
Over 11,000 sign #RenameDontShame Petition, urging supermarkets to ditch stigma around period products

Personal care brand Natracare has launched a petition, calling for supermarkets to change the wording they use in store and online to describe period products.

Natracare's campaign, titled #RenameDontShame, urges supermarkets to ditch the words 'sanitary products' and 'feminine hygiene products', and instead use more inclusive terms such as 'period products' or 'menstrual products'. This follows the recent announcement made by New Zealand supermarket chain, Countdown, who announced that they were moving away from using 'euphemistic language' for their period product signposting, declaring that 'words are powerful and can change cultural norms'.¹

Natracare is asking supermarkets and online retailers to follow Countdown's lead, agreeing that the language used by supermarkets is shaming and excluding.

Over 11,000 people have signed Natracare's petition, which states "The use of the terms 'sanitary products' or 'feminine hygiene products' suggest there is something unsanitary or unhygienic about having a period, when this is not the case." Those who support the campaign include creator of the Guilty Feminist podcast, Deborah Frances-White, period equity campaigner Amika George, and feminist author Daisy Buchanan.

Online retailer, Big Green Smile, has also announced that they will be changing the wording on their website as a result of the campaign.

Natracare's campaign addresses the exclusion of members of the LGBTQ+ community. Their petition explains, "The issue with using the words 'feminine hygiene' is that it assumes that all people who have periods are feminine. This is not the case – trans men and non-binary people can have periods too, and there are plenty of cis women who don't get periods."

Research shows that there is a very real stigma around periods. Plan International UK found that 48% of girls in the UK report feeling 'embarrassed' about their periods, and this figure rises to 56% when they reach the age of 14.²

Susie Hewson, Natracare's owner and founder, said "Words are powerful and affect us all. Terms like "sanitary napkins" date back to the 1930s, in the era of the great depression. It feels morally wrong that people menstruating back then were made to feel dirty at a time of such poverty. We see similar shame-inducing tactics these days, with some companies adding unnecessary perfume to pads, as though menstrual blood is something that needs disguising and sanitizing. As the world changes around us, it is time our attitude towards menstruation did, too. We owe it to younger generations to do better."

You can sign the petition at www.change.org/RenameDontShame

PHONE: 07800 985 855

DATE: 1 Oct 2020

natracare®

You can read more about the campaign at www.natracare.com/blog/its-time-for-supermarkets-to-ditch-period-stigma

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For more information, product samples and high-res images, please contact:

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References:

1 'Countdown to ditch outdated language for straight talk on period products' – Stuff (online magazine) – Found at <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/121947473/countdown-to-ditch-outdated-language-for-straight-talk-on-period-products>

2 'Break the Barriers: Girls' Experiences of Menstruation in the UK' – Page 11 – Plan International UK – Found at <https://plan-uk.org/file/plan-uk-break-the-barriers-report-032018pdf/download?token=Fs-HYP3v>

Notes to editors:

Natracare is the first company in the world to provide plastic-free, certified organic cotton tampons and totally chlorine-free sanitary pads and panty liners. Natracare products are biodegradable and can even be composted. Susie Hewson created the brand in 1989 in response to the growing danger to human health and the environment from dioxin pollution in the pulping industries with the chlorine bleaching of paper products. You can learn more here – www.natracare.com

Countdown is New Zealand's leading supermarket brand, serving more than 3 million customers every week. You can learn more here – www.countdown.co.nz/about-us/our-company

Change.org is an online petition platform which is used by more than 200 million people in 196 countries. You can learn more here – www.change.org/about

Deborah Frances-White is a stand-up comedian, podcaster and screenwriter. She is the creator and host of the podcast, the Guilty Feminist. You can find out more here – www.deborahfrances-white.com/podcasts/

Amika George is a period equity campaigner. She founded the #FreePeriods movement, which campaigns against period poverty in the United Kingdom. You can find her on twitter @AmikaGeorge

Daisy Buchanan is a feminist author and podcast host. She is the author of 'How to be a Grown-up' and 'The Sisterhood – a Love Letter to the Women who have Shaped us.' You can find her on twitter @NotRollergirl