EARLY FINDINGS SHOW PROVIDING MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IN THE WORKPLACE PROMOTES INCLUSIVITY, EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

GOING PERIOD POSITIVE:

WWW.PERIODPOSITIVELWORKPLACE.ORG
BACKGROUND

May 28, 2023

On May 28th, 2023, the Period Positive Workplace (PPW) initiative was launched worldwide in celebration of Menstrual Hygiene Day. The motivation to launch the PPW came from the simple idea to engage the private sector in the global menstrual equity movement.

In a space driven by grassroots advocacy and nonprofits, the notable absence of private companies suggested a new space for collaboration to address menstrual health needs in the workplace.

Diane Nelson
Global Advocacy Director | Days for Girls International

“We saw a gap in the fight for menstrual equity – a lack of involvement from the private sector. This initiative was created to bridge that gap and help bring businesses to the table. By working together, we can leverage the power of the private sector to create more inclusive and supportive work environments for all employees who menstruate.”

February 2024

The Period Positive Workplace steering committee sought to evaluate the prevalence of menstruation-related disruptions for employees at PPWs and assess how PPW interventions can assuage these disruptions.

In February of 2024, PPWs that opted to participate in data collection were sent two surveys: one to be completed by the employer or manager overseeing PPW implementation, and one to be completed by the employees of the organization. This report is a summary of both survey findings.
BECOME A
PERIOD POSITIVE WORKPLACE

TO BECOME CERTIFIED, ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO DO JUST THREE THINGS:

01 Provide Period Products
Provide period products at no cost in or near all bathrooms used by employees who menstruate

02 Ensure WASH Facilities
Meet the World Health Organization’s WASH facility standards to provide a clean & safe bathroom

03 Notify Employees
Inform employees via a formal notice that period products are and will continue to be provided

Once certified, PPWs have the option to share their certification on social media, attend an exclusive webinar on gender equality and menstrual health, and participate in data collection about the program.

In the one year since launching, 173 organizations representing 40 countries across every inhabited continent have become certified as Period Positive Workplaces.
Of the 62 employee survey respondents that experience menstruation:

Over half had experienced productivity challenges at work due to menstruation

Over half had either missed work entirely or had to work remotely/flexibly due to menstruation

24% rated their experience menstruating at work as challenging or very challenging

73% agreed that their and/or their colleagues’ experience managing menstruation at work had improved since their employer became a Period Positive Workplace

Of the 102 total employee survey respondents:

99% agreed that employees at their organization can freely or easily access menstrual products

When asked what more their employer could do to support menstrual health at work, respondents mostly selected increased ease of product access, increased product options, and menstrual health awareness initiatives.

“Colleagues have expressed feeling more comfortable and confident at work knowing that menstrual products are readily available and free. This seemingly small change has significantly reduced the anxiety around unexpected periods and the need to always be prepared, allowing individuals to focus more on their work without added stress.” - Employee from Pakistan

“One day, I unexpectedly started my period while at work and realized I didn’t have any menstrual products with me. In the past, this situation would have been incredibly stressful and embarrassing. But thanks to the organization’s new approach, I was relieved to find free menstrual products readily available in the restroom. It was such a simple yet impactful gesture that made me feel supported and valued by my employer.” - Employee from India
Of the 32 responding Period Positive Workplace leaders or implementing managers who completed the entire survey:

- 87% noticed the initiative had improved employee satisfaction
- 75% noticed the initiative had improved public perception of their organization
- 78% said the PPW initiated conversations around menstruation in their organization
- 91% agreed that it was easy to make period products available in or near the bathrooms at their workplace

“After taking part in the PPW campaign, [an employee] mentioned that the focus on personal well-being and self-care encouraged them to prioritize their own health and happiness, leading to increased productivity and job satisfaction.” - Employer from Nigeria

“I hear positive things all the time about providing period products. It is one of the lowest cost, highest impact efforts that we have been able to do to support the people who menstruate in our office.” - Employer from USA

37 Period Positive Workplace employers or implementing managers participated in any part of the survey:

Notably, 46% of those who identified as implementing managers did not menstruate, demonstrating the Period Positive Workplace as an accessible way for even non-menstruating managers and executives to get involved in menstrual equity work.
Research that sparked the creation of the PPW indicates that workplaces that provide period products report **reduced absenteeism, increased productivity, and higher collaboration** among employees who menstruate. Alternatively, inadequate menstrual health conditions in the workplace can lead to **wage loss, absenteeism, and limited physical mobility**.
This inaugural survey of Period Positive Workplaces supports the motivating idea in which providing period products at work improves menstrual experiences of employees, contributes to a culture of inclusivity alongside business benefits for the employer, and creates a space for productive conversations about menstrual health and its role in the workplace.

In future surveys, the PPW initiative may seek to measure employee benefits enjoyed following participation in the gender equality and menstrual health webinar, as well as directly reported outcomes by employees in areas of absenteeism, productivity, and perceived inclusivity.

As the PPW initiative continues to expand globally, these early findings support the case for businesses to prioritize inclusive work conditions, meet menstrual health needs for their employees to support their success at work, and demonstrate their commitment to advancing menstrual equity by becoming certified Period Positive Workplaces.

This report was made possible by the following authors & key contributors:
Jess Strait, Global Advocacy Manager, Days for Girls International
Renjini Devaki, Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Consultant
Diana Nelson, Global Advocacy Director, Days for Girls International
Jennifer Ka, Graphic Design Volunteer, Days for Girls International

The Period Positive Workplace initiative is led by a steering committee consisting of Days for Girls International, the Policy Project, PSI Europe, the Pad Project, the Toilet Board Coalition, Share the Dignity, and the International Sanitary Supply Association, in addition to regional coalition partners who coordinate the initiative in their respective communities. They are instrumental to the growth of the Period Positive Workplace initiative, and their contributions have made these findings possible.

www.periodpositiveworkplace.org
EARLY FINDINGS SHOW PROVIDING MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IN THE WORKPLACE PROMOTES INCLUSIVITY, EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION

OF 62 EMPLOYEES SURVEYED:

Over half had either missed work entirely or had to work remotely/flexibly due to menstruation

73% agreed that their and/or their colleagues’ experience managing menstruation at work had improved since their employer became a Period Positive Workplace

“...it was such a simple yet impactful gesture that made me feel supported and valued by my employer.”
- Employee from India

OF THE 32 EMPLOYERS SURVEYED:

87% noticed the initiative had improved employee satisfaction

75% noticed the initiative had improved public perception of their organization

91% agreed that it was easy to make period products available in or near the bathrooms at their workplace

“I hear positive things all the time about providing period products. It is one of the lowest cost, highest impact efforts that we have been able to do to support the people who menstruate in our office.”
- Employer from USA

PROVIDE PERIOD PRODUCTS
ENSURE WASH FACILITIES
NOTIFY EMPLOYEES

PERIODPOSITIVEWORKPLACE.ORG