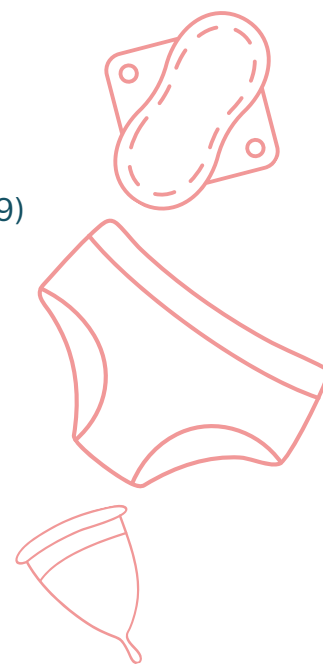


Reusable period products: use and perceptions among young people in Victoria, Australia.

Reusable menstrual products including period underwear, reusable pads and menstrual cups offer an alternative and may also offer environmental and cost sustainability.

In 2021 we conducted an online survey of 596 young people (15 – 29) in Victoria, Australia to answer the question:

How many young Victorians are using reusable menstrual products, and what do they think of them?



48%

Had tried a reusable product

Reusable product use was associated with:

- older age (age 25–29)
- being born in Australia
- having greater discretionary income.

Used a reusable during last period

37%

24% period underwear
17% menstrual cups
5% reusable pads

Over 1/3 of participants reported not having enough information about reusable products.

Younger participants (aged 15–19) and high school students were significantly less likely to report having sufficient information on reusables (47.7% and 55.7%, respectively).



What do young people want to support reusable product use?



1 More information, earlier

- Many participants reported wishing they had information about reusables earlier and suggested integration into school sex-ed programs.
- Some participants reported wanting more detailed information about cup use, fit, cleaning and potential risks.

“I would have loved to have learnt more about reusable menstrual products during sex ed at high school – they have totally changed the relationship I have with my period.”



Add comprehensive menstrual product information into school puberty and education programs.

2 Upfront cost is an access barrier

- Participants acknowledged the long-term cost-benefit, yet were deterred by the steep upfront cost of reusables.
- Not able to guarantee the correct fit of a menstrual cup prior to purchase was an additional barrier.

“The initial cost is what puts me off. I understand it would be more cost-effective in the long term, but when living week-to-week, sometimes you can't afford that cost.”



Explore incorporating reusable products into free provision programs or exploring other initiatives such as subsidization.

3 Improved public facilities and infrastructure

- Participants reported difficulty in changing reusable products outside of the home.

“How do I change/empty a cup in public places if I have a heavy flow?”



Support use outside of the home by ensuring public bathrooms are comfortable, private and safe, with access to water, soap and mirrors.

Citation (Be sure to cite this paper!)

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