

Abstract Submission – The South Australian Youth Forum

Addressing Period Product Access for Young People in South Australia: Insights from the South Australian Youth Forum

Authors:

Wilkinson A¹, Sterian C¹, Moon C¹, Choi E¹, Forsythe H¹, Ats J¹, Bovell L¹, Brock-Fabel A¹

¹The South Australian Youth Forum

Background:

Access to period products is essential for maintaining health and educational engagement among young people. However, various barriers hinder this access, contributing to stigma, financial burden, and psychological stress. This study identifies and analyses these barriers to create a comprehensive framework for improving period product access in South Australian schools.

Methods:

The study was uniquely conducted by the South Australian Youth Forum, an initiative led by young people for young people. This approach ensured that the study was grounded in the experiences and perspectives of the target population. The study utilised a qualitative approach, gathering data through focus groups and surveys conducted at the South Australian Youth Forum. Participants included young people from diverse backgrounds, including different genders, ages, and cultural identities. Thematic analysis was employed to identify key barriers and develop actionable recommendations for enhancing period product access and reducing stigma.

Results:

The analysis highlighted several key barriers:

1. Stigma and Negative Connotations
2. Financial Barriers
3. Inadequate School Facilities
4. Educational Gaps
5. Psychological and Situational Barriers

Conclusions:

The study underscores the urgent need for systemic changes to improve period product access and reduce stigma in schools. To address these issues, recommendations were proposed, including further education, promoting accessibility, and changes to facilities and infrastructure. The full list is found in the Framework. These recommendations aim to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for menstruators, thereby enhancing their educational health experience and well-being.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The South Australian Youth Forum and the authors recognise the significant contributions made by various stakeholders in addressing period product access and related issues. We also acknowledge the importance of transparency in disclosing potential conflicts of interest. The authors declare no conflicts of interest. This ensures clarity and maintains the integrity of our findings and recommendations.