

## Period Poverty

Period poverty is the term used for the inability to acquire feminine hygiene products and the subsequent disruption it causes to attendance at school or work.



According to the Office of National Statistics (ONS), there were 425,000 workers - aged 16 and above – earning less than the minimum wage.

As two thirds of the UK workforce are female, that equates to at least 283,000 who are likely to experience period poverty at some point.

In

England the first steps were taken to recognising the impact of period poverty by funding the provision of sanitary towels in state schools and colleges in England. Scotland are the world leaders with this initiative as they began this provision for all students in September 2019. The initiative evolved into the Period Revolution in 2020, wherein the pbs Group agreed to be the government’s delivery partner. So successful were [The Red Box Project](#) with their campaign, that they have now closed their UK projects to concentrate on other international issues.

*“...We need to organise in our workplaces, in our schools, in our hospitals and in our communities so that everyone has period dignity – so that every woman can access menstruation products freely at the point of need, wherever they are.”*

Sian Elliott TUC - Sept 2019

The United Nations defines adequate menstrual hygiene management as “women and adolescent girls using a clean menstrual management material ... that can be changed in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of the menstruation period, using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials”.

Meanwhile, work with other organisations continues with a view to extending the provision of free feminine hygiene products to all those in the UK who are in financial need. [Hey girls](#) have donated over 30 million products since they began in 2018. They too have made such an international impact, that they are the first social enterprise to be formally recognised at COP26!

*Hey Girls has created a range of lesson plans, conversation starters and educational content that are completely free and easy to download. <https://www.heygirls.co.uk/learn/>*

They state on their website...

**When we start normalising conversations about periods, that’s when the shame and stigma is eliminated which is why we include supporting education to ensure everyone feels confident talking about periods.**

Hey girls do an amazing range of period products including reusables. Visit their shop here:

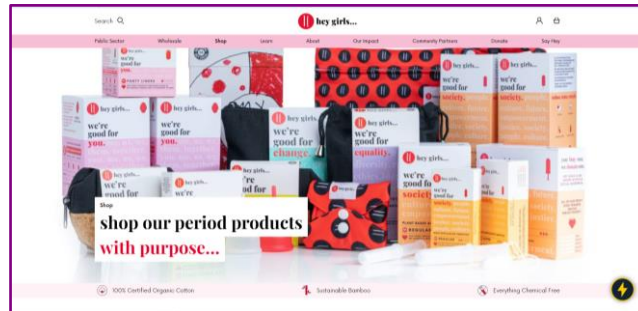


Image: <https://www.heygirls.co.uk/shop/>

Anyone interested in assisting their employers or community groups with the Period Revolution can contact any of the following organisations for advice:

- The Red Box Project - <http://redboxproject.org/>
- Hey Girls - <https://www.heygirls.co.uk/>
- Your Workplace Health and Safety Officer or Trade Union Representative
- [Info@seriousaboutsolutions.com](mailto:Info@seriousaboutsolutions.com)

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