

LI M5 Period poverty

Conference notes that:

Period poverty mainly affects women and girls living on low incomes, at or below the poverty line, and those who are homeless. Shrinking wages, benefits cuts and rising living costs have all contributed. The inability to afford adequate sanitary items has led to:

- Women and girls resorting to alternatives such as rags, socks, toilet paper, or severely limiting the daily use of tampons and pads;
- Women missing work- and career-development opportunities;
- Girls missing school resulting in around 145 days a year of lost education;
- Occasions where women and girls have just had to bleed through their clothes.

Therefore, the Labour Party resolves to:

- To support existing efforts to combat this issue. In particular that at the very minimum the 5% VAT on sanitary products is abolished. If this is not allowed under current EU rules, the abolition to be replaced with an equivalent subsidy;
- Ensure that free menstrual products are provided for students who need them, including girls entitled to free school meals, and to be available at both school and non-school premises such as pharmacies (to allow for school holidays):
- Make free menstrual products (including maternity pads) available for the women in the immediate household of students entitled to free school meals;
- Ensure that grants are made available through local authorities and funded by the government, for independent social organisations to enable them to offer free or subsidised products (including maternity pads) to women and girls, including those who are homeless."

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