

## 28 CONVERSATIONS

Menstruation is a normal human process and a sign of good health. In order to normalize menstruation, we must challenge the taboos and stigmas surrounding it.

**Let's start the conversation about menstruation!**

### YOU Can Start the Conversation About Menstruation!

This sheet will help you start a conversation in your family, school, group of friends, or community. Do this on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May – Menstrual Hygiene Day – or any other day of the year! Below are 28 questions that have the potential to spark 28 conversations. Feel free to use them all, or just select a few that you think will help lead a good, comfortable discussion.

#### ***Tips before starting your conversation:***

- Establish a 'safe space' where everyone can express his opinion and feelings openly, free of judgment.
- You can delegate one person to be an informal facilitator, who determine any ground rules, guide you through the questions, and maintain a respectful atmosphere.

#### ***Conversations can take many forms:***

- Sit down and discuss the questions below in a group or with one friend
- Invite participants to share their answers by writing them anonymously
- Screen one of the following videos to inspire a discussion:
  - On YouTube: [Menstruation in Kenya](#), [Walt Disney's "The Story of Menstruation"](#), [The Beauty of Red](#), [The Female Puberty Ritual in South India](#)
  - On DVD: [The Moon Inside You](#) (full length)/ [Monthlies](#) (short film) (screening access for MH Day partners, just ask [danielle.keiser@wash-united.org](mailto:danielle.keiser@wash-united.org))
- Read and discuss recommended books such as "[Cycling to Grandma's House](#)" for children and "[The Red Tent](#)" for adults.

### 28 Questions to inspire conversations and discussions:

#### Menstruation and the Menstrual Cycle

1. Have you heard about menstruation?
2. What do you think about menstruation?
3. How were your views about menstruation shaped?
4. Are you aware of the process of menstruation?
5. What do you know about the uterus?
6. How much do you know about the different phases of the menstrual cycle?
7. What questions do you have about the menstrual cycle?
8. Did anyone (sister/mother/friend) mention about her period? Do you believe in celebrating the first period (menarche)? How and why?

### Changing Emotions and Bodies

9. What are the major changes you see in boys & girls when they grow?
10. Have you noticed any different behavior among women / girls during specific days at school & home?

### Talking About Menstruation

11. What do you think is the best way for girls and boys to learn about menstruation?
12. Have you ever discussed male & female physiological changes with your father/ grandfather or male teacher?
13. Do you talk with your female relatives or classmates about menstruation? Why or why not?
14. How do you feel about discussing menstruation? In what context do you feel most comfortable to talk about it (with or without girls)?

### Managing Menstruation

15. Have you ever seen a sanitary napkin? Would you like to? Do you know what it is used for? What other menstrual hygiene products do you know?
16. What products do your female relatives use? How and where do they dispose of these products? How do these products impact the environment and people around you?
17. Have you ever provided money to your daughter/mother/sister/wife to buy sanitary napkins? How much should the monthly budget for managing periods be?
18. If any of your female relatives asked you to buy sanitary napkins for them, would you be comfortable doing that? Why / why not?
19. What kinds of facilities are required by girls to take care of themselves when they have their period (at home, school, the workplace, or public toilets)?
20. How would you support your female relative if they didn't have the products they like or facilities they need?

### Past, Present and Future

21. How do you think women and girls in other countries and societies manage their period? What questions do you have for them?
22. What would you like the next generation to know about menstruation and physiological changes?

### Myths and Taboos

23. What ideas exist in your community or country around menstruation? What do you think about them – are they true or false?
24. Have you tried to confront or challenge any of the myths, taboos, or ideas about menstruation to support your sister/mother/aunt/daughter? If so, how?
25. Have you ever been told anything about menstruation by your elders or heard them discuss it? What were you told about it?
26. What would you like to better understand about menstruation?
27. Does menstruation matter (to you)? If so, why?
28. Do you plan to celebrate Menstrual Hygiene Day every May 28?

