



JENNY USA

FGM/C is widely known to take place among diaspora communities in the United States. Less known are the stories of FGM/C occurring in the local population, including within Christian communities.

“ I grew up in the American Midwest in a conservative, Christian home.

I was five when I underwent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). I was told that a lady I didn't know was going to take my sister and I on a special trip. We went on an airplane without my parents.

The morning after I arrived I was laid down on a cold table. I had no idea what was going to happen.

They took off my panties and lifted my dress. I felt exposed and bare. I began to fight and cry. Someone held me down and covered my mouth and eyes with their hands. Then I felt the cold metal and the first cut. The pain in that moment was unbearable, no other pain in my life has ever compared.

Gradually I got better and we were sent home. Our mom had made a cake, which was odd because she never normally made cakes. We were told we were celebrating our obedience to God. We were told it was something we could never talk about.

I remember my sister and I weeping in each other's arms, knowing we had this terrible secret to keep.

When I was growing up I thought it happened to all girls. It was only when I studied human anatomy in college that I realized I wasn't like everyone else.

FGM has had a terrible impact on my body.

Up until I had a hysterectomy, my periods were excruciating. Sex was always, always painful.

It is important for people to understand just because so few Americans have spoken up, it does not mean it is not happening here. There is such a silence that surrounds this practice. Until we are talking about it more, we are never going to know how many girls in the US have been affected. We have to remove the shame, make it a subject safe to talk about.

This is not a race, culture, religious, region or anything else issue. It is a human issue, period. ”



For Jenny's full story head to equalitynow.org/Jenny

FGM/C IS GLOBAL
but so is the
movement to end it