

Kimberly-Clark Partners With NZ Government To End Period Poverty

Kimberly-Clark New Zealand is proud to announce it has been named a key partner of the New Zealand Government's 'Access to Period Products in Schools' initiative. Commencing mid-June, students from more than 1,610 schools and kura will have access to free tampons and pads, a key first step to addressing period poverty in New Zealand.

Kimberly-Clark is the manufacturer of New Zealand's leading period care brand, U by Kotex. In 2020, the company participated in the Government's Waikato trial of free period products in 15 schools and kura in the Waikato region, specifically supporting Fraser High School. In the same year, the company publicly committed to alleviating period poverty for 500,000 people across New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific, as well as educating five million people to fight menstrual stigma.

New Zealand is only the fourth country in the world to roll out free period products in schools nationally. In 2020, Scotland made history by making free period products available to anyone who needs them and 84 per cent of students^[1] reported a positive impact on them (their wellbeing). That same year, free period products were rolled out in all schools in England and Wales.

U by Kotex New Zealand spokesperson, Julie McNae, said the Government's national program is critical to ensuring more students stay in school.

"Research shows that nearly 95,000 9-to-18-year olds^[2] may stay at home during their periods because they didn't have access to pads and tampons. By providing greater access to these essential products at school, more of our young people will have the chance to experience their period with dignity and stay in school. Nothing should get in the way of an education, certainly not a period, and we're proud to partner the Government on this game-changing initiative," she said.

Kimberly-Clark has been working to address period poverty for many years and is a major partner of The Period Place, Aotearoa's biggest period advocacy charity, and one of the organisations that petitioned the Government for period products to be accessible for students in Aotearoa.

"From day one, Kimberly-Clark has been huge supporters of our mahi at The Period Place, believing in our vision for a period equitable country and jumping onboard our waka enthusiastically to achieve that vision," says Danika Revell, Co-founder and CEO of The Period Place.

"Tens of thousands of U by Kotex donations have been made by Kimberly-Clark through our Impact Partner Programme to organisations like ASA Foundation, Middlemore Foundation, Strive Community Trust, Auckland City Mission, and Henderson High School in Auckland. Kimberly-Clark being selected as a provider for the free period products in schools programme is a testament to their dedication to eliminating period inequity from Aotearoa, and to the power they have as a global organisation fighting to end period inequity."

Findings from the Youth19 Survey^[3], the latest in the Youth2000 series of health & wellbeing surveys, found 12 per cent of year 9 to 13 students who menstruate reported difficulty getting access to products due to cost; and research from the University of Otago found that 94,788 girls aged 9 to 18 from the country's poorest households may be unable to afford to buy period products and could be missing school when they have their period.

In 2015, U by Kotex launched its [What's Happening to You](#) menstrual education program which offers teachers free education toolkits on puberty and menstruation. The program was designed in conjunction with NZ HPE teachers for both male and female students and since 2015, more than one million students having participated in our region.

For more information on the Government's 'Access to Period Products in Schools' initiative, visit [here](#).

About Kimberly-Clark

Kimberly-Clark (NYSE: KMB) and its trusted brands are an indispensable part of life for people in more than 175 countries. Fueled by ingenuity, creativity, and an understanding of people's most essential needs, we create products that help individuals experience more of what's important to them. Our portfolio of brands, including Huggies, Kleenex, Scott, Kotex, Cottonelle, Poise, Depend, Andrex, Pull-Ups, GoodNites, Intimus, Neve, Plenitud, Sweety, Softex, Viva and WypAll, hold No. 1 or No. 2 share positions in approximately 80 countries. We use sustainable practices that support a healthy planet, build strong communities, and ensure our business thrives for decades to come. To keep up with the latest news and to learn more about the company's nearly 150-year history of innovation, visit kimberly-clark.com.

[1] Young Scot research (2020)

[2] Beehive.govt.nz (2020)

[3] Youth19 Rangatahi Smart Survey (2019)

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