

PERIOD PRODUCTS IN UTAH SCHOOLS



THE ISSUE

Caring for menstruation is a silent need in every Utah school, but because of shame and embarrassment, this issue has been overlooked.

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 4
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.



84% (8 out of 10 girls) in the U.S. have missed school, or know someone who has, due to a lack of access to period products.



THE SIMPLE SOLUTION: H. B. 162

Through the efforts of The Policy Project, H.B. 162 passed unanimously through the Utah Legislature and will ensure students have access to free period products in every girls' and all-gender restroom in Utah K-12 public and charter schools.

“FOOD INSECURITY” = PERIOD PRODUCT INSECURITY

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 a spontaneous biological need.
4. Respect student's right to privacy in managing their period in the bathroom with the needed products readily available.
5. 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 misusage) of period products when they are newly introduced in schools but experts say that similar to other bathroom products like paper towels, usage temporarily increased and then returned to normal 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: Will period products be flushed?

A: Menstruators have been managing their periods with period products, when they have access. So the idea of period products will not be new to the students, neither will the idea of proper disposal in a trash receptacle. Additionally, educational signage will be offered that reminds students not to flush period products. Please ensure there is easy access to a trash receptacle in the stall (preferable) or bathroom.

**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.***

