

**MENSTRUAL  
HYGIENE MONTH  
2022**



# **MENSTRUAL HYGIENE MONTH CAMPAIGN 2022**

## **Safe Period For 1 Million Lives**

**Aiming to #EndPeriodStigma through  
action and awareness**

### **On-Field Support**

100 Trained  
Menstrual Hygiene  
Champions

### **Virtual & Art Symposiums**

Dialogue with  
policymakers, artists  
& ambassadors.  
(22nd & 29th May)

### **Digital Advocacy**

Bringing together  
voices on  
Social Media  
(20th to 29th May)



**YOUNGISTAAN  
FOUNDATION.ORG**

**unicef**  
for every child

# OVERVIEW

Throughout May 2022, Youngistaan Foundation in partnership with UNICEF India held online and on-ground activities to raise awareness on:

- **menstrual hygiene management**
- **breaking taboos on menstruation**
- **ending period stigma**

Around the world, billions of girls and women are stigmatized, discriminated against and excluded simply because they menstruate. It is unconscionable that a natural function of the human body should prevent girls and women from receiving an education, earning an income and equally participating in society.

Now, more than ever, increased awareness on safe menstruation and breaking period taboos is needed. Youngistaan Foundation aims to achieve the following objectives through our online and on-ground activities to reach 1 million people and:

- Break taboos and end the stigma surrounding menstruation
- Raise awareness on menstrual equity and period-friendly sanitation facilities
- Encourage girls and young women to share information from the training sessions to people in academic institutions, urban slums and communities
- Promote intergenerational dialogue on menstrual health using traditional and digital forms of media
- Host virtual symposiums and social media campaigns with the cohort of identified MHM Goodwill Ambassadors
- Train 100 young women as Menstrual Champions who will train others

## TOTAL REACH

763,483 PEOPLE

# SURVEY

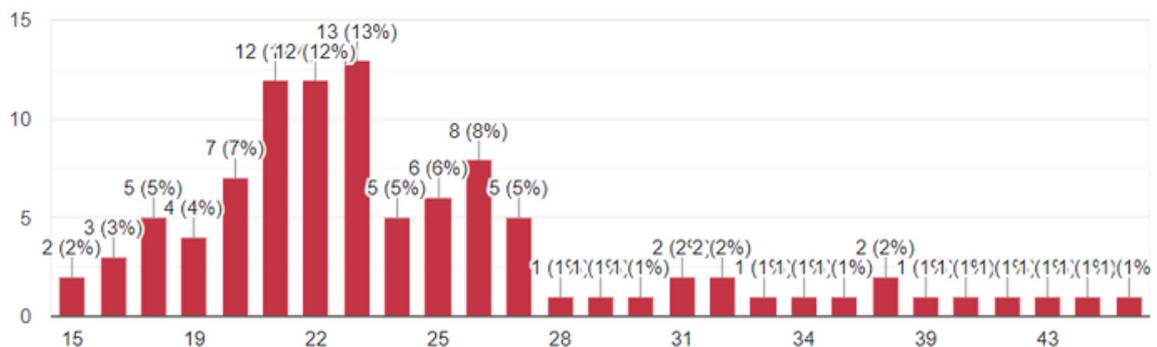
Throughout May 2022, Youngistaan Foundation observed Menstrual Hygiene Month focusing on the following objectives:

- Promoting menstrual hygiene management
- Breaking period taboos
- Ending period stigma

These objectives were carried out by interacting with men and women and boys and girls through awareness sessions on-ground and digital campaigns online. We set these objectives keeping in mind the practical changes in thinking and behavior that can take place in homes, classrooms, offices, and public places.

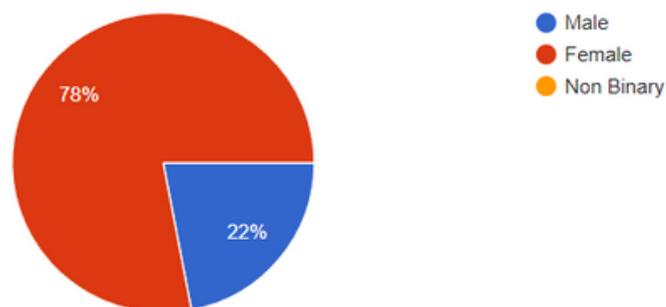
## Age

100 responses



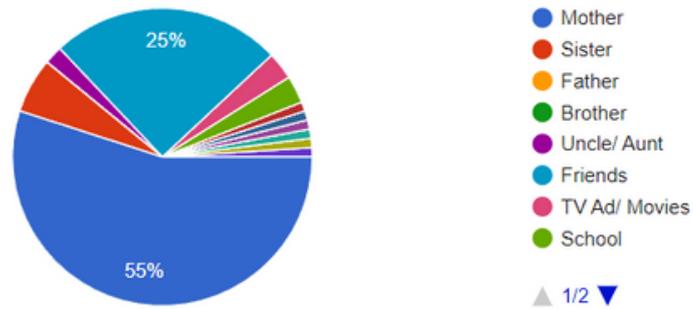
## Gender

100 responses



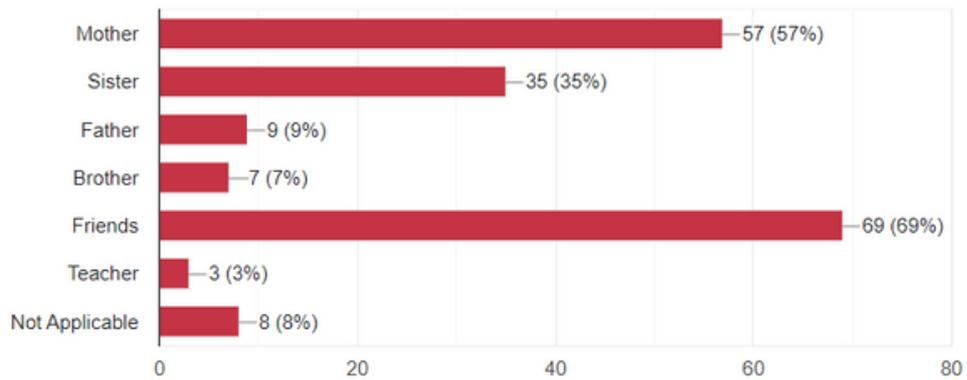
### How did you learn about periods for the first time?

100 responses



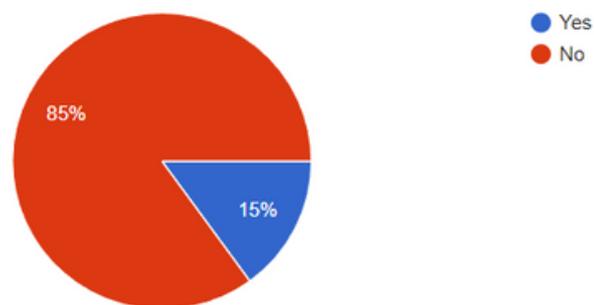
### With whom do you talk about periods freely?

100 responses



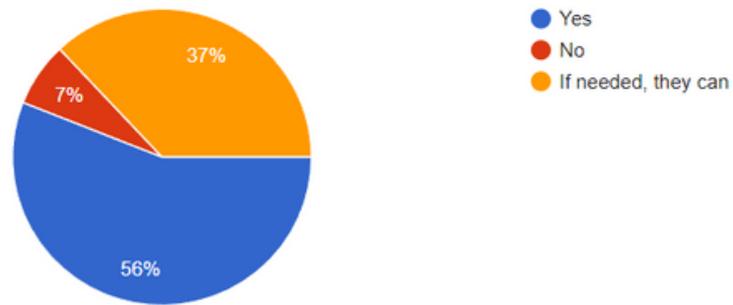
### Do you think periods should only be discussed by women?

100 responses



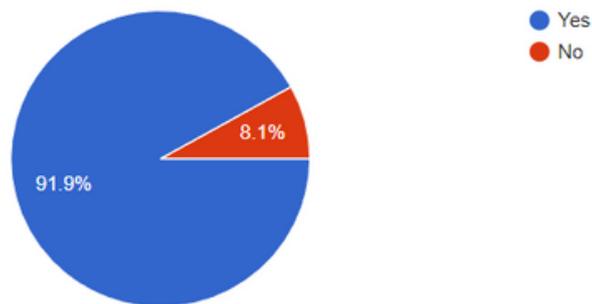
Do you think girls should talk to their fathers/brothers about periods?

100 responses



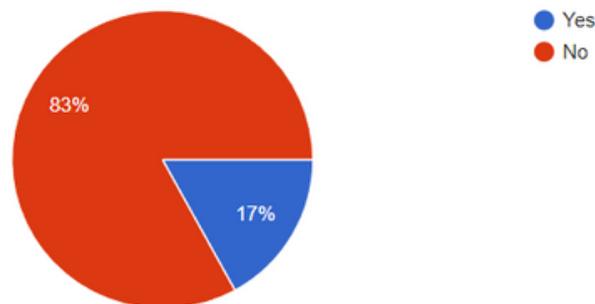
Do you think young boys should be taught about periods?

99 responses



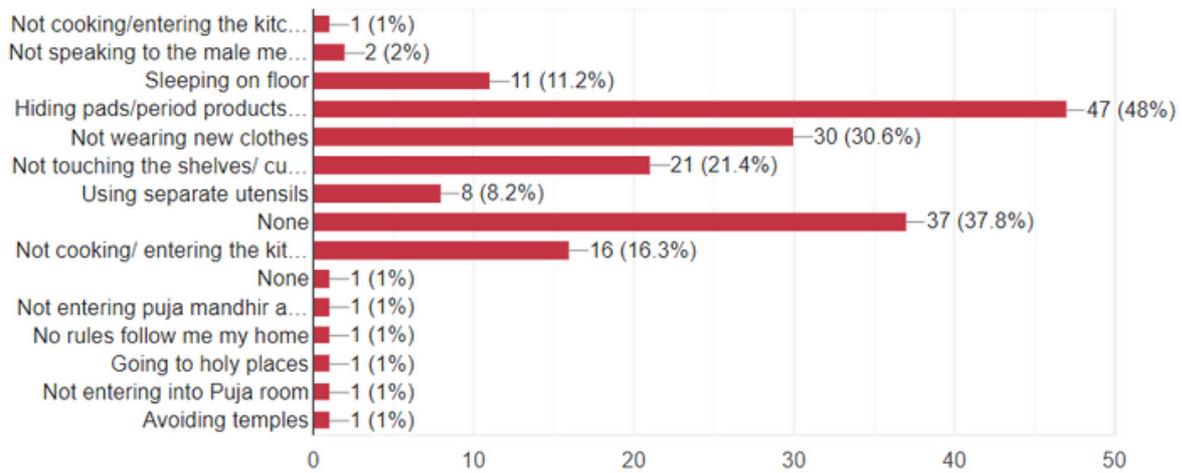
Do you think period blood is impure / dirty?

100 responses



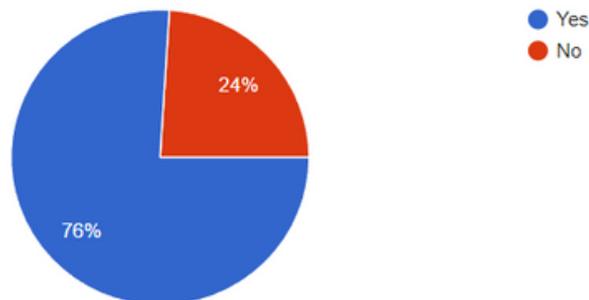
### Which of the following rules have you noticed being followed in your home during periods?

98 responses



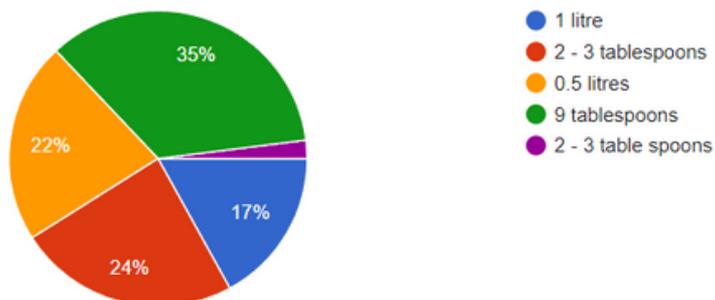
### Do you think women are capable of working during periods?

100 responses



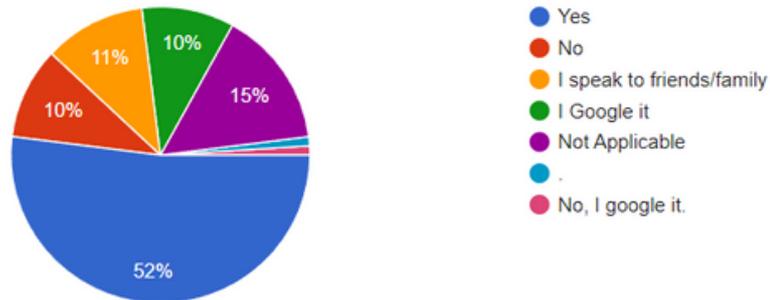
### On an average, how much blood do women bleed during periods?

100 responses



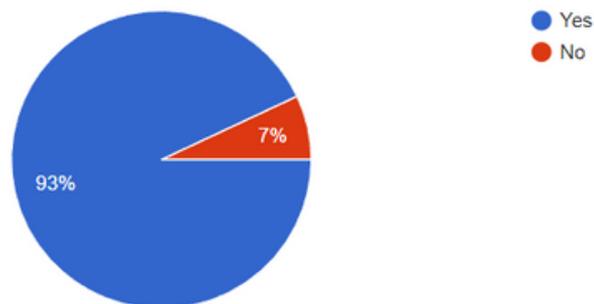
Do you consult a doctor (gynaecologist) when you have a problem with your periods?

100 responses



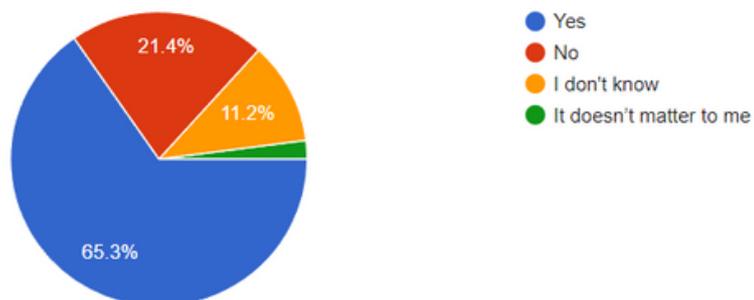
Do you think hotels / restaurants / other public places should provide sanitary napkins?

100 responses



Are period products expensive to buy?

98 responses

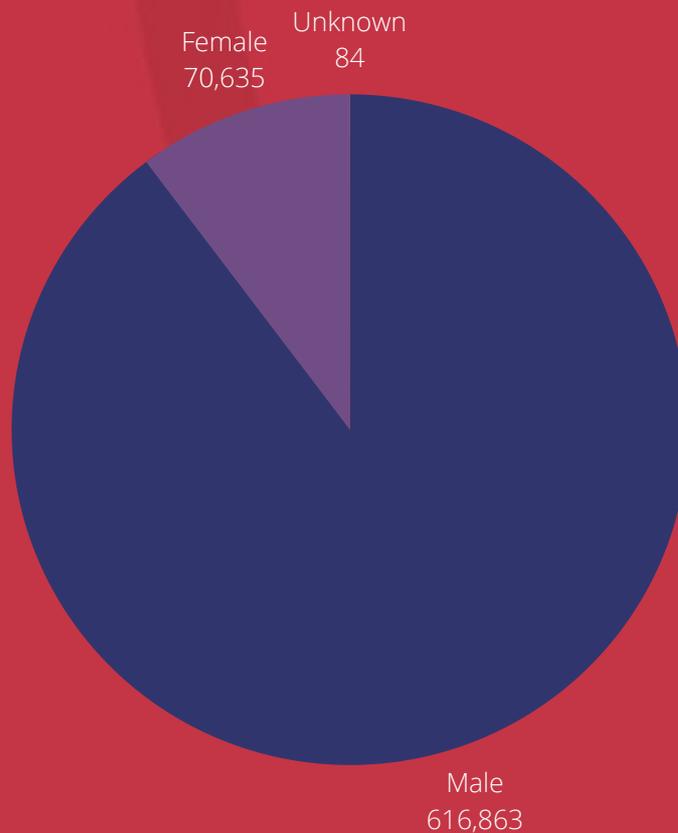


# ONLINE CAMPAIGN REACH

Throughout our month-long campaign, we reached a total of **687,582** people divided into the following age groups:

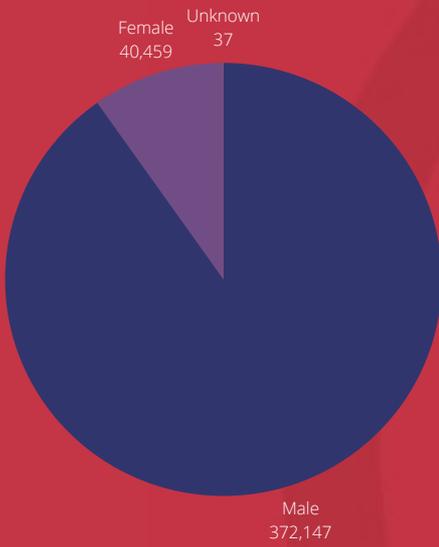
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65+

Most of those who engaged with our month-long online campaign on social media were male, with a small percentage of people whose gender was unknown.

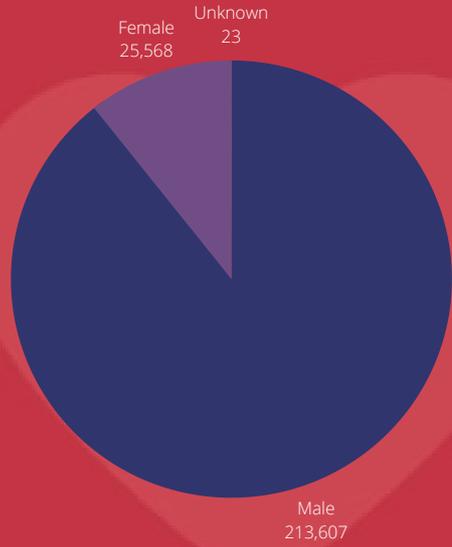


To look at the gender and age statistics of the people who interacted with our online campaign, continue on to the next page:

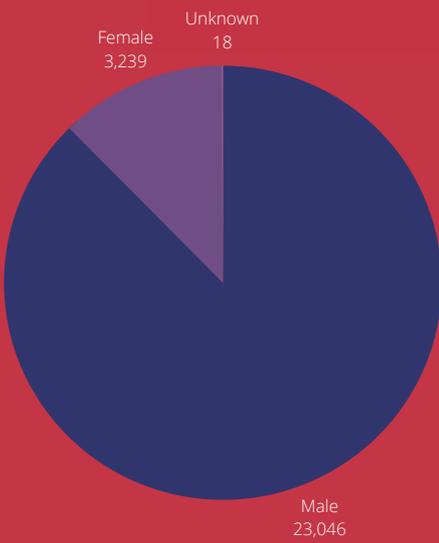
**AGE GROUP:**  
18 to 24  
412,643 people



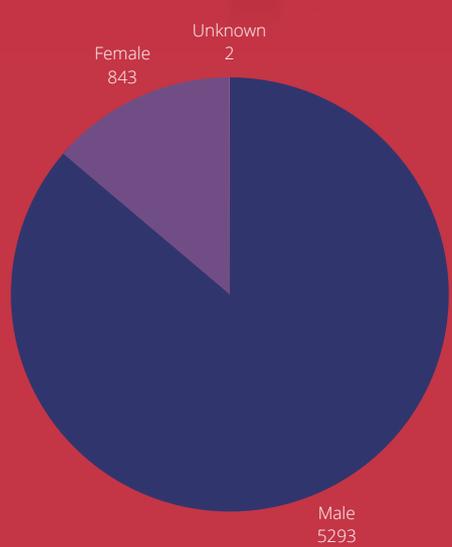
**AGE GROUP:**  
25 to 34  
239,198 people



**AGE GROUP:**  
35 to 44  
26,303 people

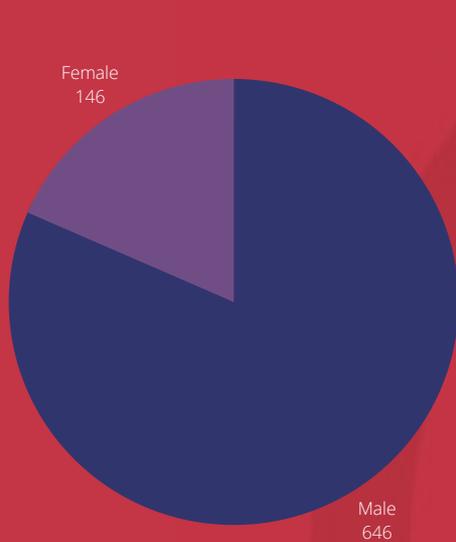


**AGE GROUP:**  
45 to 54  
6,138 people



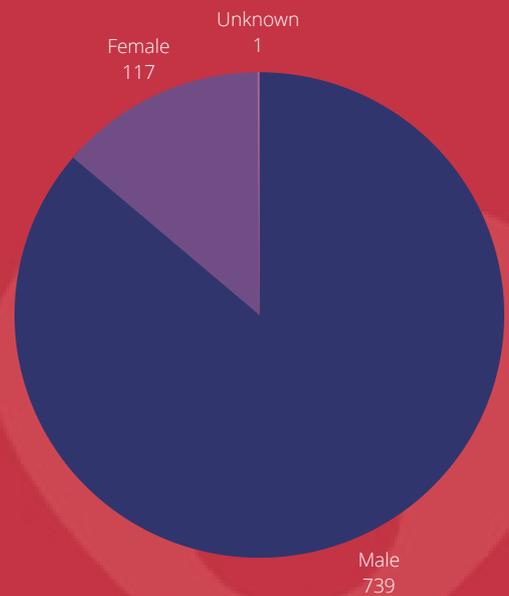
**AGE GROUP:**

55 to 64  
792 people



**AGE GROUP:**

65+  
857 people



# TWITTER SPACES

We held a Twitter Spaces discussion on normalizing conversations around menstruation. Listen here!



**CLICK HERE**  
TO LISTEN TO THE DISCUSSION!

# ONLINE CAMPAIGN

Our month-long campaign on social media focused on achieving the following objectives:

- Building awareness on menstruation and menstrual hygiene management
- Breaking taboos and ending the stigma on menstruation

## Unlike Humans, Plants Don't Discriminate

In this video, we are fighting against one of the many period taboos which claim that if a girl or woman on her period touches a plant, the plant will die. No, women are not impure while menstruating.

- A period is a natural and healthy part of a woman's reproductive health.
- For most girls in India, their first period is a confusing time since no one ever explained to them what periods are.
- Some girls even think they are dying when they see their menstrual blood for the first time!
- Around the world, periods taboos and resource limitations prevent girls from managing their periods with dignity. Why don't we just normalize period talk?



**CLICK HERE**  
TO WATCH THIS INSTAGRAM REEL!

# Keeping Periods a Secret From Men

Have you noticed that it's common to hide period products from men?

Even today, many girls and women hide their pads, tampons and cups from men. A few wash their cloth pads and hide them in their closets while their pads are still wet, just to avoid anyone seeing them.

In public spaces like classrooms and offices, many smuggle their period products into the washroom because they don't want them to be visible to anyone, especially men. Why don't we just normalize period talk?

Men are a part of periods too and can play a significant role in breaking period taboos and ending stigma.



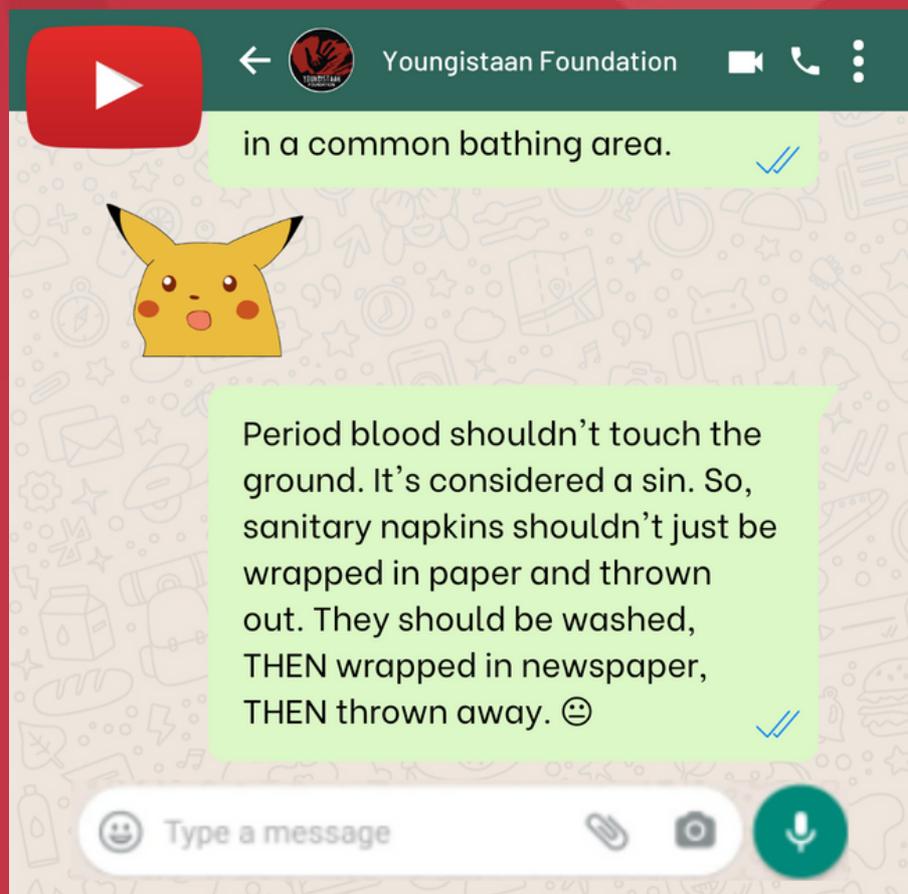
**CLICK HERE**  
TO WATCH THIS INSTAGRAM REEL!

# Shocking Period Taboos We Have Heard

What are some shocking taboos or stigma about periods that you have personally experienced or heard?

We asked this question and received multiple answers indicating that period taboos are still being passed down from generation to generation. Shockingly, we also received some never-before-heard answers from young girls. The fact that new taboos and stigmas are being created and followed is another reason we should continue to raise awareness on these taboos and work to end period stigma.

Talking about it is the first step to breaking the stigma and helping girls and women across the world practice safe menstruation.



**CLICK HERE**  
TO READ THIS CHAT!

# 9 Myths and Facts on Periods

Most of what we know about menstruation is not rooted in FACT but MYTH.

There are multiple reasons we develop taboos and stigma over time - but let's look at the consequences of those myths. Stigma about periods leads to 23 million girls dropping out of school every year in India due to a lack of menstrual hygiene management facilities, among other reasons.

In turn, the disrupted education leads to reduced employment and this has consequences for the entire family, community and nation. Stigma around periods has far-reaching consequences but we can stop and reverse this.

Let's examine what we think we know about periods. Is it myth, or is it fact?



**CLICK HERE**  
TO WATCH THIS VIDEO!

# More Myths and Facts on Periods

This is the most common statement you hear when you ask women about their **first period experience**.

In a study about Menstrual Hygiene Management in India in 2016, it was found that **50% of adolescent girls did not know about menstruation until the first time they got their period**.

No wonder they are filled with shock, confusion and fear when they first start menstruating and **they continue to associate their periods with some degree of trauma and shame for the rest of their lives**.

Young children are often much smarter than we give them credit for. It is generally agreed upon by doctors and experts that by the time children turn 8-9 years old, they gain the ability to understand the concept of menstruation in simplistic terms.

The average age of children hitting puberty is decreasing all over the world, and this makes it all the more important for children to be aware of and prepared for the changes their bodies will go through.

If such topics are normalised at the home and family level, girls will feel more confident talking about it and seeking help and support when they need it.

**Open conversations are the only way to create a future generation that is not stigmatised by the mere mention of menstruation.**

**"When I got my first period, I thought I was DYING!"**



**Comment "YES" if you agree**

# More Myths and Facts on Periods

Most of what we believe about menstruation is not rooted in fact - but myth. Let's re-think why we believe certain things about the physical body, but not others.

**Pregnancy and periods are two sides of the same coin. Then why is it that, in our culture,**



**PREGNANCY IS CELEBRATED**



**PERIODS ARE SHAMEFUL**



**"How are women deemed ashudh when they're bleeding? It's beyond ridiculous. Dont people know why we bleed? It's a sign that we have the ability to give birth to another life. Disallowing women to enter temples during their periods angers me. It's absurd because it's the rule of nature. There's nothing wrong with you, girls. It's just a thought process that needs to change."**



**- Alia Bhatt, Bollywood Actor**

# Let's Normalize Period Products!

"Would you wrap soap or toothpaste in newspaper? Then, why menstrual products?"

Most people have faced discomfort when purchasing period products. From wrapping sanitary pads in newspaper and then a black plastic bag, to hiding them in our homes, period products remain hidden from sight.

But, as this video shows, period products are an essential product much as soap or toothpaste it. If we don't hide soap or toothpaste, there is no need to hide sanitary pads or other menstrual products.

When we can openly discuss periods, then the stigma that many people face when buying period products can end.

Normalizing period products is a step toward normalizing menstruation.



**ME BUYING PADS AT A  
LOCAL SHOP**



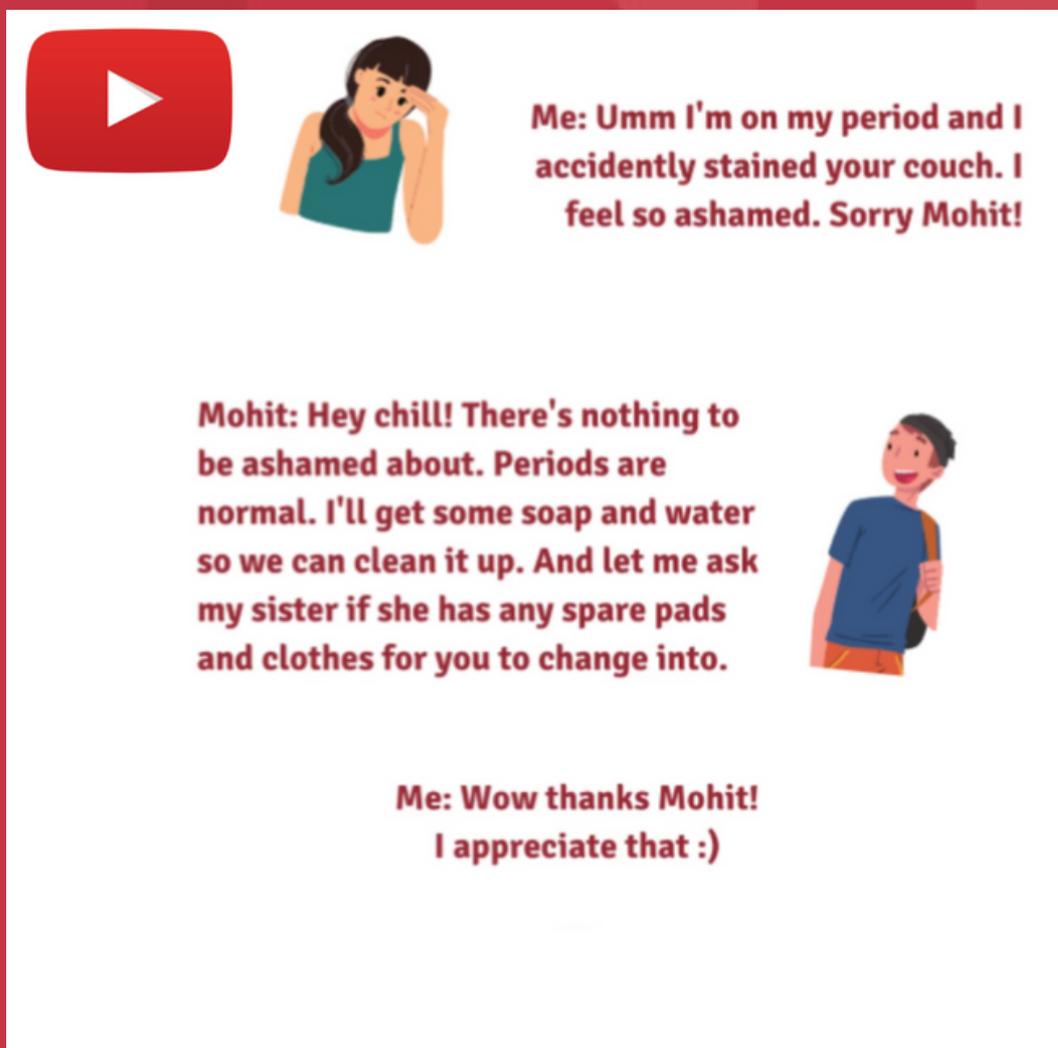
**CLICK HERE  
TO WATCH THIS VIDEO!**

# Let's Normalize Period Conversations!

"Oh no! I'm at Mohit's house, and I'm on my period and stained his couch. What should I do!"

Many people are still embarrassed to talk about periods, even amongst friends. But openly discussing periods, as we would about any other process of the human body, is healthy as it is important.

Normalizing period conversations is a step toward normalizing menstruation.



**Me: Umm I'm on my period and I accidentally stained your couch. I feel so ashamed. Sorry Mohit!**

**Mohit: Hey chill! There's nothing to be ashamed about. Periods are normal. I'll get some soap and water so we can clean it up. And let me ask my sister if she has any spare pads and clothes for you to change into.**

**Me: Wow thanks Mohit! I appreciate that :)**



**CLICK HERE**  
TO WATCH THIS VIDEO!

# ADVOCACY

Here are 8 ways YOU can be an advocate for menstrual health:

- Be your child's primary source of information
- Involve men in conversations about periods
- Find out if menstruation is taught in your child's school
- Normalize period products
- Talk about periods with others
- Make period products available at the workplace
- Educate yourself and listen to others
- Donate menstrual products to those in need

## BE YOUR CHILD'S PRIMARY SOURCE OF INFORMATION

Talking about periods shouldn't be one big talk at a particular age. Instead, start the conversation early, and slowly build on your child's understanding. Girls and boys need reliable information about periods. Make sure you talk to your sons too! Over the years, you can give your child more information as he or she is ready.



## INVOLVE THE MEN IN PERIOD CONVERSATIONS

Involving the men in your family (fathers or brothers) in conversations about periods encourages the belief that periods are not just a women's issue. The stigma associated with periods can only be overcome when men know about it and talk about it without any hesitation.



## NORMALIZE PERIOD PRODUCTS

You don't need to hide period products from your kids while on your way to the bathroom or while buying them at the store. It's okay for them to ask questions. You should be prepared with age-appropriate answers to build on their awareness.



## FIND OUT IF MENSTRUAL EDUCATION IS INTRODUCED AT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL

You can try involving other parents as you approach your child's school to find out about sexual and reproductive health education being taught in their school. You should hold the school accountable for making pads freely available for all menstruating students to use when needed.



## TALK PERIODS TO YOUR HOUSE HELP

Your house help would really benefit from an open conversation about this topic. The menstrual myths, stigmas and taboos are deep rooted within their families. You could break these notions by educating them and encouraging them to normalise period talk within their families.



## MAKE SANITARY PRODUCTS AVAILABLE AT YOUR WORK PLACE

Talk to your work place to ensure that they make feminine hygiene products readily available in women's washrooms. If they can provide toilet paper and hand washes, why should pads and tampons be any different?



## EDUCATE YOURSELF AND LISTEN EMPATHETICALLY

Sometimes, it can be easy to think that times have changed and period poverty is a thing of the past. Make sure you keep yourself educated about the ground reality and listen without prejudice when someone opens up to you regarding the issues they are facing with their menstrual health.



## DONATE MENSTRUAL HYGIENE PRODUCTS

Most people in our country do not have the resources to purchase sanitary products during periods. Providing affordable and sustainable menstrual products can improve girls' menstrual health. This will also ensure that they don't have to miss school when they are on their periods.



# ON-GROUND CAMPAIGN

Throughout the month, we held on-ground sessions to 6,352 people throughout Hyderabad on the following topics to ensure that young people have information on:

- What is menstruation
- What happens during the menstrual cycle
- How to use menstrual products
- PMS (it's real)
- Myths, taboos and stigma on periods
- Proper hand washing steps
- Building immunity
- Eating healthy food
- Don't spread germs

Youngistaan Foundation made it possible for anyone to join the Menstrual Hygiene Day campaign 2022 – by using their social media presence to raise awareness on menstrual hygiene and breaking period taboos – in their own personal way!





# HACKATHON

Grand finale of the #Innovate4MenstrualWaste Hackathon was one-of-a-kind. We saw some outstanding and much needed innovative menstrual waste ideas by young people in Telangana.

Over 240 participants held the sessions in 8 locations in Telangana in this unique initiative organized by Telangana State Innovation Cell (TSIC).



# BREAK THE SILENCE AROUND PERIODS

Break The Silence Around Periods was held in Lamakaan on Saturday May 21st in Hyderabad as a part of Youngistaan Foundation's month-long Menstrual Hygiene Month campaign. We reached **412** people with the event, which included activities such as:

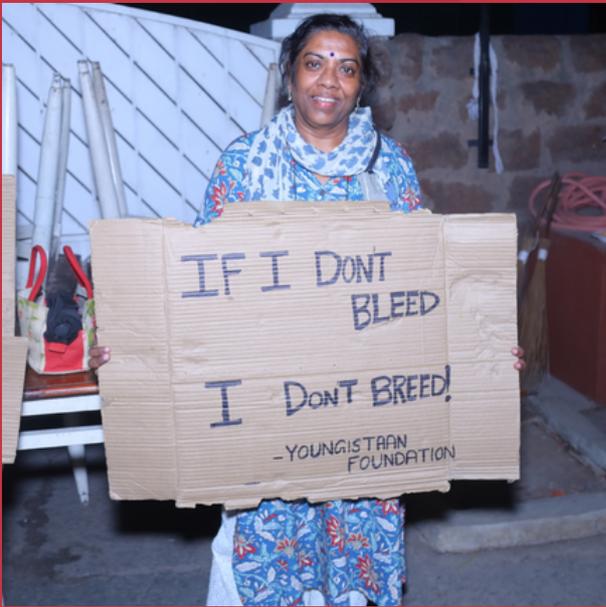
- Storytelling
- Poetry
- Standup comedy
- Live music
- Drama
- Open mic

Through their poems, slam poets from the Hyderabad Arts and Culture Community (HACC) named Rana Khan and Krishna, highlighted the importance of sustainable menstruation and the natural process of periods. Stand-up comedian Roshni Rao normalized talk about periods and also discussed period stigma while making the audience laugh. Hyderabad Storytellers Association (HYSTA), a collective of storytellers, performed a skit on menstrual education.



Those in attendance also had the opportunity to take to the stage and share their personal experiences about menstrual stigma and taboos. Some shared how they were shunned by their family members while speaking about their periods.

The men at the event also shared their experiences of learning new things about menstruation, and thanked the organizers for creating a carefree environment to discuss periods.



*“Menstrual hygiene and the taboos around it are hardly spoken about in public spaces. I believe it’s time we speak about it and create awareness to the people around us. The Break The Silence Around Periods event aims to do this. Today, we’re building conversations on menstrual hygiene using art, with men as a part of the conversation. The open nature of conversations like this can help normalize menstruation. We will be initiating more conversations on menstruation and other social issues going forward.”*

Arun Daniel Yellamaty, the Founder of Youngistaan Foundation



**CLICK HERE**  
TO WATCH A RECAP OF THIS EVENT!



## THE WAY FORWARD

The 100 Menstrual Hygiene Champions who were trained throughout the course of this month-long campaign will be active in creating awareness throughout the year on:

- menstrual hygiene management
- breaking taboos on menstruation
- ending period stigma

# MILAAP FUNDRAISER

As a part of our month-long Menstrual Hygiene Month campaign, Youngistaan Foundation ran a fundraiser on Milaap for people to get involved and provide sanitary products to young girls who lack access to them.

In addition to receiving sanitary products, we encouraged girls to share the information they learned on menstrual hygiene awareness with others.

On the Milaap fundraiser, people can donate a Period Safe Kit worth Rs. 1,000 containing sanitary pads, hygiene products, awareness materials and also includes the transport costs for the team to go to the location and hold the sessions.

A donation will support Youngistaan Foundation to purchase period products, and and create awareness on menstruation and breaking period taboos.

SANITARY  
NAPKINS *DISTRIBUTION  
DRIVE*



**CLICK HERE**  
TO DONATE TO OUR CAMPAIGN!

The period kits are for distribution in government schools, slums, and orphanages in the age group of 12 to 20. The distribution is to take place after a 2-hour interactive awareness session by Youngistaan Foundation's trained volunteers.

# NEWS COVERAGE

If you would like to get in touch with Youngistaan Foundation, you may contact us the following ways:



**MENSTRUATION TABOOS  
KEEPING WOMEN IN THE DARK  
29 MAY 2022**



**CLICK HERE  
TO READ THIS ARTICLE!**



**YOUNGISTAAN FOUNDATION  
ORGANIZES AWARENESS  
PROGRAM ON MENSTRUAL  
HYGIENE | 23 MAY 2022**



**CLICK HERE  
TO READ THIS ARTICLE!**

# CONTACT US

If you would like to get in touch with Youngistaan Foundation, you may contact us the following ways:

## GET IN TOUCH:



+91 98853 42224



arun@youngistaanfoundation.org



[youngistaanfoundation.org](http://youngistaanfoundation.org)

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