

UTAH PERIOD PROJECT

ACCESS TO PERIOD PRODUCTS IN UTAH SCHOOLS



THE ISSUE

Basic period product needs for girls have been largely overlooked in our public and charter school systems.

Similar to a spontaneous bloody nose, menstruation is an involuntary monthly physical occurrence for **every female** that disrupts school and ALL activity if unmanaged.

School-age girls are at the highest risk for mis- or under-managed menstruation as almost ALL begin their periods before they are able to legally work (90 percent menstruate by age 13), and they rarely have control over family finances or the ability to drive to a store to purchase period products.

Lack of access to period products leads to missed school, health risks, lower confidence, shame, embarrassment, and withdrawal from critical school programs that support vulnerable students.

1 in 5 girls CANNOT AFFORD period products.

THE BREAKDOWN

Many female students who lack access to period products would rather miss class than go to school while menstruating.



Almost 7 out of 10 girls in the U.S. have missed school due to lack of access to products, or know someone who has.

- 86% of women stated they have started their period unexpectedly in public without the supplies they need
- 90% of girls menstruate by age thirteen
- 46% of women in poverty have chosen between a meal or purchasing period products

GREAT NEWS!

'Period poverty' is an antiquated stumbling block for growth that is easily removed.

THE SIMPLE SOLUTION

It is proposed that the Utah Legislature implement legislation to increase access to free, safe, and good quality menstrual products in Utah's public and charter schools. Menstrual products should be placed in school bathrooms to ensure accessibility and privacy. The result will immediately and positively address issues of education, public health, and medical privacy for many Utah children.

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP



Private Donor Participation The Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation and the Andrus Family Foundation want to see Utah's girls succeed and have each committed a million dollars to help purchase dispensers for EVERY female and all-gender public and charter school bathrooms in Utah.

POSITIVE OUTCOMES FROM PROVIDING PERIOD PRODUCTS

1. Raise educational outcomes across the state in EVERY female demographic.
2. Intervene with our most vulnerable students and allow them to learn with confidence and dignity.
3. Allow all students to learn without disruption of an uncontrolled health need.
4. Destigmatize and desexualize menstruation.
5. Respect students' right to privacy in managing their period in the bathroom with the needed products readily available.
6. Encourage other entities in the state to destigmatize periods and to provide period products to increase productivity in educational settings as well as the workplace.
7. Increase productivity levels in both education and workforce.
8. Minimize public health costs by prevention versus treatment (e.g. infections from using unsafe products, etc.)
9. Create fairness by removing gender-inherent barriers to school attendance for girls and underserved communities.



PERIOD POVERTY IN OUR SCHOOLS LOOKS LIKE:



One Salt Lake student recounts that her parents are unable to provide period products, so when she is menstruating, she lies on towels on her couch.

One Utah custodian mentions how she wipes blood off of classroom seats "often."

One girl in Granite School District uses cotton balls because they are less expensive than period products.

FAQ

Q: What about vandalism and over-use?

A: There is always a possibility of waste (or misuse) of period products when they are newly introduced in schools. However, experts say that similar to other bathroom products like paper towels, usage temporarily increased and then returned to normal usage when supply remained consistent.

Q: How do we know that it will have impact?

A: When piloted in other states, they saw a 2.4% increase in school attendance in schools offering free period products.

Q: Has it been implemented elsewhere?

A: Yes. Similar menstrual policies have been implemented in AK, FL, NV, CO, RI, VA, CA, NY, DE, MD as well as in private businesses and public universities.

**PERIOD PRODUCTS ARE AS
NECESSARY TO MENSTRUATING
CHILDREN AS TOILET PAPER
IS TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.**

***Uncared for periods affect
public health, education, workforce
and medical privacy in our state.***



**“PERIOD POVERTY” =
LACK OF ACCESS TO
PERIOD PRODUCTS**

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