups, begin to visit extremist websites, networks and blogs or go to demonstrations for extremist causes
- They begin to cut ties with existing friends, family or community members
- They start to associate with known radical preachers or extremists
- They become dependent on social networks

**Of course, the above does not mean that somebody has become radicalised. Use your personal judgment and if you are worried refer to the table below.**

### Steps to take...

Is someone at immediate risk of harm?	Call the Police: 999
Do you suspect that somebody in Wandsworth is at risk of becoming radicalised?	Call the Police: 101
Is a UK national or permanent resident in need of consular assistance?	Call the Foreign & Commonwealth Office: 020 7008 1500
Do you suspect that somebody may pose a risk to national security?	Call 999 if the threat is imminent. Otherwise call the confidential anti-terrorist hotline: 0800 789 321
Has somebody returned from a war zone and is suffering from stress or anxiety?	Encourage the person to see their GP

### MYTHS about radicalisation

Only uneducated people would become radicalised

Asking for help would mean that the person you are worried about will automatically be arrested

My child is abroad and has realised that he or she has made a mistake and wants to return but the Government won't let them back into Britain

### FACTS

Bright young people with a good education have been known to join Islamic State

Asking for help for someone who may be at risk of or have been radicalised does not mean that they will be automatically arrested. It might be the case that they are in danger and in need of help which is why it's so important to seek help

They might find it difficult to escape ISIS, but if they do manage, they can return to Britain. They will be formally interviewed and assessed upon return.

# Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking

## What is it?

Human trafficking is referred to as the illegal trade of humans, most commonly for sexual exploitation or forced labour. Thousands of people are trafficked into, out of or around the UK each year - commonly by gangs, sometimes by private individuals or even family members.

## Domestic Servitude

In the UK, forced marriage victims often become domestic slaves. In other cases of domestic servitude, what could seem like an 'innocent arrangement' could be somebody trapped in a situation that they cannot escape - enslaved in a home environment for forced labour, often in bad conditions and without pay or freedom to leave.

## Debt Bondage (forced labour)

Many people who either flee or leave their home country for economic or safety reasons are helped into the UK by 'smugglers'. The fee that smugglers charge becomes a debt that the victim must pay; the debt is often so large that it can never be fully repaid. Smugglers may also make somebody work for them for free or extremely low pay. If the victim can't pay the debt or tries to break free, they could face deportation or violence.

## Sexual Exploitation

Many young women and girls are groomed into a life of sexual exploitation and prostitution. Men and boys can also be affected. Gangs often use false promises and manipulative tactics to sexually exploit young women. Some victims are abducted; others are orphans, runaways or those in difficult emotional or financial situations.

The victim and their family are often promised security and a place to stay - the harsh reality that they may enter into is a world of drugs, crime and being a repeat victim of rape and forced prostitution.

*Note: Under the Modern Slavery Act, public authorities (including police and local authorities) are required to submit information about suspected modern slavery to the National Crime Agency. For more information visit [www.modernslavery.co.uk](http://www.modernslavery.co.uk)*

## Who is at risk of Domestic Servitude?

Victims, who can be either male or female, are trafficked into the UK by family members or relatives generally with the promise of a better life. Most victims come from a poor background and a large number of victims are children (under the age of 18).

## Forced marriage

Parents sometimes use their UK born son or daughter to marry a victim abroad and use spousal visas to bring them to Britain. Victims can also be UK nationals who are trafficked out of the UK and left to work.

## Broken promises to parent(s)

Private fostering: Perpetrators in the UK will promise the parent(s) of a victim in a poor country that their son or daughter will be looked after, educated and have good job prospects.

## The reality

The victim will generally arrive to the UK on a family visit visa and not have any access to school, health services or employment. They overstay their visa and are forced to work for the person that brought them here as domestic slaves. Their abuse and neglect is never known to their parents abroad, who mistakenly think that their child is living a good life. The victim will rarely come to the attention of the authorities as there is no official record of that person being here.

**Victims can be from anywhere in the world, but those from poorer countries are at highest risk.**

It's common for those from poorer countries to be trafficked as domestic slaves, often by UK nationals.



## Who is at risk of Debt Bondage (forced labour)?

Men from poorer countries are the highest risk victims of being trafficked into debt bondage (forced labour), especially men from non-European countries, but women can also be affected.

### Tactics that smugglers use:

- International criminal networks prey on vulnerable families and promise employment opportunities to those who leave their home country to earn money to send home
- Those who are fleeing violent countries or affected by natural disasters or famine and have no choice but to escape are preyed upon by smugglers who promise to bring them to the UK
- Calais in France is a hotspot for smugglers because of the large number of refugees trying to enter the UK

### Typical hotspot locations where debt bondage victims are found to be working in the UK:

- Nail bars and beauty salons
- Restaurants and takeaways
- Car washes
- Some victims are forced into crimes like pick pocketing, cannabis cultivation or selling stolen and illegal goods (such as pirate copy movies)

## FACT BOX

In 2013, over 230 victims of domestic servitude were identified by the National Crime Agency.

743 Victims in 2013 were identified as trafficked for labour exploitation. 249 for criminal exploitation.

Sexual exploitation victims are the highest category of identified trafficking victims. In 2013, 1128 victims of sexual exploitation were identified.

2,340 potential victims of trafficking were referred in to the National Referral Mechanism in 2014; a 34% increase on 2013. Potential victims were reported to be from 96 countries of origin.

## Who is at risk of Sexual Exploitation?

Women and girls are the highest risk victims of being trafficked for sexual exploitation and prostitution, but men can also be victim.

### Tactics that traffickers use:

- Sexual exploitation victims from the UK are commonly groomed by gang members who buy gifts for and trick a young person into thinking that they are loved. Eventually, the victim may be introduced to drugs or criminal activity. Victims can be trafficked across the UK or taken abroad.
- European nationals, especially from Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Poland are encouraged to travel to the UK where they are promised better education and work. They are met by the gang which arranged for their travel, their documents taken from them and eventually they are sexually exploited. Because of European free movement laws, trafficking European nationals is easy.
- Non-European nationals, such as those from South America are trafficked in a range of ways, including false documentation, using transit routes or arriving on various visas.

There are a range of other tactics. For more information about sexual exploitation visit

[fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/cse](http://fis.wandsworth.gov.uk/cse)

### What happens to victims of sexual exploitation?

Victims of sexual exploitation can find themselves being forced to perform non- consensual or abusive sexual acts against their will. They could be forced into prostitution, escort work or pornography. Many victims will be trafficked across different parts of Britain, depending on where they are likely to make the most money for gangs. Some become dependent on drugs and alcohol. Victims are at constant risk of sexually transmitted infection and other health issues including mental health problems.

### Family back home

Family members are unlikely to ever know about the abuse that their loved one is suffering from.

Victims often feel too afraid or embarrassed to tell them - that's if they are still in touch.

# Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking

## Smugglers' tactics

Smugglers use a range of tactics to get people into the UK: using fake passports, travelling through European transit routes, smuggling a person on a ship or lorry, or sponsoring various visas.

### No chance of escape

Once in the UK, the victim's identity documents may be taken away and they may be placed in extremely dirty, dangerous and vile living conditions and forced to work for free or very little money. If they do earn money, most of it will be paid to their smugglers to cover the 'fee' to bring them here, which is often a debt that can never be repaid and may be passed down to their children.

### A life of danger and fear

Victims have no access to healthcare services or benefits and are afraid of what would happen if they asked for help - their family could be at risk abroad, they could be deported or they could be at risk of violence.

### From war, violence and poverty to debt and slavery

It's common for those from poorer countries to be trafficked into debt bondage, often by organised gangs

**WARNING**  
If you think slavery is happening, do not attempt to let the victim know that you have reported it or confront the traffickers.  
You need to ensure their safety and yours.

## The law

### The Modern Slavery Act (2015)

This Act enhances support and protection for victims, gives law enforcement the tools they need to target today's slave drivers, ensures perpetrators can be severely punished, and includes a provision to encourage business to take action to ensure their end-to-end supply chains are slavery free. The Act:

- Has introduced Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders and Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders to restrict the activity of individuals where they pose a risk of causing harm
- Increases the maximum sentence available for the most serious offenders from 14 years to life imprisonment
- Ensures that perpetrators convicted of slavery or trafficking face the toughest asset confiscation regime

The Act also ensures that victims receive the protection and support they deserve by:

- Creating a statutory defence for victims of modern slavery so that they are not inappropriately criminalised
- Giving the courts new powers to order perpetrators of slavery and trafficking to pay Reparation Orders to their victims;

To find out more visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

## Steps to take...

Is someone at immediate risk of harm?	Call the Police: 999
Do you suspect that somebody has been trafficked into the UK?	Call the Police: 101 or the Modern Slavery Helpline, which is open 24 hours: 0800 0121 700
Do you suspect that a child in Wandsworth may be at risk of modern slavery or exploitation? (Even if the child has no immigration status)	Call 101 and Children's Social Care (MASH): 020 8871 6622 or e-mail <a href="mailto:mash@wandsworth.gov.uk">mash@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Do you suspect that an adult in Wandsworth may be at risk of modern slavery or exploitation?	Call 101 and Adult's Social Services: 020 8871 7707 or e-mail <a href="mailto:accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk">accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk</a>
Are you unsure or would like to find out more?	Visit <a href="http://www.modernslavery.co.uk">www.modernslavery.co.uk</a> Call 0800 0121 700 (24hrs)

## Contacts

### **Children's Social Care (MASH)**

020 8871 6622  
mash@wandsworth.gov.uk

### **Adult's Social Services**

020 8871 7707  
accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk

### **VAWG and MARAC Team**

020 8871 6437  
domesticviolence@wandsworth.gov.uk

### **PREVENT Coordinator**

020 8871 6094  
scornwall@wandsworth.gov.uk

### **Community Safety Unit (Met Police)**

020 3276 2610  
wwcsu@met.police.uk

### **Foreign & Commonwealth Office**

0207 008 1500  
www.fco.gov.uk

### **Rape and Sexual Abuse Crisis Centre**

0808 802 9999  
12:00-14:30 & 19:00-21:30 daily

### **The Havens (Rape & Sexual Assault)**

020 3299 1599  
www.thehavens.org.uk

### **Forced Marriage Unit**

020 7008 0151  
fmu@fco.gov.uk

### **Modern Slavery Helpline**

0800 0121 700  
www.modernslavery.co.uk

### **NSPCC FGM Helpline**

0800 028 3550  
fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk

### **Karma Nirvana - Honour Abuse Helpline**

0800 5999 247  
www.karmanirvana.org.uk

### **Wandsworth Safety Net**

020 7801 1777  
www.wandsworth.gov.uk/vawg

### **Confidential Anti-Terrorism Hotline**

0800 789 321  
24 Hours

### **Wandsworth Safeguarding Children's Board**

020 8871 8610 / 7401  
www.wscb.org.uk

### **The Samaritans**

08457 90 90 90 (24 Hours)  
www.samaritans.org

For guidance documents on dealing with victims of violence and abuse please visit the Wandsworth VAWG website  
[www.wandsworth.gov.uk/vawg](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/vawg)

