



# Capital Region Partnership Development to Address Period Poverty



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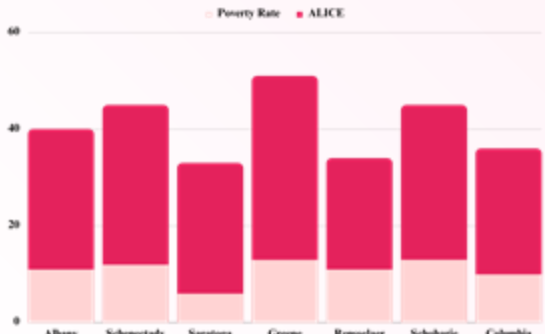
## What is Period Poverty?

Period poverty is defined as “**lack of access to menstrual hygiene products, hygiene facilities, waste management, and education**” [1]. Low-income and homeless individuals who menstruate often have limited education on menstrual hygiene and are left with little to no resources to safely manage their period each month. These individuals may use old clothing, rags, toilet paper, etc. as makeshift products or stretch the products they do have beyond their intended timeframe. These practices put individuals at higher risk of infections of the urinary and genital systems and can contribute to feelings of shame and embarrassment.

## Statistics

- A 2021 study conducted by Uby Kotex®, found that **two in five** people have struggled to purchase period products, a 35% increase from the brand's initial research in 2018.
- Over **one-third** (38%) of low-income menstruators report missing work, school or similar events due to lack of access to period supplies.
- Nearly **seven in ten** (68%) people agree that period poverty is a public health issue, yet only 4% of Americans are aware of a local resource where free or reduced cost period supplies are available. [2]

The **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed** (ALICE) population earns above the federal poverty level but does not earn enough to afford a bare-bones household budget of housing, childcare, food, transportation, and health care.



Source: United Way of the Greater Capital Region (2020)

- In the Greater Capital Region:
- 30% of households are ALICE
  - 11% of households live below the federal poverty line
- Combined, 41% of individuals in our region are struggling to make ends meet.

**Despite being intended to support the needs of income-constrained individuals, SNAP and WIC benefits CANNOT be used to purchase menstrual products.**

## Period Pantries

Our period pantries are small, free, weather-protected containers that house a multitude of menstrual hygiene products and are accessible 24/7 for anyone in need. These pantries are strategically placed in areas with high foot traffic and significant need. We have partnered with local CBOs to host each pantry and rely on their feedback for decision making.



The goal of these period pantries is to ensure that people who menstruate have reliable access to menstrual hygiene products, promoting their health, dignity, and well-being. This initiative is part of broader efforts to eliminate stigma around menstruation and ensure that menstrual products are treated as essential items rather than luxury goods. We understand and acknowledge that these pantries are a “band-aid” solution that only addresses the immediate need. CRMH advocates for free access of menstrual products in all public-facing restrooms, similar to that of toilet paper and soap, and for menstrual products to qualify as necessities rather than luxuries.

## Partnership Development

Our partnership development plan consists of three key components:

- Providing Period Products:**
  - This phase involves the distribution of essential menstrual hygiene products to individuals in need. These products could include pads, tampons, menstrual cups, or any other items necessary to manage menstruation. The goal is to ensure that those facing period poverty have access to these products on a regular basis. We obtain menstrual products either through in-kind donations or by purchasing them with the support of grants and monetary donations.
- Educating Organizations about Period Poverty:**
  - In this step, we focus on raising awareness and educating our partner organizations about the issue of period poverty. This helps enable our partners to better support those affected by period poverty and advocate for change within their own organizations.
- Collaborating with Partners to Foster Systemic Menstrual Equity.**
  - Advocacy Day May 30th, 2023: In partnership with United Way of the Greater Capital Region, Senator Michelle Hinchey and Senator Lea Webb, we called on state lawmakers to make menstrual hygiene products more accessible and affordable. Senators Hinchey and Webb introduced a resolution on the Senate floor, which calls attention to the importance of raising awareness about menstrual hygiene and improving the accessibility and affordability of products and care.

## Community Partners

**First Tier - Main Partnership:**  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Schenectady County and Cornell  
Cooperative Albany County

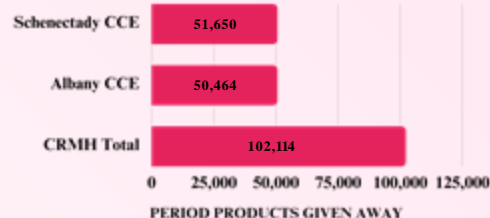
**Second Tier - Major Funding / Support Source:**  
United Way of the Greater Capital Region, Women  
United, The Pad Project, St. Peter's Health Partners

**Third Tier - Engaging In / Implementing Initiative:**  
ESCRH, Homeless Health, YWCA, St. M. P.S., Trinity Alliance, Boys & Girls  
Club of Albany, West Hill Baroque Center, Joseph's Home and Shelter, Capital  
Region BOCES, Hilltown Community Resource Center, Contact Center for  
Youth, Bethesda House

**Fourth Tier - Community Funding / Support:**  
MoonCatcher Project, The Junior League of Albany, CDPHP, Planned Parenthood,  
Grapefoot Givers, The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region

**Fifth Tier - Donations / Corporate Funding:**  
Walmart, Target, Stewart's Shops, Price Chopper/Market 32, Saalt, CVS

## Impact



## Citations

- [1] Michel, J., Metzler, A., Schönenberger, S., & Gunz, D. (2022, February 22). Period poverty: Why it should be everybody's business. Published in Journal of Global Health Reports. Journal of Global Health Reports. Retrieved October 21, 2022, from <https://www.jghr.org/article/32436-period-poverty-why-it-should-be-everybody-s-business>
- [2] Initiative, T. B. (2022, May 18). Period poverty - alliance for period supplies. Alliance for Period Supplies - It's that time. Retrieved October 21, 2022, from <https://allianceforperiodsupplies.org/period-poverty/>
- [3] What does menstrual equity mean to you? Women's Voices for the Earth. (2022, April 4). Retrieved October 21, 2022, from <https://womensvoices.org/what-does-menstrual-equity-mean-to-you/>