

# RIGHT T♥ PADS:

## STUDENT-LED PROJECT ADDS FEMININE PRODUCTS TO CEDAR RESTROOMS



By Ikeoluwa Ojo

**O**n Aug. 23 Jamyria Wise walked through the front doors of Cedar Shoals High School with two baskets full of menstrual products and a plan.

After noticing Clarke Central's "period project" on social media, the sophomore decided that Cedar menstruators deserved a similar effort.

"It's important for the girls to have options. Everyone does not use the same product," Wise said.

With help from her mother, Wise gathered supplies and set out baskets containing various sizes of pads and tampons in the two main restrooms.

She used her Instagram to highlight her initiative and joined forces with friends Laryn Cross, Jakeria Adkins, Amaya Mitchell, Jada Thomas and Mariah Mathis to expand the project to all Cedar restrooms and share the workload.

"We've been friends since middle school, we're always together so of course it made sense for us to work on this project together too," Thomas said.

Together the girls refill empty baskets as well as accepting and tracking



**RAISING AWARENESS:** Project members (from left to right) Jada Thomas, Jamyria Wise, Laryn Thomas, Mariah Mathis, Jakeria Adkins and Amaya Mitchell stand in front of Cedar Shoals on Sept. 29. The group has been working together since late August. "We're just happy to be helping girls out," Mathis said. Photo by Isabella Morgan.

donations from faculty, students and wellwishers in the form of cash, menstrual products or through Cash App.

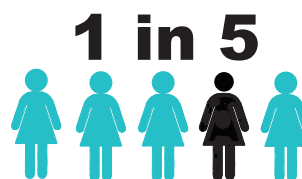
"The basket in the C200 restroom runs out very fast so we always have to

make sure that one gets filled up each day," Cross said.

Family communication specialist Courtni Reese learned about the



**69%**  
**of teen menstruators feel embarrassed to bring menstrual products to the restroom.**



**1 in 5**  
**teen menstruators have struggled to afford menstrual products or were unable to purchase them at all.**

Infographics by Ikeoluwa Ojo and Marcus Welch

project through a Facebook post by Wise's mother and reached out to them to offer her support and advice. Since their first meeting, the group often receives guidance from Reese.

"Having the baskets in the restrooms just helps alleviate a lot of the embarrassment that people feel with periods, which shouldn't be there in the first place but that's just society," Reese said.

After one of their strategizing sessions, the group created an Instagram account @cs.femininehygieneawareness where they post information about restock dates and facts about menstruation.

A caption on a recent post from their account reads "Menstruation is a NATURAL bodily function and there's nothing shameful about it."

Cedar Shoals Nurse Eve Bisard supports the girls' efforts and hopes that permanent changes are made to the Cedar Shoals restrooms to reduce the number of students who stop by her office for menstrual products.

"I probably get around 10-12 girls a day asking for pads, sometimes it's the same ones. I don't know if this is due to financial issues at home or them not monitoring their cycle. So hopefully the baskets keep the students from having to come up here," Bisard said.

Despite having support from Cedar faculty and most students, the group often find themselves dealing with the misuse of the menstrual products, particularly on the freshman hallway.

"We see products thrown everywhere or being stuck on the mirrors. It's annoying because it's probably just one or



**PADS PLEASE:** Two hands hold menstruation products over a basket that states "Take what you need" in a Cedar Shoals restroom. Similar baskets were placed in restrooms throughout the school by a group of sophomore students. "(Menstrual) products are so expensive so it's awesome of them to put them in all the restrooms, especially for emergencies," junior Ella Johnson said. Photo by Zaya Roberson.

two girls who are trying to be funny," Thomas said.

After making posts on their Instagram pleading with the pad perpetrators to no avail, the girls removed the baskets in the restrooms on the freshman hall with the hopes of one day returning them.

"They weren't thinking about their classmates who might actually need the products when they were wasting people's money and resources," Cross said.

Regardless of the complications that come up, the five girls continue with their project with the ultimate goal of

the Clarke County School District taking over and making menstrual products permanently available in each restroom.

"Students shouldn't be responsible for filling up these baskets or raising money for them, but for now we are," Wise said.

