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NYC Commission on Gender Equity and NYC Her Future Promote Menstrual Equity Through Staten Island Period Product Drive and Virtual Panel

Community-based initiatives promote access to menstrual products, resources, and education to address lack of access to medical necessities and promote equity across New York City.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK (May 14, 2026) — The New York City Commission on Gender Equity (CGE) and NYC Her Future (NHF), which sit under the Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice, are launching a period product drive to raise awareness and provide access to menstrual products in New York City and to convene a panel of experts to discuss menstrual health disparities and inequities. Through community-based action and public education, these initiatives aim to raise awareness and promote access to essential period products, and advance menstrual equity for all New Yorkers.

"One in four students in this country cannot afford basic period supplies, and four in ten say it has affected their ability to do schoolwork," said **Deputy Mayor for Economic Justice Julie Su**. "The New York City Commission on Gender Equity and NYC Her Future are launching a product drive and expert panel to make sure New York City students have what they need to stay in school."

Thousands of New York City students and low-income residents rely on public schools, shelters, and city facilities for basic needs. Free period supplies are available in schools, shelters, and public buildings citywide — because students can't learn, and workers can't work, when they lack access to basic medical necessities. These initiatives build on that commitment through community partnerships and public education to reach more New Yorkers who need support.

"Lack of access to menstrual products is not just a health issue, it is an equity issue that impacts education, economic stability, and overall well-being," said **NYC Chief Equity Officer and Commissioner Afua Atta-Mensah, NYC Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice**. "Far

too many New Yorkers continue to face barriers accessing the products and information they need to manage their health with dignity. By bringing together community leaders, advocates, and public health experts, we are working to break stigma, expand access, and advance a city where menstrual equity is recognized as essential to gender justice and opportunity for all.”

“Menstrual equity is fundamentally about health, dignity, and opportunity. No one should have to miss school, work, or daily activities because they cannot access basic menstrual products or accurate information about their health,” said **Executive Director Priya Nair, NYC Commission on Gender Equity**. “As a nonbinary person who experiences menstruation, I know how important it is to be inclusive in our work on menstrual equity. Through community partnerships, education, and direct resource distribution, we are working to reduce barriers that disproportionately affect low-income communities and communities of color, while helping to build a city where all New Yorkers can access the care and support they need to thrive.”

“At NYC Her Future, we understand that menstrual equity is directly linked to womb care, which is one of the main things we address and the overall health and well-being of those we serve,” said **Founding Executive Director Nathifa Forde, NYC Her Future**. In this campaign in partnership with CGE we are creating space to have a discussion many shy away from so that young people are informed and understand what is happening in their bodies. By convening an informational panel and providing tangible support such as free period products alongside accessible educational resources, we are meeting communities where they are and ensuring they have the tools and knowledge to show up fully, confidently, and without barriers. This is what it looks like to move beyond conversation and into action centering womb care in how we support, serve, and show up for our communities.”

“Menstrual equity is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Access to period products and accurate health education directly impacts dignity, confidence, and opportunity,” said **President Kellyta Murphy Reives, Staten Island Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority**. “Through initiatives like our May Week Health and Safety Fair, we are not only raising awareness but actively working to eliminate disparities that affect women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals in our community.”

“When we normalize conversations about menstruation, we dismantle stigma, empower knowledge, and move closer to a world where menstrual health is recognized as a basic human right,” said **Dr. Ashanda Saint Jean, OB/GYN physician, maternal health leader, and Senior Maternal Health Consultant for the New York City Department of Health**. “Community-centered conversations like this are critical to advancing education, equity, and access to care for women, girls and gender-expansive individuals across New York City.”

“Access to menstrual products is not a luxury, it is a basic matter of dignity, health, and equity. No young woman should have to miss class, fall behind academically, or feel ashamed because

she cannot afford essential menstrual products,” said **New York City Council Majority Whip Kamillah Hanks**. “The reality that nearly one in four students in the United States has missed school due to lack of access is unacceptable. Expanding access is about removing barriers, supporting our students, and ensuring every young person can learn, grow, and succeed with confidence and dignity. I am proud to support efforts that advance true menstrual equity for all New Yorkers.”

“The disparities menstruating people still face in accessing menstrual products, reproductive health education, and culturally competent care show why menstrual health must continue to be treated as a serious public health issue. I’m proud to support this initiative led by the NYC Commission on Gender Equity and NYC Her Future, which combines free product distribution and education to support young people and families across our city,” said **Council Member Amanda Farías**. “It’s encouraging to see more New Yorkers benefit from resources like the Know Your Period: NYC Student Guide, which I was grateful to help expand to include information on menstrual cups and menstrual health.”

Despite progress, advocates continue to highlight awareness, affordability, and consistent access — particularly for low-income communities and communities of color. National estimates also show that one in three menstruating individuals in the United States has struggled to afford menstrual products, underscoring the urgency of continued local action to close equity gaps.

Staten Island Period Drive: Expanding Access to Essential Products

During Period Poverty Awareness Week (May 11–17), an annual awareness campaign dedicated to highlighting the barriers many people face in accessing menstrual products, education, and hygiene resources, CGE and NYC Her Future, in partnership with the Staten Island Alumnae Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, will host a free period product drive as part of the Annual May Week Health & Safety Fair.

The drive will provide free menstrual and sexual health products while connecting New Yorkers to critical health and safety resources.

Event Details:

- **Date:** Saturday, May 16, 2026
- **Time:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Location:** [Tappen Park](#) (Bay St., Staten Island, NY 10304)

Participants will also receive educational materials, including the [Know Your Period: NYC Student Guide](#), which provides accessible information on puberty, menstrual health, and available resources.

Through this effort, CGE and NYC Her Future are working to:

- Raise awareness about menstrual inequity
- Provide free menstrual products and supplies
- Share health and safety resources
- Promote dignity and equity for all who menstruate

Virtual Menstrual Equity Panel: “And That’s on Period, NYC”

CGE and NYC Her Future will also host a virtual menstrual equity panel, bringing together health professionals, advocates, and youth leaders to discuss menstrual health, stigma, and policy solutions.

The panel will center conversations on menstrual equity, common myths about menstruation, and access to care and resources across New York City.

Event Details:

- **Date:** Thursday, May 28, 2026
- **Time:** 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- **Location:** Virtual. [Register to attend.](#)

The program will include a moderated discussion with experts in reproductive health, community advocacy, and city government leadership, along with opportunities for audience engagement and resource sharing. Together, these events aim to address menstrual inequity, expand access to essential menstrual products, and elevate public education on menstrual health, dignity, and equity across New York City.

About the NYC Commission on Gender Equity

Established in 2015 and codified in the City Charter in 2016, the NYC Commission on Gender Equity (CGE) works to address issues of inequity and discrimination facing girls, women, intersex, transgender, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming people throughout the five boroughs. Focusing across the areas of economic mobility and opportunity, health and reproductive justice, and safety, CGE uses policy, research, advocacy, and public engagement to advance gender equity for New York City government and the communities it serves. For more information, visit nyc.gov/GenderEquity or follow us on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

About NYC Her Future

Launched in March 2024, as an office within the Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice, to address the disparities that young women of color face across NYC in education, employment, justice, and health, and provide them with the tools to be successful by their own definition. By developing and championing policies, programs, and partnerships that holistically support the success of young women of color throughout NYC, NYC Her Future is dedicated to fostering positive change and creating a brighter future for girls and women. Learn more about how NYC Her Future is providing young women and girls of color with the tools to be successful by their own definition. Visit www.NYC.Gov/HerFuture

About the Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice

Launched October 2023, the NYC Mayor's Office of Equity & Racial Justice (MOERJ) is dedicated to creating a fairer and more equitable city for New Yorkers. As the city's first centralized equity office, MOERJ is dedicated to working across all city agencies to create the first NYC Citywide Racial Equity Plan, with the goal of implementing policies, practices, and programs that promote social justice. This newly established office encompasses multi-agency bodies such as NYC Her Future (NHF), the NYC Commission on Gender Equity (CGE), the Mayor's Office of LGBTQIA+ Affairs, and the NYC Young Men's Initiative (YMI), along with the collaborative initiatives of the NYC Pay Equity Cabinet (PEC) and the NYC Taskforce on Racial Inclusion & Equity (TRIE). To learn more about how MOERJ is advancing racial justice and engaging with New York City's diverse communities, visit nyc.gov/Equity or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

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