



P.O. Box 28343 St. Louis, MO 63146 | www.dignityperiod.org

EVENT TOOLKIT



Photo credit: Joni Kabana

WE WANT DIGNITY FOR GIRLS - PERIOD.

WELCOME

Dear Event Host,

Thank you for organizing an event to support Dignity Period!

In Ethiopia, talking about menstruation is taboo. As a result, many girls feel alone, fearful, and ashamed when they first get their periods. Most girls and women in the remote Tigray region of northern Ethiopia don't have access to sanitary menstrual hygiene products and must make do with strips of cloth, dry grass, or nothing at all. This leads to frequent accidents and embarrassment. As a result, girls often miss school three to five days per month, fall behind in their studies, and end up dropping out. This is hugely detrimental to both women and their communities. Ultimately, it is a loss of human potential that no country can afford.

Dignity Period's mission is to keep Ethiopian girls in school by working with Ethiopian partners to provide quality menstrual hygiene products and education.

We partner with Mekelle University to investigate how cultural values in Tigray shape knowledge and menstrual practices. Our findings inform development of culturally sensitive education programs that improve menstrual hygiene in the region. We also partner with the Mariam Seba Sanitary Products Factory to produce reusable, cost-effective pads and distribute them to girls in the region. The factory not only produces invaluable menstrual hygiene products, but also employs local women, giving them the means to support themselves and make independent choices about their lives.

Events are a way for those who believe in dignity for girls in Ethiopia to spread the word about Dignity Period and raise money to help fund our work. We believe we will be most successful with community engagement and by sharing personal stories about the importance of providing sanitary menstrual hygiene products to girls in Tigray.

This event kit provides everything you need to know and do to organize a successful event that will motivate your peers to take action. The kit includes tips on planning and building an event list, sample collateral materials, model invitations and thank-yous, and a post-event results report.

Sincerely,
Dr. Lewis Wall
President of the Board, Dignity Period

THIS EASY-TO-USE KIT INCLUDES:

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Members of the Dignity Period's leadership team are ready and eager to help make your event a success! Please contact Jane Unger (junger@dignityperiod.org) to get started. Thank you for supporting Dignity Period!

EVENTS & GOALS

EVENT

Before you plan your event, it's important to think about what kind of event you want to host.

IDEAS:

Mother daughter tea - Mothers and daughters in Ethiopia often do not discuss menstruation because it is taboo. Strengthen mother daughter bonds in your community while raising money to help eliminate stigmatization of menstruation in Ethiopia.

Celebrate by raising money for Dignity Period - Host a birthday party or other celebratory event and make Dignity Period the focus. Educate guests about a cause that is important to you and ask for donations in place of traditional gifts.

Host a house party - Invite friends and family over to mingle over drinks and snacks while learning about Dignity Period.

Auction - Ask friends, family, and associates to donate their skills and time and auction them off to benefit Dignity Period.

Bake sale - Call upon the baking skills of your network and sell sweet treats to support girls.

Penny drive - Place jars in classrooms or cubicles and compete to see who can raise the most change. Up the ante and have a penny war, with each penny counting as one point and larger coins counting for more - whoever earns the most points gets a prize!

Book club/youth group/school class - Use a natural group setting to raise awareness for Dignity Period.

Benefit concert - Have a local band play a show in a park or auditorium with ticket sales going to Dignity Period.

Walk-a-thon - Host a walk-a-thon at a school or business. Have students or colleagues ask the community for donations for walking a certain distance.

Create your own! These are ideas to get you started, but creativity is encouraged!

As the host of the event, please consider providing:

- ✓ Beverages and refreshments
 - Consider asking neighborhood restaurants, bakeries, and shops for donations of food and drink for your event.
- ✓ Goody bags or favor(s) if these can be donated.

Be sure to take photos throughout the event and send them to us so that we can share your success on Facebook and our website!

GOALS - It is critical to set goals so you can measure success.

What's the focus of your event?

1. Do you want to **educate and engage** your community about Dignity Period?
2. Do you want to **raise money** for Dignity Period?

Depending on your event's objectives, you can set specific goals.

- ❖ If you're putting on an **educational event** you can aim to:
 - Increase awareness about menstrual hygiene in Tigray, the production of pads at the Mariam Seba Sanitary Products Factory, and the research being carried out with Mekelle University.
 - Be a multiplier! Find one person to host their own event.
- ❖ If you're throwing a **fundraising event** you can aim to:
 - Raise a total of \$2,000, or \$100 per person.
 - Sign up five people to attend another Dignity Period event.
 - Be a multiplier! Find one person to host their own event.



TALKING POINTS: SPEAK ABOUT DIGNITY

- ❖ **98% of women in Tigray, Ethiopia do not have access to adequate menstrual hygiene products.** This forces them to make do with insufficient alternatives such as spare cloth, bedding, or even dried grass.
- ❖ Speaking about menstruation in Tigray is taboo. Many girls experience fear and confusion when they have their first period because they do not know about the natural process of menstruation.
- ❖ **2 out of 5 girls miss school because of shame and embarrassment surrounding their period.** This causes them to fall behind and leads many to drop out of school entirely.
- ❖ The Mariam Seba Sanitary Products Factory was founded in 2009 by Freweini Mebrahtu. Freweini grew up in Tigray before moving to the U.S. and working in business. She returned to Tigray and opened the factory to address the stagnant conditions surrounding menstruation in Tigray.
- ❖ The Mariam Seba Sanitary Products Factory provides training, social support, and a vital source of income for more than 50 local women.
- ❖ **Each year, the factory produces approximately 600,000 pads** which are distributed to women and girls across Ethiopia.
- ❖ In collaboration with Mekelle University, Dignity Period is conducting anthropological research into beliefs, attitudes, and practices surrounding menstruation in Tigray. When the study is completed in spring or summer of 2016, the findings will be used to improve menstrual hygiene practices and education in the region.



Freweini with her daughter, Mariam, and Dignity Period Board President, Lewis Wall. Photo credit: Dignity Period.

For more information about our work, please visit our website: dignityperiod.org

EVENT PLANNING GUIDE: 9 STEPS

- 1. Recruit co-hosts**
Consider finding a friend or neighbor to co-host your event. Having a friend or two help can increase your guest list and distribute tasks.
- 2. Pick a date and time**
We recommend evaluating time allotment based on the type of event and giving guests as much notice as possible.
- 3. Choose a location**
There are a variety of options depending on the event, from bars and restaurants to playfields and backyards.
- 4. Create a guest list**
Think broadly about your social contacts. Plan to invite two to three times the number of guests you expect to attend. More information on building a great guest list is on page 5.
- 5. State “suggested donation” on invitation**
If you are putting on a fundraising event, it’s important to clearly communicate this to your guests. Listing a “suggested donation” on your invitations is a great way to let them know what you’re asking. Consider \$50, \$75, \$100, or more depending on what you think is appropriate.
- 6. Send invitations and track RSVPs**
Pages 8-11 of this kit include examples of save the dates, invitations, and thank-you emails. Evite, PaperLessPost.com, and Facebook are good options for free and easy invitations and RSVP tracking. Send your save the dates as far in advance as possible, and plan to send your invitations 3-4 weeks in advance.
- 7. Make personal contact to confirm attendance**
Budget time to follow up with your undecided and confirmed guests. Sending a reminder the week before the event, or making a personal phone call, can make all the difference in ensuring your guests’ attendance. This is also a great opportunity to talk to your community about Dignity Period.
- 8. Post-event follow-up**
After your event, email those who attended, as well as those who couldn’t come but were interested in learning more, to thank them and give them a link to the Dignity Period website (www.dignityperiod.org). This is a great reminder for those who might want to find out more. Also, be sure to send your materials back to Dignity Period - especially all donation envelopes, your event report (on page 13), and your sign-in sheet (on page 7).
- 9. Keep in touch with your Dignity Period representative**
Do you plan to host an event? Please let Jane (junger@dignityperiod.org) know so she can answer any questions, help you brainstorm, and provide you with materials - and even a speaker - to help make your event a huge success.

Most importantly - we want to hear from you! Please be in touch to share your story with the Dignity Period team - send us photos, personal stories, or information on your success, and indicate if we can share it on our website and Facebook page. We also want to hear why *you* support Dignity Period and your thoughts on how to make the organization even stronger.

BUILDING YOUR INVITATION LIST

Not sure who to invite? Here are some great ideas of people to put on your list:

Family: Consider both your immediate family and relatives you haven't seen in a while.

Friends: Think about your friends and their extended circles.

Acquaintances: People you see once in a while, people you met online, friends at your old job, people you went to school with, former teachers and professors, past sorority and fraternity friends.

Social networks: Facebook and Twitter are great places to publicize your event.

People you worship with: The head of the congregation, leaders, justice committee members, regular attendees.

Colleagues: People you work with, eat lunch with, and ride the elevator with.

Neighbors: Next door, upstairs, downstairs, one floor up, the whole block! Remember your neighborhood association members, landlord, babysitter, pet sitter, and parents of your children's friends.

Friends from other organizations: PTA, labor union, bowling league, sports teams, running group, workout friends, yoga class, book club, church, children's activities, people you volunteer with.

Social gatherings: Take a minute at your next luncheon or cocktail party to talk to people about your upcoming Dignity Period event.



Photo credit: Dignity Period

EVENT AGENDA

Events are most successful when scheduled for weekend afternoons or weekday evenings, depending on the type of event. Timing is also event type-specific and could range from two hours for a mom-and-daughter team or up to five hours for an auction.

We recommend beginning with some time for guests to meet and greet one another, before diving into the meat of the event

No matter what the event, these three things should occur:

1. **Introduction** (3-5 minutes). Usually done by the host. Thank your guests for coming. Talk to them about what Dignity Period means to you and why you decided to host an event. The more personal and individualized you can make the intro the better - people like and connect to personal stories.
2. **Remarks and Q&A** (10-20 minutes). Given by the host, a guest, or a Dignity Period representative, about the Mariam Seba Sanitary Products Factory, Mekelle University, and Dignity Period. Refer to the Dignity Period talking points (page 12) when writing your remarks. Allow your guests to ask questions.
3. **The pitch** (5 minutes). Made by the host, a guest, or a Dignity Period representative. The “pitch” asks people to engage with Dignity Period and explains how they can help. Use your event goals to determine what you’re going to ask your guests to do. For example, to write a check if you are hosting a fundraising event, or to sign up to volunteer, if your event is an educational event.

After the pitch, the formal program is over and guests go back to mingling.

- ❖ You may decide that you want your event to be less formal, so feel free to adapt this format to something that would better suit your friends and guests.
- ❖ If you are hosting a fundraising event, collecting contributions is very important. After the pitch, you should distribute donation forms, and have your guests make their donations. Please make sure that all forms are filled out completely and clearly.

After your event: Within 24 hours of your event, please mail or drop off any donation envelopes, sign-in sheets, and an event report to:

Dignity Period
P.O. Box 28343
St. Louis, MO 63146

EVENT COLLATERAL

Follow the links below for materials:

- ✓ [Brochure](#)
- ✓ [Presentation](#)
 - [Slides](#)
 - [Notes](#)
- ✓ [Video](#)
- ✓ [Sign-in sheet](#)
- ✓ [Save the date](#)
- ✓ [Invitation Samples](#)
 - [Educational Event 1](#)
 - [Educational Event 2](#)
 - [Fundraising Event](#)
- ✓ [Thank you email](#)

Depending on where you are located and the scale and scope of your event, a Dignity Period representative may be available to attend and speak. Please contact Jane (junger@dignityperiod.org) if you would like to explore this option.

Want to know how you should and shouldn't use the Dignity Period logo? Trying to figure out which font to use for invitations or which shade of pink for decorations? Check out our [Style guide](#) to get all of this helpful information and more.

Once your event has taken place, it is important to share your success! Post photos of your event on Facebook and encourage friends to spread the word.

Finally, please fill out and send the form below to our office within 24 hours of the event.

[EVENT RESULTS REPORT FORM](#)

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING DIGNITY PERIOD!