emoji

Notes & Cues:

Article:

The newest emoji made crimson waves across the Internet upon its unveiling this week.

Plan International UK's fight for the cartoon red blood droplet—an emoji meant to symbolize menstruation—was almost poetically symbolic to the message it was trying to convey with it: that periods aren't shameful.

Plan organized a popular vote on the design of the symbol. Eventually, Plan partnered with NHS Blood and Transplant to share that organization's proposed new emoji: a red blood droplet.

"Ending the shame around periods begins with talking about it," Lucy Russell, the Head of Girls' Rights and Youth at Plan International UK told the Guardian.

Many activists and health workers agreed that the emoji was "revolutionary" and an important step in reducing the stigma around menstruation.

But some found the new emoji disappointing.

"The drop of blood feels like a half-measure," said Megan Vaughan, a writer and PhD student in Essex. "The red droplet still has this sense of shame about it. Like it wants to talk about periods but not in too open a way, not in the kind of way that might offend delicate, largely male, sensibilities."

The younger generation seems to have a healthier and more accepting perspective when it comes to menstruation, said Andrea Askowitz, a writer in Miami who had tweeted a bloody sanitary pad in response to the period emoji.

"Attitudes are changing," Askowitz said. "We've come far, but we still have a long way to go."

Summary:
