

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Medical Research



Friday, 6 December 2024

SUPPORTING STUDENTS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PELVIC PAIN

The Allan Labor Government is building upon the success of its nation-leading Free Period Products in Schools initiative with free pelvic pain and menstrual health education for years 5 to 10 students from 2025.

Minister for Education Ben Carroll today announced that Sexual Health Victoria will deliver the pelvic pain and menstrual health education program, which will reach 400 government schools by 2027.

The inclusive, age-appropriate, evidence-based and curriculum-aligned education program will be delivered in person to students in years 5 to 10 to build menstrual health awareness among young people.

An Australian study indicated that 21 per cent of young people between the ages of 15 and 19 experience severe pelvic pain during their periods. The education sessions will help students develop the skills and confidence to recognise when and how to seek help and support.

The sessions will also cover endometriosis and other conditions that can cause pelvic pain – many of which are only diagnosed after significant delays. By teaching young Victorians about these conditions at the right time, we'll help ensure early detection and treatment.

The program delivered by Sexual Health Victoria also includes resources and development sessions for school staff, to build knowledge and confidence to support students with pelvic pain, including referring to support services. These sessions will also increase staff capability to deliver menstrual health education to students.

The education program comes in addition to a pilot program currently underway to provide students with reusable period underwear.

Parliamentary Secretary for Women's Health Kat Theophanous visited Northern College of Arts and Technology this week, which is one of the 30 schools currently participating the pilot, which was driven by requests from students for more sustainable products.

The trial expands upon the Labor Government's successful Free Period Products in Schools program that launched in 2019 and will determine whether providing reusable period underwear is feasible for schools and useful for students.

For more information, go to education.vic.gov.au/pal/personal-hygiene/print-all#1-information-on-the-free-period-products-in-all-government-schools-initiative

Quote attributable to Minister for Education Ben Carroll

"No young person should be stressed or worried about having access to period products. We're proud to be providing free reusable sanitary items in all Victorian government schools to ensure that students don't have to worry and can focus on their education."

"Schoolyard conversations around menstruation and pelvic pain have historically been seen as taboo. We are ensuring more young Victorians are informed so they can seek help before their pain impacts their health and not have to suffer in silence."

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Quote attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

"This free pelvic pain and menstrual health education program, alongside our nation-leading work we are doing as part of our Women's Pain Inquiry, is helping destigmatise and remove the shame women and girls have long been taught to feel about their bodies."

Quote attributable to Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins

"This initiative has delivered more than 11 million period products to Victorian government schools so far, and now, driven by student feedback for more sustainable products, we are pleased to be undertaking the reusable period underwear pilot to determine if these products are feasible for schools."

Parliamentary Secretary for Women's Health Kat Theophanous

"Growing knowledge and awareness about pelvic pain is crucial to shifting the dial on women's health. This education will mean young people feel heard, believed, and empowered to seek healthcare if they need it."