

THE RED REPORT

THE

RED REPORT

Experiences and attitudes  
towards menstruation  
in the UK.

2026



Irise International

# A message from our youth board

**“Push for better education, challenge stigma in schools, homes and workplaces, and back up conversations with evidence.”**

Research like this matters because it turns what young people have been saying for years into hard evidence. The Red Report shows that embarrassment, discrimination and low confidence around menstruation are still widespread, and we know that this gap affects health, dignity and equality, not just periods.

Young people and communities should use this report to push for better education, challenge stigma in schools, homes and workplaces, and back up conversations with evidence. It also gives us a clear message that knowledge builds confidence, and confidence helps people speak up, buy products, talk to doctors and support others without shame.

As a young change maker on the Empower Period Committee, I want other young activists and decision-makers to take this seriously. Let's close the Menstrual Literacy Gap by making menstrual health normal to talk about, challenging myths wherever they show up, and making sure young people grow up with the information and support they deserve.



**Millicent Wenlock**

Empower Period Committee Member  
Irise International

# A message from our CEO

## The Red Report exists because we cannot change what we refuse to name.

In this, the second year of Irise's Red Report, we lay bare the reality of menstrual shame and stigma in the UK today, exploring how it manifests through discrimination and exclusion. We reveal how menstrual injustice is deeply entwined with wider systems of inequity and boldly confront who, therefore, is most deeply impacted by our collective discomfort.

Generations have been taught that menstruation is something to hide rather than something to understand. Knowledge about our own bodies has been withheld through systems rooted in misogyny and patriarchy. This data builds on last year's finding that knowledge is power. It's not only about how much you know - but the confidence in using what you know to better advocate for ourselves, our bodies and our fellow menstruators.

But this also raises urgent questions: where are people getting their information from, and who gets to decide whose knowledge is visible, credible and accessible? In a world shaped by algorithms, misinformation and censorship, accurate menstrual information is hidden, while harmful myths continue to spread freely and honest conversations about our bodies are still treated as controversial. That is not accidental.

The Red Report helps us to move the conversation away from one of product access, to understanding menstruation as a public health issue, a human rights issue, and a matter of social justice. We explore how the reality of menstrual injustice continues to shape our experiences in schools, workplaces, healthcare systems and communities. Importantly, the report is designed as a milestone and a call to action - building the evidence we need to challenge the status quo, identifying where progress is happening and to expose the gaps that continue to shape people's lives.

This report is for our allies - for the young people, the campaigners, the overlooked and underfunded grassroots organisations and movements who continue to push for change, often while carrying the weight of their own experiences of menstrual injustice. For those who have been shamed into silence, dismissed when seeking healthcare, excluded from education or work, or made to feel that their pain, bodies and experiences matter less.

This report is for you, please use it. Use it to start conversations, to strengthen campaigning, to shape policy, and to move resources towards the communities leading change. Share it. Reference it. Bring it into your workplaces and schools.

Menstrual justice is a collective action. If you want to partner with us as we drive resources to activists and grassroots leaders - we would love to hear from you.



**Chrissy Cattle**  
CEO  
Irise International

## Executive Summary

# It's here, our 2026 Red Report.

Published each year around [MH Day](#), this annual report tracks the UK's attitudes, understanding, and action on menstruation. It's designed to be a national barometer for menstrual justice - a tool to measure whether we're moving forwards, standing still, or sliding backwards.

This year's findings make one thing unmistakably clear: progress is not happening quickly enough.

**The 2026 data shows that menstrual injustice remains deeply rooted in the UK, shaped by stigma, silence, and systemic inequity. Those facing overlapping systems of oppression continue to carry the greatest burden.**

At the same time, the report reinforces a critical truth:

**knowledge is power.**

Those that report feeling more knowledgeable are significantly more likely to feel comfortable talking about menstruation in a variety of everyday settings. When people are better informed and more menstrually literate, they are more confident, more able to advocate for themselves, and more able to shift the dial on stigma, systems, and outcomes.

**The 2026 findings paint a stark picture:** menstrual stigma, discrimination, and inequality remain deeply embedded in UK society, with those facing systemic disadvantage continuing to bear the greatest burden.

**Yet the data also points to a powerful opportunity.**

Public support for change is growing, awareness is increasing, and there is clear momentum for more ambitious, structural action on menstrual health and justice.

## Discrimination persists

**10% of menstruators experienced discrimination due to menstruation in the last 12 months.**

This was more likely to have been experienced by millennials who menstruate (13%), ethnically diverse communities (15%), and those struggling to afford period products (36%).

## Shame still shapes behaviour

**26% of menstruators felt embarrassed about their period in the last 12 months.**

This was more likely to have been experienced by Gen Z respondents (29%), people with disabilities (29%), and those struggling to afford period products (49%).

## Knowledge gaps remain significant

**57% of adults say they feel knowledgeable about periods and menstruation, suggesting as many as 43% may not.**

Even among people who currently menstruate, 17% do not report feeling knowledgeable about their own menstrual health.

## Comfort remains low in everyday life

**Only 47% of adults feel comfortable discussing periods with family, 37% with colleagues 41% with children and young people, and just 30% in mixed-gender social settings.**

Discomfort remains widespread across public and private life.

## Period poverty remains widespread

**1 in 5 menstruators sometimes struggle to afford period products (21%), and consistent with our 2025 findings this continues to be more likely to have been experienced by Gen Z (23%), people with disabilities (29%), and lower-income groups/C2DE (24%).**

## Support for structural change is strong

**52% of respondents support workplace menstrual leave policies, while only 13% oppose.**

In 2025 this was 51% and 15% respectively, suggesting public appetite for action is slowly growing.

# Findings

The survey which sits behind the Red Report has been **co-created with Irise's youth-board the Empower Period Committee, and was conducted by [Opinium](#) on behalf of Irise International.** Fieldwork for this UK nationally representative survey of 2,000 adults took place in April 2026, and the data has been weighted by age, gender and other key demographics to be representative of the UK population.

**Please use the reference: The Red Report, Irise International, 2026.**

## In the following pages, we share findings across three key dimensions:

### Shame & Stigma

Which includes insights on:

- **Discrimination**
- **Embarrassment**
- **Shifting stigma**
- **Comfortability**

### Menstrual Literacy

Which includes insights on:

- **Knowledge**
- **The Knowledge & Comfort Paradigm**
- **Information sources**

### Policy & Products

Which includes insights on:

- **Menstrual leave**
- **Period poverty**

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hhhh **Stigma** hhhh

hhhhhhhh **&** hhhhhhh

hhhhhh **Shame** hhhh

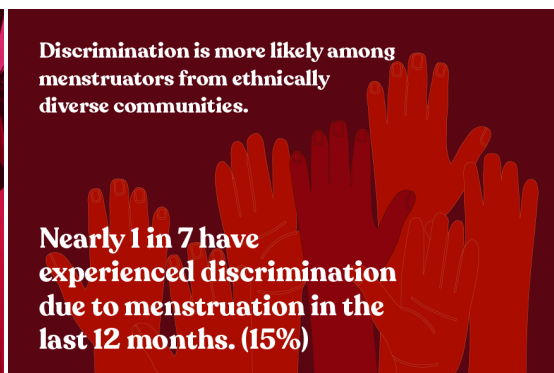
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# Discrimination

Discrimination is one of the most prominent ways stigma manifests in people's lives. **Discrimination is the unfair, unjust, or prejudicial treatment of an individual or group based on the fact that they are a menstruator.** It shows up in how menstruators are spoken to and about, how they are treated, dismissed, or punished - in families, communities, schools, workplaces, healthcare settings, and social spaces.



**Alarmingly 1 in 10 menstruators reported experiencing discrimination due to menstruation in the last 12 months. That's an estimated 1.2 million people.** This harm is not evenly distributed - there is a sense that this might affect some groups more than others, for example, people from ethnically diverse communities (15%), people with disabilities that affect day-to-day life (13%) and young people (11% Gen Z and 13% Millennials).

For those who struggle to afford period products, experiences of discrimination are significantly higher, with 36% reporting that they have faced discrimination linked to menstruation. This highlights a stark inequality: those already experiencing socio-

economic hardship are also the people most likely to bear the additional burden of menstrual discrimination.

It's promising to see that overall this figure is slightly lower than in 2025 (17%) but the pattern remains the same: **Those already navigating inequity are more likely to pay the price of our collective shame, discomfort and inaction.** We know that menstrual injustice is not only about access to products or information - it is about power, visibility, and whose experiences are treated as valid. Dismantling discrimination means shifting social norms and systemic barriers, not expecting menstruators to shrink into the shadows.

# Embarrassment



**1 in 4**

**menstruators have felt embarrassed about their period in the last 12 months. (26%)**

**Of people who have struggled to afford period products**



**1 in 2**

**have felt embarrassed in the last 12 months. (49%)**

Shame is not just an uncomfortable personal feeling - its prevalence reinforces a social norm that expects people who menstruate to stay quiet, take up less space, and manage their bodies out of sight. **Shame reinforces cycles of silence**, impacting whether and how they seek support, and whether they're believed when something is wrong.

In 2026, 26% of menstruators said they have felt embarrassed about their period in the last 12 months - around 1 in 4. That rises for Gen Z (29%), for people with disabilities (29%), and once again, for **those who struggle to afford period products is alarmingly higher at 1 in 2 (49%)**.

These findings show almost no change to the 2025 data (27%) which means that shame continues to shape the choices menstruators make, revealing a culture where silence and discomfort still dominate - **holding people back from getting the support they need and reinforcing harmful cycles of exclusion**.

'I was unpacking my groceries onto my uni halls' kitchen table and I put a box of sealed tampons on it. I was asked by my male housemate to take them off the table as it's "unhygienic to put them on the table we eat at".  
The shaming was insane'

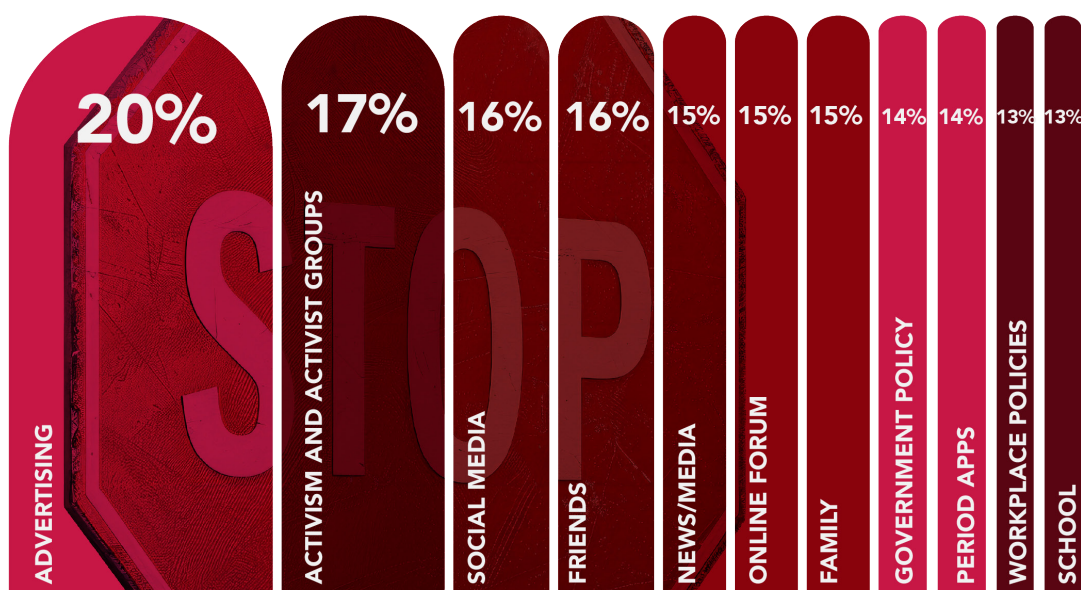
'I remember once I was at my dad's house and there weren't any tampons there and I felt too embarrassed to tell him because he's a man'

To this day I am so angry that before I even understood what a period was (the teacher did not explain this well at all) we were taught it was something to hide and feel shame about.'

# Shifting stigma

**Social norms do not shift in a vacuum. They are shaped by the messages we consume every day, across families, workplaces, schools, media, advertising and increasingly digital and online communities.**

**Percentage of UK adults who say each has played a role in decreasing stigma in the last 12 months:**



Our data shows that stigma reduction is being driven by a wide and diverse ecosystem of influences rather than a single dominant force. Interestingly, advertising (20%) emerges as the most commonly cited driver of reduced stigma over the past 12 months, followed closely by activism and activist groups (17%). Social media, friends, news media, online forums, and family all sit within a similar range (15–16%), highlighting the importance of both formal and informal spaces in shaping how menstruation is understood and talked about. Institutional and structural influences such as government policy (14%), workplace policies (13%), and schools (13%) are also recognised, alongside period tracking apps (14%), reflecting the growing role of both systems and technologies in shaping menstrual norms.

Of those respondents that had an opinion (n=479, 24% of the total sample), on sources of increasing and decreasing stigma, 54% said that what they learned at school had decreased stigma whereas only slightly less (46%) said it had increased stigma, the most polarised ratio of any of the sources in question.

**This suggests that the education system, which should be delivering positive and destigmatising messages is not doing this nearly consistently enough.**

Taken together, these findings point to a decentralised landscape of change: no single actor is responsible for reducing stigma, but rather a constellation of voices, platforms, and institutions each playing a part. Importantly, this includes both formal systems and everyday interactions, suggesting that **menstrual stigma is being challenged simultaneously from the top down and the ground up.**

What is clear is that visibility matters. When people speak openly and authentically about menstruation – in advertising, activism, peer conversations, and digital spaces – they do more than raise awareness. They expand language, normalise experiences, and create permission for others to speak.

**It is important to note that 76% of respondents did not express a clear opinion on this question**, selecting ‘don’t know/unsure’ or indicating no perceived impact on stigma. This lack of awareness or engagement with messaging around menstruation and menstrual health is perhaps due to messaging not always cutting through, or that many people are not exposed to some of these sources – perhaps in part due to the **ongoing silencing of menstrual content through censorship and shadow banning.**

DON'T CRAP IN THE TOILET!

You are a snob and not

#



Flush



GET

GORGEOUS GORGEOUS GIRLS  
DON'T BRING OTHER GIRLS

Love rousablings

DOWN

(not ever)

BE GOOD, OR BE GOOD AT IT.  
KRISPY LW I WENT THERE

Amin



I started my period when I was 8.

My mum didn't tell me what it was.

I thought I was dying.

I promise you regret!

SHAME PERIODS

PADS

PASS ME A TAMPON

(Be makes my period dont dau better)

Chloe + Gigs



@Shinewithchagoann  
Life + Wellness  
Coach.

Be who you are

LAUREN + STEFAN

LOVE



LOVES

LOVE ME YOU



HURAY UP  
THERE'S PEOPLE WAITING U

NEE

STILL WAITING FOR

# Comfortability

## Menstruation is still something most people feel they have to keep hidden.

In 2026, fewer than half of UK adults say they would feel comfortable talking about menstruation with family (47%) and most concerning of all, just 41% with children and young people. When adults cannot talk openly, young people are left without the language, confidence, and permission to talk about their own bodies and the shame and stigma persists, generation to generation.

Comfort is not a “nice to have” – it shapes whether people feel able to ask for what they need, challenge misinformation, and participate without shame in everyday life, at home, at work, and in social settings. Comfort falls further in more public or mixed settings, with just 37% feeling able to talk about menstruation with colleagues and 30% at a mixed-gender social gathering.

Almost one in three adults (32%) did not report feeling comfortable buying period products in a shop, highlighting how stigma extends beyond conversation into everyday behaviours.

### Most UK adults are not comfortable talking about menstruation in day to day situations.

#### I would feel comfortable talking about menstruation

##### with my family (47%)



##### with children or young people (41%)



##### with colleagues (37%)

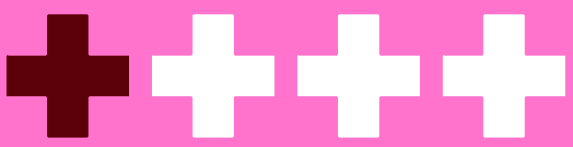


##### at a social gathering (30%)



**The gap is particularly stark in healthcare contexts.** One in four menstruators (24%) did not report feeling comfortable speaking to a doctor about a menstrual health concern, rising to 36% among Gen Z menstruators. This suggests that even among younger generations who are often assumed to be more open, stigma and discomfort remain deeply embedded when it comes to seeking medical support.

**Taken together, these findings show that menstrual stigma is not confined to individual attitudes, it is embedded in everyday social interactions.** Normalising conversations about menstruation therefore requires sustained cultural change across education, workplaces, healthcare, and public life, so that silence is replaced with confidence, language, and legitimacy.



**1 in 4 menstruators did not report feeling comfortable talking to a doctor about a concern they had around menstruation. (24%)**

‘it was never talked about/normalised in my household/with my family so when I went to stay at my dads I would hide all the used sanitary towels in my bag until I went home so he wouldn’t find them in the bin!’



**Only around 1 in 2 adults would feel comfortable talking about menstruation with young people (41%)**



**Almost 1 in 3 adults didn't report feeling comfortable buying period products in a shop (32%)**



# Knowledge

**Knowledge around menstruation remains incredibly low, and when we don't have accurate information about menstruation, stigma fills the gap.**

In 2025, we tested menstrual knowledge directly by asking 2,000 adults ten true/false questions where fewer than 1% scored 9 or 10 out of 10. In 2026, we asked a different question: whether people feel knowledgeable. In 2026, 57% of UK adults say they feel knowledgeable about periods and menstruation – suggesting as many as 43% may not. And most concerningly, even among people who menstruate, as many as 17% are not confident in their knowledge.

Not only is menstrual knowledge unacceptably low, these findings point to a clear disconnect between perceived knowledge and actual understanding. **These aren't personal failings - it's the outcome of social and educational systems that have treated menstrual education** - whether formal or informal - as optional, incomplete, or "too awkward" to teach properly. When knowledge is missing, people are left without the language to understand their bodies, recognise when something isn't normal, ask for support, or challenge misinformation.



# The Knowledge & Comfortability Paradigm

**Our data highlights a clear and consistent pattern, and identifies a powerful lever for change: increased menstrual knowledge is strongly associated with greater comfort, confidence, and everyday engagement with menstruation.**

This dynamic is present across the spectrum of menstrual experiences. One in three adults (32%) - and almost one in five people who menstruate (17%) did not report that they would feel comfortable buying period products in a shop. However, those who feel knowledgeable about menstruation are twice as likely to feel comfortable doing so.

This pattern extends across social interaction. People who feel knowledgeable are up to **three times more likely** to feel comfortable talking about menstruation in everyday settings - including with family (22% vs 66%), at mixed-gender social gatherings (14% vs 41%), with children and young people (17% vs 59%), and with colleagues (16% vs 56%). This indicates that knowledge does not simply increase understanding; it actively shifts social confidence in navigating menstruation.

If a person feels knowledgeable they are 3x more likely to also feel comfortable talking about menstruation in a variety of every day settings.

**I would feel comfortable talking about menstruation**

**with my family**



22% (less knowledgeable) 66% (knowledgeable)

**with children or young people**



17% (less knowledgeable) 59% (knowledgeable)

**with colleagues**

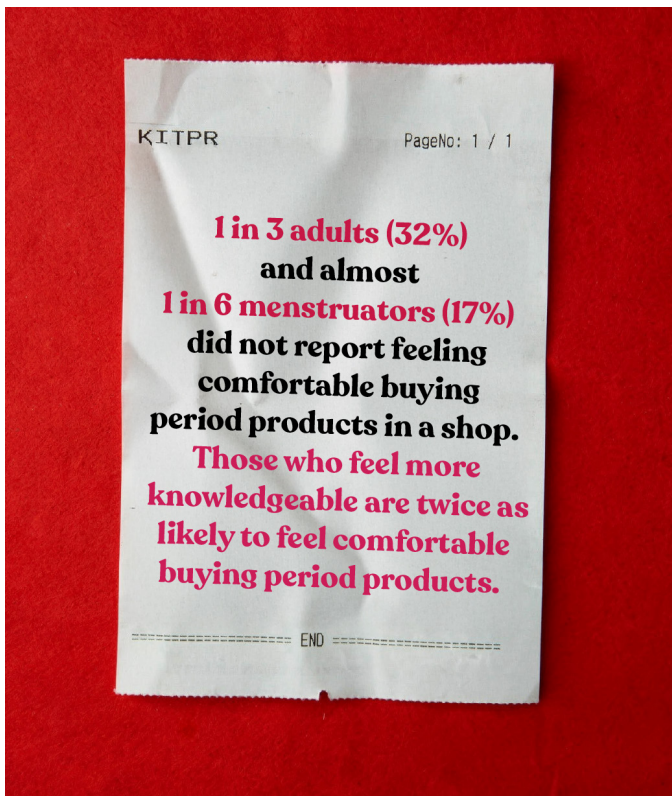


16% (less knowledgeable) 56% (knowledgeable)

**at a social gathering (mixed gender)**



14% (less knowledgeable) 41% (knowledgeable)



The data also shows a gendered dimension to this effect. Men are up to **five times as likely** to feel comfortable discussing menstruation across family, social, youth-facing, and workplace settings when they also report higher levels of knowledge. Yet only around half of men (49%) feel comfortable buying period products - a figure that doubles among those who feel more knowledgeable.

Importantly, knowledge also has implications for healthcare engagement. Only 76% of menstruators say they'd feel comfortable speaking to a doctor about a menstrual health concern. However, among those who feel knowledgeable, this shifts dramatically - with 82% reporting they would feel comfortable doing so. This underscores how menstrual literacy can directly influence help-seeking behaviour and timely access to care.

Taken together, the evidence is clear: **knowledge is not neutral - it is a driver of confidence, agency, and participation.**

When people understand menstruation better, they are more able to advocate for their own needs, engage in conversations that reduce stigma, and contribute to shifting cultural norms that have historically kept menstruation private, hidden, or silenced.



# Information sources

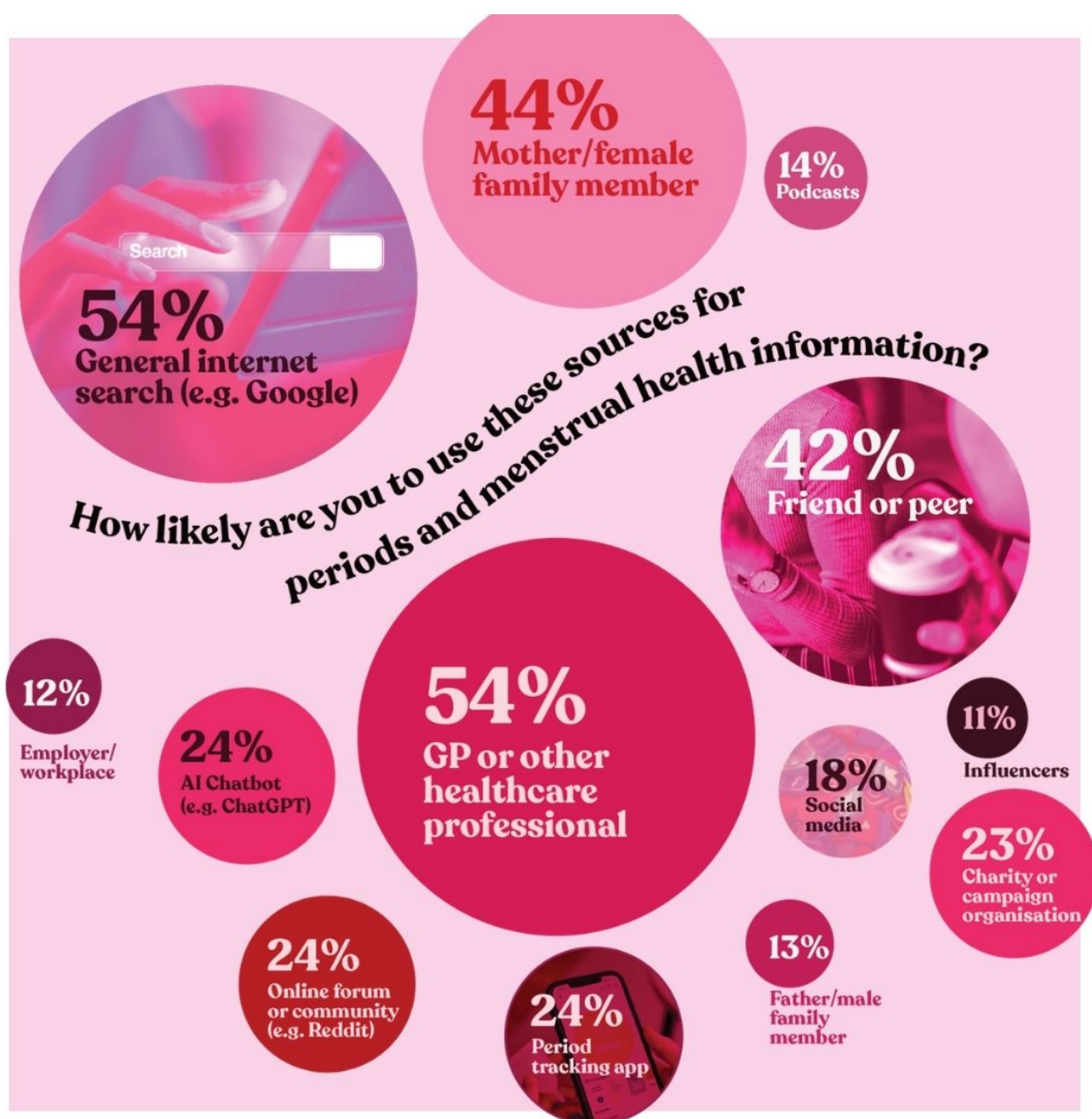
## The places people turn to for information about menstruation matter deeply.

Our data suggests that people are navigating an increasingly complex information landscape, where formal healthcare sits alongside digital platforms, peer networks, and emerging artificial intelligence technologies. General internet searches and healthcare professionals are now the joint most common sources

people would turn to for information about menstrual health (both 54%), followed by mothers or female family members (44%) and friends or peers (42%).

What is striking is the growing role of digital and technology-driven sources. **Nearly a quarter of respondents say they would turn to AI chatbots such as ChatGPT (24%), online forums like Reddit (24%), or period tracking apps (24%) for information and support.** This signals that a shift might be underway in how people seek private, immediate, and judgement-free access to menstrual health information.

The findings around male family members are particularly revealing. While overall only 13% of respondents say they would



turn to a father or male family member for information about periods, younger generations are significantly more likely to do so, suggesting a potentially important **cultural shift in the role of males as allies**. However, the data also shows the limits of this progress. Even amongst Gen Z, respondents are still roughly twice as likely to seek information from AI chatbots, online forums, or social media than from a father or male family member.

Taken together, these findings point to both opportunity and risk. Digital platforms can provide accessible, community-driven, and stigma-free routes to information, especially where traditional education or family conversations fall short. But they also raise important questions about misinformation, trust, and the quality of information young people are encountering.

**These spaces are also not neutral.** Social media platforms, online forums, and AI-generated content are largely unregulated spaces where misinformation can spread rapidly. Young people are navigating digital environments shaped by algorithms that often reward controversy and sensationalism over accuracy,

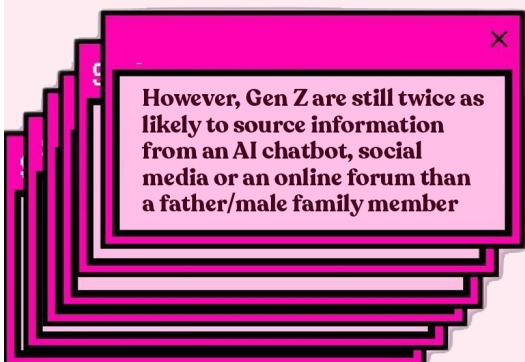
making it harder to distinguish evidence-based information from harmful myths or pseudoscience.

**The rise of misogynistic online cultures and “manosphere” content has contributed to increasingly hostile public conversations about gender, bodies, and reproductive health.** In this context, misinformation about menstruation does not exist in isolation, it sits within wider digital cultures that can reinforce shame, undermine bodily autonomy, and normalise the dismissal of menstruators’ experiences.

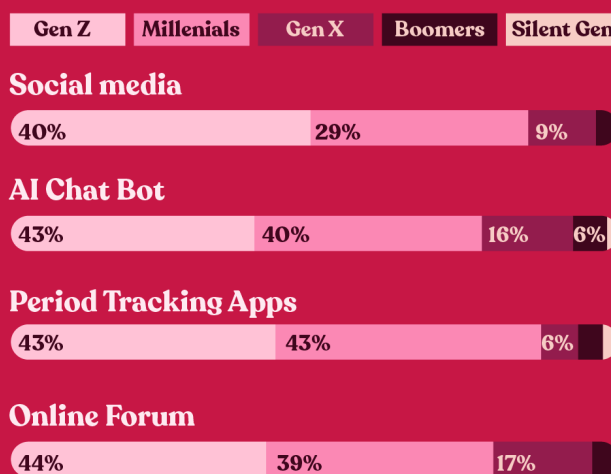
At the same time, the democratisation of digital information has created important opportunities for communities traditionally excluded from mainstream health education to access knowledge, share experiences, and challenge stigma on their own terms. **The challenge ahead is therefore not simply to discourage digital engagement, but to ensure that trustworthy, inclusive, and evidence-based** menstrual health information is visible and accessible within the online spaces where young people are already learning, questioning, and seeking support.

**There’s a growing trend of younger generations being likely to speak to a father / male family member vs. older generations.**

**Gen Z 21%**                      **Gen X 8%**  
**Millennial 23%**           **Boomers 4%**  
   **Silent Gen 7%**



**Digital platforms are widely used as a source for menstruation related knowledge by younger generations, with a distinctive generational drop-off.**





# Menstrual leave

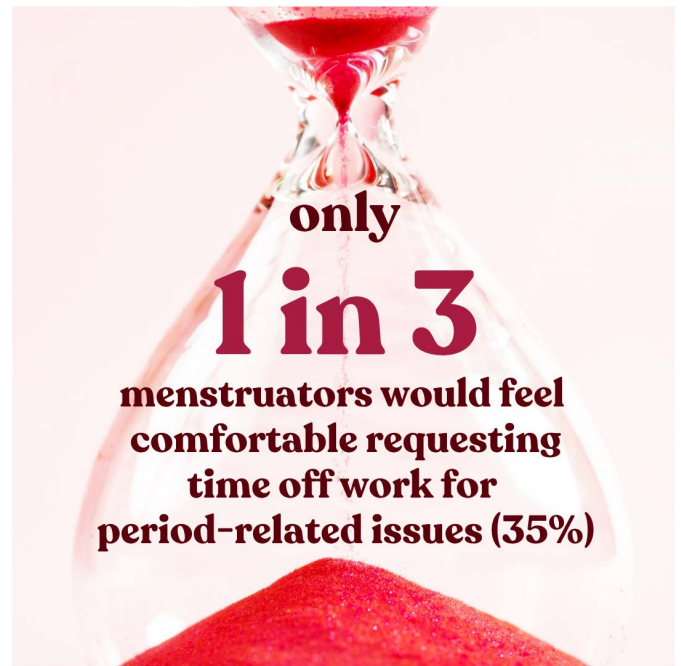
## The UK public is ready for workplace change.

In 2026, more than half (52%) of UK adults support workplace policies related to menstrual leave, which is four times as many as those who oppose (13%) - with strongest support among Gen Z (62%) and Millennials (64%), signalling a clear generational shift in expectations. This matters because, while there is no legal right to menstrual leave in the UK, a small but growing number of employers are beginning to introduce informal or policy-based approaches within wider menstrual health and wellbeing frameworks. However, most workers still rely on standard sick leave, and evidence suggests that without supportive cultures, many people feel unable to disclose menstrual-related absence or seek appropriate adjustments, even when symptoms are severe or disruptive to work.

However, our data reveals an interesting and important dynamic. While most measures relating to comfort discussing menstruation have remained broadly unchanged year on year, the proportion of people who feel comfortable talking about menstruation at work has actually fallen from 42% to 37%. In addition, only one in three people who menstruate say they would feel comfortable requesting time off for menstruation-related issues. This decline in comfortability may reflect the increasingly polarised and often misogynistic public discourse surrounding menstruation and menstrual leave policies. **Media narratives that frame conversations about menstrual support as controversial or divisive reinforce stigma and make people feel less safe advocating for themselves.**

This finding gives us food for thought. Menstrual leave policies are most effective when embedded within a wider culture of care, where menstruators feel safe, respected, and supported rather than shamed or scrutinised.

This includes flexible working practices, supportive line management, strong anti-discrimination protections, and access to inclusive health support, so employees are not forced to justify, minimise, or conceal their needs.



# Period Poverty

## ‘Period poverty’ remains widespread.

In 2026, 1 in 5 menstruators (21%) say they sometimes struggle to afford period products. And as with every measure in this report, the impact is not evenly felt. Period poverty is higher among Gen Z (23%), among people with disabilities (28–29%), and among lower-income groups (24%).

Interestingly, the data suggests that **difficulty affording period products is not limited to households traditionally considered low income.** This points to a more complex issue around how menstrual care is valued and prioritised within households, with period products still too often viewed as a personal or luxury expense rather than an essential need. Persistent shame and stigma surrounding menstruation can make it difficult for people to voice their needs, justify spending on products, or ask for support, leading many to quietly go without.

£ £ £ £ £

**1 in 5 menstruators struggle to afford period products**



It is unacceptable that people still cannot reliably access the period products they need, and far more must be done to ensure equitable access for all. Yet we have learnt that the persistence of **period poverty is not simply an issue of access**, but one of justice. We must ask ourselves why, in one of the world’s wealthiest countries, meeting the basic needs of women, girls, and all people who menstruate continues to be such a challenge. Until we confront the **structural inequities that drive menstrual injustice**, product provision alone cannot deliver the meaningful and lasting change that campaigners, communities, and organisations are working tirelessly to achieve.

**The Red Report 2026 makes one thing undeniably clear: menstrual injustice does not exist in a vacuum, and it is not inevitable. It is a crisis sustained by silence, deepened by stigma, and enforced by systemic inequity. But beneath the shocking data lies an undeniable truth: change is not only possible, its already in motion.**

## **Be part of our movement**

At Irise International, we believe in a world where menstruation is no longer stigmatised, but reclaimed for collective liberation. We dismantle menstrual injustice by channelling power and resources to **young activists and grassroots leaders**, sustaining them as powerful forces for systemic change, and advocating for others to do the same. We centre those facing intersecting forms of oppression, ensuring menstrual justice is embedded within broader social justice movements. Bold in our ambition, we refuse to work within the existing system, modelling new paths for a more just and liberated future.

If you like what we stand for, then use and share this report, follow our work and be part of the movement we are building.

**Share. Donate. Advocate.**

# Methodology

This UK nationally representative survey of 2,000 adults was conducted independently by Opinium on behalf of Irise International. Fieldwork took place in April 2026, and the data has been weighted by age, gender and other key demographics to be representative of the UK population.

**We encourage the sharing of this survey, please use the reference when doing so: The Red Report, Irise International 2026**

## Discrimination:

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I have experienced discrimination due to menstruation in the last 12 months

Menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted. Menstruators with disabilities n=94 / 108 weighted base. Menstruators from ethnically diverse communities n=77 / 105 weighted. Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

\*Disability was self-defined in the survey: people who say they have a condition lasting >12 months and that it affects their ability to conduct day to day activities.

## Embarrassment:

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? I have felt embarrassed about my period in the last 12 months

Menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted. Menstruators with disabilities n=94 / 108 weighted base. Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

\*Disability was self-defined in the survey: people who say they have a condition lasting >12 months and that it affects their ability to conduct day to day activities.

## Shifting stigma:

In the last 12 months, what role has the following had in increasing or decreasing stigma (negative attitudes or shame) related to menstruation, if at all?

Adults n=2000; menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted; Gen Z n=269 / 361 weighted; Millennial n=519 / 530 weighted; Gen X n=601 / 541 weighted; Boomers n=564 / 518 weighted; Silent Gen n=47 / 50 weighted.

## Comfortability:

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I would feel comfortable talking about menstruation with my family  
I would feel comfortable talking about menstruation at a social gathering (mixed-gender)

I would feel comfortable discussing menstruation with children or young people

I would feel comfortable discussing menstruation with colleagues  
Adults n=2000; menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted; Gen Z n=110 / 162 weighted. Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I would feel comfortable speaking to my doctor about a concern I had around menstruation

I would feel comfortable buying period products in a shop (for myself or someone else)

Adults n=2000; menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted; Gen Z n=110 / 162 weighted. Percentage selected 'strongly disagree' 'somewhat disagree' or 'neither agree or disagree'.

## Knowledge:

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I feel knowledgeable about periods and menstruation

Adults n=2000; menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted. Percentage selected 'strongly disagree' 'somewhat disagree' or 'neither agree or disagree'.

## The Knowledge and Comfortability Paradigm:

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I feel knowledgeable about periods and menstruation

Adults n=2000; menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted; Male n=1041 / 964 weighted; Male who feel knowledgeable n=303 / 279 weighted. Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I would feel comfortable talking about menstruation with my family

I would feel comfortable talking about menstruation at a social gathering (mixed-gender)

I would feel comfortable discussing menstruation with children or young people

I would feel comfortable buying period products in a shop (for myself or someone else)

I would feel comfortable discussing menstruation with colleagues

I would feel comfortable speaking to my doctor about a concern I had around menstruation

Adults n=2000; menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted; Male n=1041 / 964 weighted; Male who feel knowledgeable n=303 / 279 weighted.

Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

## Information sources:

If you wanted to find out information about periods or menstrual health today, how likely would you be to use each of the following sources?

Adults n=2000; Gen Z n=269 / 361 weighted; Millennial n=519 / 530 weighted; Gen X n=601 / 541 weighted; Boomers n=564 / 518 weighted; Silent Gen n=47 / 50 weighted. Percentage selected 'very likely' or 'quite likely'.

## Menstrual leave:

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I would support workplace policies related to menstrual leave

Adults n=2000. Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I would feel comfortable requesting time off work for period-related issues

Menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted. Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

## Period poverty:

To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I sometimes struggle to afford period products

Menstruators n=372 / 449 weighted; menstruators with disabilities n=94 / 108 weighted base. Percentage selected 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

\*Disability was self-defined in the survey: people who say they have a condition lasting >12 months and that it affects their ability to conduct day to day activities.

# Additional Resources and Supporting Evidence

## Stigma and Shame Discrimination

Cysters and Endometriosis UK (2026)  
Disbelieved, dismissed, delayed

[https://www.endometriosis-uk.org/sites/default/files/2026-03/Cysters\\_Endo\\_UK\\_Report\\_A4\\_v3.1\\_interactive.pdf](https://www.endometriosis-uk.org/sites/default/files/2026-03/Cysters_Endo_UK_Report_A4_v3.1_interactive.pdf)(<https://www.endometriosis-uk.org/sites/default/files/2026-03/Cysters%20Endo%20UK%20Report%20A4%20v3.1%20interactive.pdf>)

Olson, M.M., Winters, L.K. & Winkler, I.T. (2022)  
The persistent power of stigma: breaking menstrual silence and advancing menstrual literacy  
<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0000070>

### Useful Resources

- [Transhub](#)
- [Scarleteen](#)
- [Clue \(trans inclusion article\)](#)
- [National Autistic Society](#)
- [Hello Period Equity](#)
- [Clue \(disabled menstruation article\)](#)

## Shifting Stigma

Tomlinson, M. (2025) \*The Menstrual Movement in the Media: Reducing Stigma and Tackling Social Inequalities\*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.  
Available at: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-72195-3>  
(Accessed: 15 May 2026).

Naidu, K.K., Mukherjee, H. & Yagnik, A.S. (2025)  
Toward sustainability in menstrual health: analysing Instagram advertisements  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2025.2525883>

Olson, M.M., Winters, L.K. & Winkler, I.T. (2024)  
Menstrual product advertising and social justice messaging  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14754835.2024.2439260>

## Menstrual Literacy Knowledge

Irise International - [Period Confident Schools] (<https://www.irise.org.uk/period-confident-schools>) & [Toilet Policy Toolkit] (<https://www.irise.org.uk/uk-schools-toilet-policy-toolkit>)

Brook – <https://www.brook.org.uk/education/teaching-about-periods/>

Bloody Brilliant Wales – <https://bloodybrilliant.wales/>

Wellbeing of Women (health info) – <https://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/health-information/>

Menstrual Health Project – <https://www.menstrualhealthproject.org.uk/toolkits>

The Adeno Gang – <https://www.theadenogang.com/what-is-adenomyosis>

Endometriosis UK – <https://www.endometriosis-uk.org/what-endometriosis>

Fumble (PCOS) – <https://fumble.org.uk/polycystic-ovary-syndrome/>

Mind (PMDD) – <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types->

[of-mental-health-problems/premenstrual-dysphoric-disorder-pmdd/aboutpmdd/](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/premenstrual-dysphoric-disorder-pmdd/aboutpmdd/)

## The Knowledge & Comfort Paradigm

Bobel, C. (2020)  
Introduction: Menstruation as Lens—Menstruation as Opportunity in The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Menstruation Studies. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-0614-7\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-0614-7_1)

Bobel, C. (2020)  
The Managed Body: Developing Girls and Menstrual Health in the Global South <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-319-89414-0>

Hansen, A., Bayes, J. & Schloss, J. (2025)  
Empowering Women Through Knowledge: A Systematic Review of Literature on Menstrual and Reproductive Health Literacy  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/24731242251363080>

## Information Sources

CensHERship: <https://censherpship.com/>

Tomlinson, M. (2025) \*The Menstrual Movement in the Media: Reducing Stigma and Tackling Social Inequalities\*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.  
Available at: <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-72195-3>

Kim, H.-K. (2024) The effects of artificial intelligence chatbots on women's health: a systematic review and meta-analysis  
<https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare12050534><https://www.mdpi.com/2227-9032/12/5/534>

## Policy and Products Menstrual Leave

Furlano, M. (2024) Disrupting menstrual stigma at work? A thematic analysis of menstrual leave policy announcements across five countries. Culture, Health & Sexuality.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2024.2418406><https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13691058.2024.2418406>

de la Iglesia Aza, L. & Solymosi-Szekeres, B. (2025)  
Menstrual health and employment law, with a special focus on the new regulation in Spain  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0143831X251397482>

## Period Poverty

Olson, M. M., Winters, L. K., & Winkler, I. T. (2024). \*Between stereotyping and empowerment: Unwrapping social justice messaging in contemporary menstrual product advertising\*. \*Journal of Human Rights\*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14754835.2024.2439260>

In Kind Direct & Irise International (2024) \*The state of period equity in the UK\*. Available at: [<https://www.inkinddirect.org/news-press-resources/the-state-of-period-equity-in-the-uk>] [https://www.inkinddirect.org/news-press-resources/the-state-of-period-equity-in-the-uk?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.inkinddirect.org/news-press-resources/the-state-of-period-equity-in-the-uk?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



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