

What can the Religious Leaders do?

- ✓ Correctly interpret religious writings on menstruation.

What can the Community do?

- ✓ Create awareness on how to use and disposal of sanitary materials.
- ✓ Clear bushes and dangerous pathways for the children's safety.
- ✓ Guard against destruction of school property (e.g. water tanks, latrines, washing facilities).
- ✓ Mobilize resources for incinerators, washrooms, hand washing facilities etc.



HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY
SUPPORT GIRLS
DURING MENSTRUATION?

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ADDRESSING MYTHS

When you get your first period it means you are ready for marriage.

Wrong. No, you are not ready for marriage, you must continue with your education.

Men with AIDS get cured when they have sexual intercourse with girls before having their first period.

Wrong. You can get HIV/AIDS. Please ABSTAIN.

If you sit on a stone when you are menstruating, it will reduce the blood flow.

Wrong. Sitting on a stone when menstruating does not reduce the flow of blood. Use sanitary pads during menstruation.

If you carry a new born baby during menstruation, it will get a rash and the cord will not dry.

Wrong. During their menstruation, girls can do all kinds of work including carrying new borns. Before carrying any baby, you should maintain personal hygiene.

If you go to the garden or climb a tree during menstruation, crops or fruits will die.

Wrong. There is no co-relation between menstruation and crops drying or fruits rotting.

If you use the latrine when you are menstruating, you will become barren.

Wrong. Using a latrine is a good and healthy practice; always make sure you keep it clean.

Having sex cures painful menstruation.

Sex does not prevent menstrual pains. Menstrual pains are normal, if too painful seek medical help.

What can we as Parents or Caregivers do?

- ✓ Know that our children go through body changes.
- ✓ Value the body changes that children go through.
- ✓ Seek and share correct information about body changes with children.
- ✓ Provide nutritious meals rich in iron, and vitamins e.g. millet and vegetables.
- ✓ Teach children personal hygiene.
- ✓ Make sure children do not miss school.
- ✓ Provide re-useable sanitary pads, knickers and handkerchiefs; teach girls how to make and use sanitary pads. Encourage use of good materials such as: cotton wool wrapped in gauze or a clean piece of cloth.
- ✓ Encourage girls to drink plenty of water, eat fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ Take girls for medical treatment in case menstrual problems persist.

What can the Cultural Leaders do?

- ✓ Explain the good cultural practices e.g. using a pit latrine rather than going to the bush.
- ✓ Discourage the bad cultural practices e.g. washing in the river/water source
- ✓ Protect the girl child from sexual abuse.

What can the Opinion Leaders do?

- ✓ Explain myths and wrong beliefs on menstruation and its management.
- ✓ Advocate for children's rights in the community e.g. a right to education, privacy, health and parental care etc.
- ✓ Protect girls from defilers and rapists.

