

# **MENSTRUAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS**

**A resource for educators and caregivers**

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This resource is brought to you by FLOW, an initiative dedicated to advancing menstrual health and hygiene advocacy. FLOW leads community-centered education, awareness, and empowerment programs focused on ensuring every menstruator has the knowledge, dignity, and support they need. Through evidence-based advocacy, capacity-building, and accessible resources, FLOW champions a world where menstruation is understood, respected, and never a barrier to opportunity.

# FLOW

## CORE VALUES

### Dignity

We believe menstruation should never be a source of shame or exclusion. FLOW promotes respect, comfort, and confidence for every menstruator, ensuring access to information, support, and safe environments.

### Inclusion

Menstrual health affects people of different ages, abilities, backgrounds, and identities. We create spaces and resources that recognize and support all menstruators, leaving no one behind.

### Evidence-Based Advocacy

Our work is rooted in research and guided by data, public health best practices, and lived experience. We champion solutions that are proven, practical, and grounded in real community needs.

### Community Empowerment

Sustainable change begins within communities. We collaborate with schools, families, health systems, and grassroots groups to build knowledge, break stigma, and cultivate leadership at every level.

### Youth-Centered Design

Young people are at the heart of our mission. We co-create programs with youth voices, ensuring their experiences, perspectives, and needs shape every resource, training, and advocacy effort.

### Gender-Responsive Programming

We recognize that menstrual health is deeply connected to gender equity. Our approach acknowledges gender dynamics, challenges harmful norms, and promotes environments where menstruators can thrive without discrimination.

## WHO WE SERVE

- Students & young menstruators
- Educators & school staff
- Caregivers & parents
- Community leaders
- Health workers

## FOCUS AREAS

### School Menstrual Education Workshops

We deliver engaging, age-appropriate menstrual health education directly to learners in schools. Our workshops are designed to build confidence, dismantle

stigma, and provide practical menstrual management knowledge. Using interactive tools, storytelling, and science-based content, we help students understand their bodies, cultivate empathy, and learn to support themselves and their peers. These sessions prioritize dignity, privacy, and inclusivity ensuring every student leaves informed, empowered, and period-positive.

### **Teacher & Caregiver Training**

Educators and caregivers are pillars in shaping healthy menstrual experiences. Our training equips them with accurate information, supportive language, and practical strategies to guide young menstruators with confidence and sensitivity. Participants learn about menstrual physiology, hygiene, pain management, gender-responsive support, and psychosocial wellbeing. We also provide teaching tools, curriculum guidance, and best-practice classroom approaches to reduce stigma and foster nurturing environments where menstruators feel seen and supported.

### **Community Advocacy Campaigns**

We work within communities to transform cultural narratives and break generational cycles of menstrual stigma. Through outreach events, sensitization forums, youth clubs, peer-education programs, and media engagement, we encourage open dialogue and collective responsibility around menstrual dignity. Our campaigns celebrate menstruation as a natural and powerful process, encouraging inclusive attitudes and championing community-driven solutions that uplift girls, women, and all menstruators.

### **Policy & Awareness Initiatives**

FLOW contributes to broader menstrual equity movements by advancing policy conversations and strategic advocacy. We collaborate with local partners, schools, civil society groups, and government stakeholders to promote policies that ensure menstrual product access, safe school facilities, comprehensive menstrual education, and the protection of menstruators' rights. We also leverage digital platforms and public awareness drives to shift public perceptions and anchor menstrual health within wider health and gender-equity agendas.

### **Resource Distribution & Facility Support**

Recognizing that education alone is not enough, we support schools and community groups with practical menstrual resources and facility improvements. This includes supplying pads and hygiene materials, setting up menstrual product stations, supporting access to water and sanitation, and guiding schools in creating clean, safe, and dignified washroom spaces. We also provide reusable product training and sustainability guidance, ensuring long-term, environmentally conscious solutions.

## **Menstrual Health in Schools: A resource for educators and caregivers**

A resource for educators and caregivers; supporting menstruators with dignity, privacy, and confidence.

Schools play a critical role in shaping healthy menstrual experiences. When students feel informed, supported, and dignified, they are empowered to stay in class, participate fully, and grow with confidence. This resource provides practical guidance for teachers, school health staff, and caregivers on creating period-positive environments. Inside, you'll find age-appropriate teaching tips, menstrual health lesson plans, guidance on setting up safe washrooms and menstrual product stations, and strategies for addressing stigma in the classroom and at home. Because no child should ever miss out on learning or opportunities simply because they menstruate. Dignity in education starts with understanding and support.

This resource provides practical guidance for teachers, school health staff, and caregivers on

creating period-positive environments. Inside, you'll find:

- Age-appropriate teaching tips
- Menstrual health lesson planning guidance
- How to create safe washrooms and menstrual product stations
- Strategies for addressing stigma in classrooms and at home

## **Age-Appropriate Teaching Tips**

Menstrual education should begin early and develop gradually, reflecting a child's emotional and developmental stage.

### **Early Primary (Ages 6–9)**

- Introduce body awareness and basic puberty concepts
- Use simple, inclusive language (e.g., “people who menstruate”)
- Teach respect, privacy, and empathy toward bodily changes

### **Upper Primary (Ages 9–12)**

- Explain what menstruation is and why it happens
- Demonstrate how to use pads and maintain hygiene
- Discuss normal symptoms and when to seek help
- Encourage questions anonymously (question box / digital prompt)

### **Secondary School (Ages 13+)**

- Teach menstrual cycle phases and reproductive health
  - Discuss pain management and tracking cycles
  - Address myths, cultural taboos, and stigma
  - Empower students with self-advocacy skills and period confidence
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## 2. Menstrual Health Lesson Planning Guidance

A strong MHH lesson should aim to:

- ✓ Normalize menstruation as a healthy process
- ✓ Provide factual and medically accurate information
- ✓ Encourage supportive peer behavior
- ✓ Promote self-care, confidence, and dignity

### Suggested Lesson Elements

- Warm-up question or myth-busting activity
- Clear explanation of the menstrual cycle
- Visual aids/models (pads, uterus diagrams, cycle charts)
- Demonstration of pad use & disposal
- Group activity: roleplay supportive peer responses
- Practical takeaway (cycle tracker page, hygiene checklist)

**Bonus Tip:** Involve male students. Inclusion reduces stigma.

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## 3. Creating Safe Washrooms & Product Stations

A menstrual-friendly school environment includes access to:

- Clean, private toilets with functional doors
- Soap, running water, and tissue
- Covered disposal bins in each stall
- A stocked **menstrual supply basket**  
(pads, wipes, spare underwear, reusable cloth options where appropriate)

### Recommended School Practices

- Designate a **Menstrual Support Point** (nurse's office / library / safe room)
- Train school personnel to provide pads discreetly & kindly

- Ensure emergency supplies are free and accessible

Small details matter. Privacy, safety, and dignity directly affect attendance and wellbeing.

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## **4. Addressing Stigma at School & Home**

Stigma remains one of the biggest barriers to menstrual health. It keeps girls silent, scared, and sometimes absent from school.

### **Strategies to Reduce Stigma**

- Use respectful and scientifically correct language
- Encourage open classroom discussions
- Celebrate Menstrual Hygiene Day (May 28)
- Display posters promoting dignity and respect
- Encourage caregiver involvement (info sessions, workshops)

### **Positive messaging matters.**

Replace “dirty,” “shameful,” or “secret” with empowering narratives like:  
*“Periods are a healthy sign of growth and strength.”*

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## **Closing Note**

When schools and caregivers normalize menstruation, we create environments where young people feel confident, prepared, and respected. No student should miss school, suffer in silence, or feel ashamed because of a natural biological process.

**Education + Access + Empathy = Period-Positive Schools**

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