

PERIOD POVERTY & MENSTRUAL INEQUITY IN HAWAII PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Ho'ohanohano Initiative conducted by Ma'i Movement Hawai'i is a statewide pilot in six schools on O'ahu, Hawai'i island, Maui and Kaua'i. The pilot distributes period products to students and tracks the product usage over time in each school. Pre- and post-surveys of students and faculty are conducted to measure the impact of free period products on student attendance, performance and overall well-being.

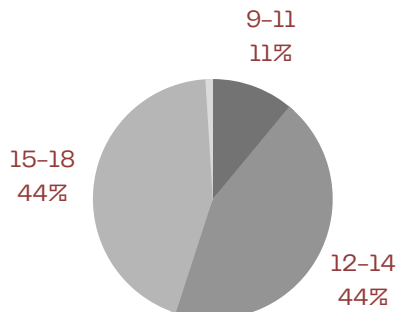


6 SCHOOLS IN THE PILOT

Elementary through high school in urban and rural communities. There are public, charter, Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools. 278 faculty and 871 students completed the pre-survey. Additional surveys will be conducted mid-year and end of year.

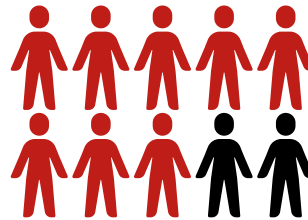
LOW COST INITIATIVE

30,876 products per semester
2,353 estimated menstruators
2.6 period products per month
\$4 - \$5 per student annually



AGES OF STUDENTS

A large proportion of students are Filipino (60%) and/or Native Hawaiian (22%). More than half reported getting their first period by the time the pre-survey was conducted.

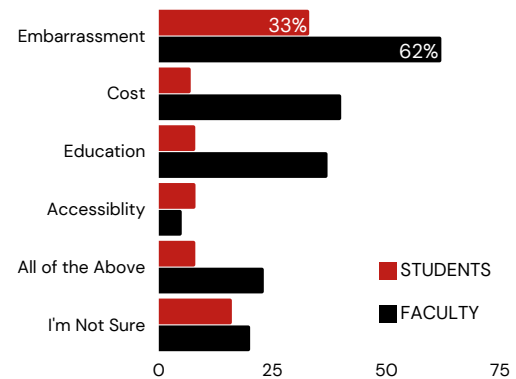


8 / 10 STUDENTS

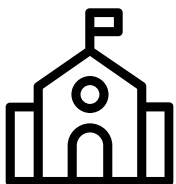
FACE DIFFICULTIES
GETTING PERIOD
PRODUCTS

56% of faculty have witnessed it.

BARRIERS TO ACCESS



Faculty and students agree that embarrassment is the biggest barrier to students. In addition, faculty cite cost and education as major barriers for students to get period products.



ABSENTEEISM & EDUCATION INEQUITY

Absenteeism is one of the most powerful predictors of student success or failure. Chronic absenteeism, or missing 15+ days, is a key priority for Hawai'i public schools. While few students were chronically absent because of their periods, the pilot establishes a clear link between access to period products, absenteeism and education loss.

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FACULTY

SAY STUDENTS
MISSED AT LEAST
ONE SCHOOL DAY



13% of students reported missing at least one school day because they lacked access to period products. Of those, 26% missed 3 or more school days in a year.

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FACULTY

SAY STUDENTS
MISSED PART OF
THE SCHOOL DAY



22% of students reported missing part of the school day because they lacked access to period products. Of those, 31% missed classes 3 or more days in a year.

WHEN STUDENTS LACKED PERIOD PRODUCTS THEY USED

- NEWSPAPERS
- DIAPERS
- LEAVES
- FOLDER PAPER
- NAPKINS
- SOCKS
- TOILET PAPER
- OLD RAGS

53% OF FACULTY

Are unsure if students receive adequate education about menstruation and how to manage it. Only 8% of faculty said education was adequate, while half of students said it was not.

**"I USED A RED-MAROON JACKET TO HIDE THE LEAKING.
I WANTED TO MISS SCHOOL BUT JUST CARRIED ON WITH MY JACKET."**

- Middle School Student, Kaua'i



95% STUDENTS
91% FACULTY

**SAY YES TO
FREE PERIOD
PRODUCTS IN
SCHOOLS**

**IT'S TIME TO
TAKE ACTION**

↑ MAIMOVEMENT.ORG @MAIMOVEMENTHAWAII



PRIORITIZING PERIOD POVERTY

THE POWER OF ALLEVIATING PERIOD POVERTY IN OUR HAWAII PUBLIC & CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Ho'ohanohano Initiative is a pilot program that aims to increase student access to period products, including but not limited to pads and tampons, by distributing them free of charge in six schools on O'ahu, Hawai'i island, Maui, and Kaua'i. There are public, charter, Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools, ranging from elementary through high school in urban and rural communities. This impact report reflects midyear data from 237 faculty and 579 students during the 2021-22 school year. We reviewed product utilization and assessed the impact of free period products on student attendance, performance, and overall well-being. [Pre-survey results can be viewed HERE.](#)

OUR GIRLS USED TO HAVE TO PAY FOR THEIR PADS. IF THEY COULDN'T AFFORD IT, THEY WOULD STAY HOME AND USE OTHER THINGS TO TAKE [CARE] OF THEIR PERIOD NEEDS.

THIS PROGRAM IS A BLESSING.

- High School Faculty, O'ahu

COST & USAGE

Served approximately 2,353 students by distributing 38,280 period products since the start of the 2021-22 school year

Average use = 25 products per student*
Average cost = \$4-5 per student*

40% OF STUDENTS USED THE PRODUCTS PROVIDED

*between August and December 2021

PRODUCTS WERE MADE FREE AND AVAILABLE IN

BATHROOMS & STALLS
HEALTH ROOM
COUNSELOR'S OFFICE
CLASSROOMS
MAIN OFFICE
TEEN CENTER
ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

DECREASED BARRIERS TO ACCESSING PRODUCTS

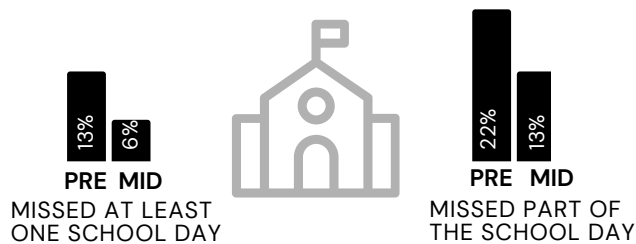
At the beginning of the school year, faculty and students agreed that embarrassment was the biggest barrier to students, followed by cost and education.

17%

Embarrassment as a barrier decreased from 33% to 16%.

IMPROVEMENT

STUDENTS REPORTED MISSING FEWER CLASSES AND SCHOOL DAYS WITH ACCESS TO PRODUCTS



37% of faculty reported that having period products helped students to reduce missed class or absences.

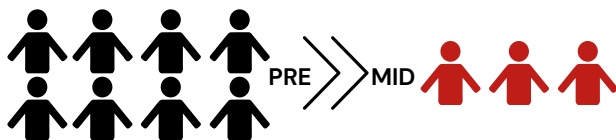
29% of faculty observed providing period products had a positive impact on students' social and emotional well-being.

IT WAS HELPFUL BECAUSE IN ONE OF MY CLASSES, I RANDOMLY GOT MY PERIOD CAUSING ME TO LEAK, PLUS I HAD NO PADS IN MY BAG, BUT THEY BROUGHT ME SOME FROM THE BATHROOM AND IT WAS LITERALLY A LIFE SAVER.

- Middle Charter School Student, O'ahu

7 / 10 STUDENTS PREFERRED PICKING UP PRODUCTS IN THE BATHROOM

Students preferred to pick up free period products in bathrooms (69%), the health room (50%), and classrooms (35%). Faculty preferred students pick up period products in the health room (57%), counselor's office (43%), and equally, bathroom and classrooms (32%).



8 out of 10 students faced difficulties getting period products at the start of the year. At the mid-survey, only 27% reported they weren't able to get period products when they needed them at school.

1% FACULTY ONLY 1% OF FACULTY reported witnessing students have difficulty accessing period products, down from 56% at the beginning of the year.

IT WAS VERY HELPFUL BECAUSE NOT EVERY GIRLS CAME TO SCHOOL BEING PREPARED WITH PADS. PADS ARE THE MOST NUMBER ONE IMPORTANT THINGS TO GIRLS, THEY HELP COVER UP FROM BLEEDING THROUGH OUR PANTS.

- High School & Elementary School Student, Hawai'i Island

IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION

PASS BILL HB2249 TO REQUIRE THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MAKE PERIOD PRODUCTS FREE IN ALL PUBLIC & CHARTER SCHOOLS

