Interview Questions  
  
Hello, thank you for taking the time to take this interview! We are highly passionate about this issue, as well as finding a voice for those who do not feel comfortable speaking about it. We are interested in the way people think about periods, as well as its accessibility in society.

If any question makes you uncomfortable, don’t hesitate because menstruation can be an awkward topic for people, but this is exactly why it needs to be talked about. Also, you can skip a question if you want to because you have the right to do that, unlike societal rights which deprives women of such simple rights.

*For those that do not get periods, please answer all the questions, unless indicated otherwise.*

*For those that do get periods, please answer all questions, unless indicated otherwise.*  
**Lastly, please try your best to answer the questions thoughtfully and feel free to answer and include all your thoughts! Don’t hold back.**

*So, let’s start:*

1. What is the first thing that comes into your mind when you hear the word “period?”
   1. Ughh why does it have to come every month. Pain. Blood, so much blood. Pads, tampons, mood swings maybe.
2. Let’s talk about the way society views women’s needs. We don’t say what we need, and we don’t want to make anyone uncomfortable, but it’s as necessary as toilet paper. What do you think about the stigma about menstruation, whether it’s about how women treat it, how men treat it, and society in general.
   1. The stigma is that it’s kinda gross, we gotta be so hush hush about it and it’s kinda “embarrassing” for women to have it or for us to even talk about it in public, but I think our friends are really open about those things so I’m lucky enough to be in a strong and supportive group of women that aren’t shy about talking about this stuff
3. Follow Up: How would you like to do break the stigma?
   1. Educate everyone! If everyone knows it happens and half the damn population goes through it, then why are we all grossed out by it. C’mon now.
4. Period is not a choice. It comes every month whether you’re prepared or not. So, let’s talk about accessibility.   
   ***(For those that get periods):*** What is your personal experience with accessibility, is it easy access for you? In a perfect world, how would you improve accessibility for those who cannot access it? How do you think we can help those who cannot afford period products?
   1. I never really had issues personally with accessibility and stuff like that to be honest, my mom always had a stock of it in the bathroom, and I always knew to carry some extra with me in my backpack for emergencies. If it ever came randomly (I track my period on an app now but this was before) then I would go to one of my friends and asked if they had a pad or something, they knew what was up.
   2. In a perfect world, I wouldn’t need to go around asking my friends for their pads (that they are happy to give me since they understand) but they also paid for or their parents paid for. Why can’t I just go to a bathroom stall and get a pad. I don’t always have quarters on me. I don’t even have cash on me in general to be honest. Who does anymore?!
5. Did you know only out of the 50 states, *only* 12 states exempts tax on essential female hygiene products? Thank goodness, Illinois is one of them! But the other 38 states still basically are taxing people who get periods just for having periods. What do you think about the tampon tax (a term used for taxing female hygiene products)? What do you think should be done to make period products more affordable?
   1. Okay can someone tell me how people are expected to pay the taxes on these things when they can’t pay for them at all. I understand that people need pads and tampons and those things add up over time, but if you think about the other side, the materials and time needed to produce those products costs time and money. If we didn’t pay for them, who would? Who is going to pay for the salaries of the workers in the factories or the people making the pads? I’m not sure how to answer this one because there are so many aspects to it.
6. ***(For those that have periods):*** Those who menstruate have no choice but to buy these products. You can’t ignore your period, it’s not like you can just ignore the constant flow. Can you share the problems you faced when you go through your period? What were the worst things you faced, and what did you wish could happen to make your experience better?
   1. If I could ignore it I would. I used to get really bad cramps but ever since I started birth control, that helped with it a lot, but then again I still have to pay for birth control so you know, that’s fun. I just wished that it wasn’t such a hassle sometimes to clean up, find a pad, find a bathroom, etc. It’s like you can’t time the damn thing. Have you ever seen the Koolaid man? Yeah. That’s your period. Fun stuff. Not sure how to improve that since it’s biological you know?
7. ***(For those that have periods):*** What level of awareness did you have initially? How difficult was it to deal with it, since we are supposed to act as if periods don’t exist and live in denial when they are too real to ignore?
   1. You know how most of us had that really awkward sex ed talk in middle school or high school and then the teachers feel weird talking about it and you feel weird talking about it and it feels forced and awkward. Yeah, that. My mom showed me how to put on a pad so that was cool. Other than that, it was something I just had to learn on my own and get used to over time. Google helped too.
8. Period poverty — a lack of access to feminine hygiene products due to poverty — is felt by 1.2 billion women globally. And yet, no one is talking about eco-solutions. What are your views regarding this?
   1. That honestly sucks. I wish I knew what to do other than donate period products to shelters, but to be honest we don’t really have knowledge as a general public in where and how to donate products to shelters. Even if we donate to shelters, what about those who do not have the chance to even get to the shelters? Like those living on the streets? It can be really dangerous for women to shove random stuff up their you know what. Personally, I don’t even know where to start in helping them with that.
9. Do you have anything in particular that you would like us to focus while performing this research and possibly finding ways to solve these problems?
   1. How to help those with poverty issues afford or get the products for free maybe? I know there are a lot of students in college who are incredibly broke as well and are unable to afford products too. What are we supposed to do about that issue? How can we help? I don’t even know myself, but maybe find a way to spread the word? Maybe have a platform where women can ask questions about periods and etc and not feel weird about it.

Thanks for your time. Don’t hide it. Period.