

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 28th 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)
- 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:

Starters

1. How did you first learn about menstruation?
2. What was it like when you got your first period? Did you know how to deal with it? What were your assumptions about menstruation? Who was the first person you told? Did you do anything special? Do you think celebrating the first period (menarche) is a good idea?
3. If someone you know told you that she got her first period, what would you tell her?
4. What do you think is the best way for girls and boys to learn about menstruation?
5. Where do you go for information if you have a question about your period? Is there someone that you talk to?

Emotions/ Body

6. How do you, your self and your body, feel when you have your period?

7. What are your funny, happy, sad, or embarrassing period stories?
8. If you could change your experience of menstruation, what would you change?
9. When you think about menstruation or hear/ see a reference to it, how do you feel?

The Cycle

10. Do you keep track of your menstrual cycle? If so, how?
11. How regular is your cycle? Do you have a different pattern, or no pattern yet?
12. How much do you know about the different phases of the menstrual cycle? Can you tell when you are in each phase?

Managing Your Period

13. What products do you use to manage your period? What products have you tried and how did you like them? How and where do you dispose of your products? How do these products impact the environment and people around you?
14. Where do you get your products from? How much do you spend on them each month? Where do you get the money and is it easy to get? What would you propose as a method to assist those who cannot afford sanitary napkins?
15. Do you do anything differently during your period?
16. What facilities do you need to take care of yourself when you have your period (at home, school, the workplace, or public toilets)?
17. What would you do if you didn't have the products you like or facilities, such as a private toilet, you need?
18. Has your [father/ brother / husband](#) ever seen a sanitary napkin? Do you think they know what it is used for? Have they ever responded strangely about it?

Past, Present and Future

19. Do you know how your mother or grandmother managed their menstruation?
20. How do you think women and girls in other countries and societies manage their period? What questions do you have for them?
21. How would you like the your daughters' experience of menstruation to be different from yours?

Myths and Taboos

22. What ideas exist in your community or country around menstruation? What do you think about them – are they true or false?
23. Have you tried to confront or challenge any of the myths, taboos, or ideas about menstruation? If so, how?
24. Have you ever been told anything about menstruation by your elders or heard them discuss it? What were you told about it?
25. What would you like to better understand about menstruation?
26. Does menstruation matter to men and boys? Do you think they should know about it? Do you talk with your male relatives or classmates about it? Why or why not?
27. How do you feel about discussing menstruation with your [father/ brother / husband](#)? In what context do you feel most comfortable to talk about it? have you ever asked them to buy sanitary napkins for you, would they be comfortable doing that? Why / why not?
28. Does menstruation matter (to you)? If so, why? Do you plan to celebrate Menstrual Hygiene Day every May 28?

