

An analysis of freely available menstrual education in Australia

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Background:

Sexual and reproductive health education is central to both global and national public health policy and priority action areas. However, menstruation education remains peripheral in both policy and school curricula – particularly in the Australian context, and socio-culturally menstruation remains both invisible and stigmatised. This presentation explores the extent and depth of menstruation education.

Method:

An inductive content analysis was conducted of publicly available Australian sexual and reproductive health educational resources, which at least mentioned menstruation. Resources from 11 organisations were identified with a total of 33 resources subject to conventional content analysis. An inductive coding process focussed on the extent and depth of menstruation content.

Results:

This presentation examines the main content areas that reflect the extent within the resources including discussions of pads and tampons, menarche, period pains, when to see a doctor and pre-menstrual syndrome. In addition, three key concepts are explored that reflect the depth within the resources: the holistic nature of menstruation, normalising menstruation, and comprehensive menstrual product education.

Conclusion:

This presentation makes a number of recommendations for organisations and schools developing or improving their menstruation resources. It also offers avenues for the improvement of sexual and reproductive health policy and education in Australia that are inclusive of menstruation, are culturally appropriate and affirming of diverse bodies and experiences.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

The University of Queensland partnered with True Relationships and Reproductive Health on this research. No grants were received in the development of this study.