

British girls skip school over period poverty: campaigners

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Some girls in Britain are forced to skip school each month because they cannot afford sanitary products, campaigners said Wednesday as they called for more government support.

Women and girls in poverty are forced to improvise when they are on their period, according to the organisation Freedom4Girls.

"I spoke to a woman who could only afford a loaf of bread to feed her children, so she used a slice of bread for her period," founder Nina Leslie said on Wednesday.

The organisation usually works in Kenya but was contacted by a school in Leeds, central England, asking for help earlier this year.

One 11-year-old girl told BBC Radio Leeds she used socks or [toilet paper](#) because her family did not give her any money for tampons or pads.

Campaigners rallied outside the [prime minister's](#) Downing Street office on Wednesday, calling for free sanitary products to be given through schools to girls in poverty.

"Toilet paper is free in schools, so why not sanitary products?" MP Jess Phillips said at the protest.

Campaign group Free Periods estimates the initiative would cost £4.78

million (\$6.39 million, 5.38 million euros) annually.

A government spokesman said £2.5 billion has been invested this year on the most [disadvantaged students](#), which schools could spend on sanitary products.

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