

Menstrual Equity

- Refers to the accessibility, affordability, and safety of menstrual products

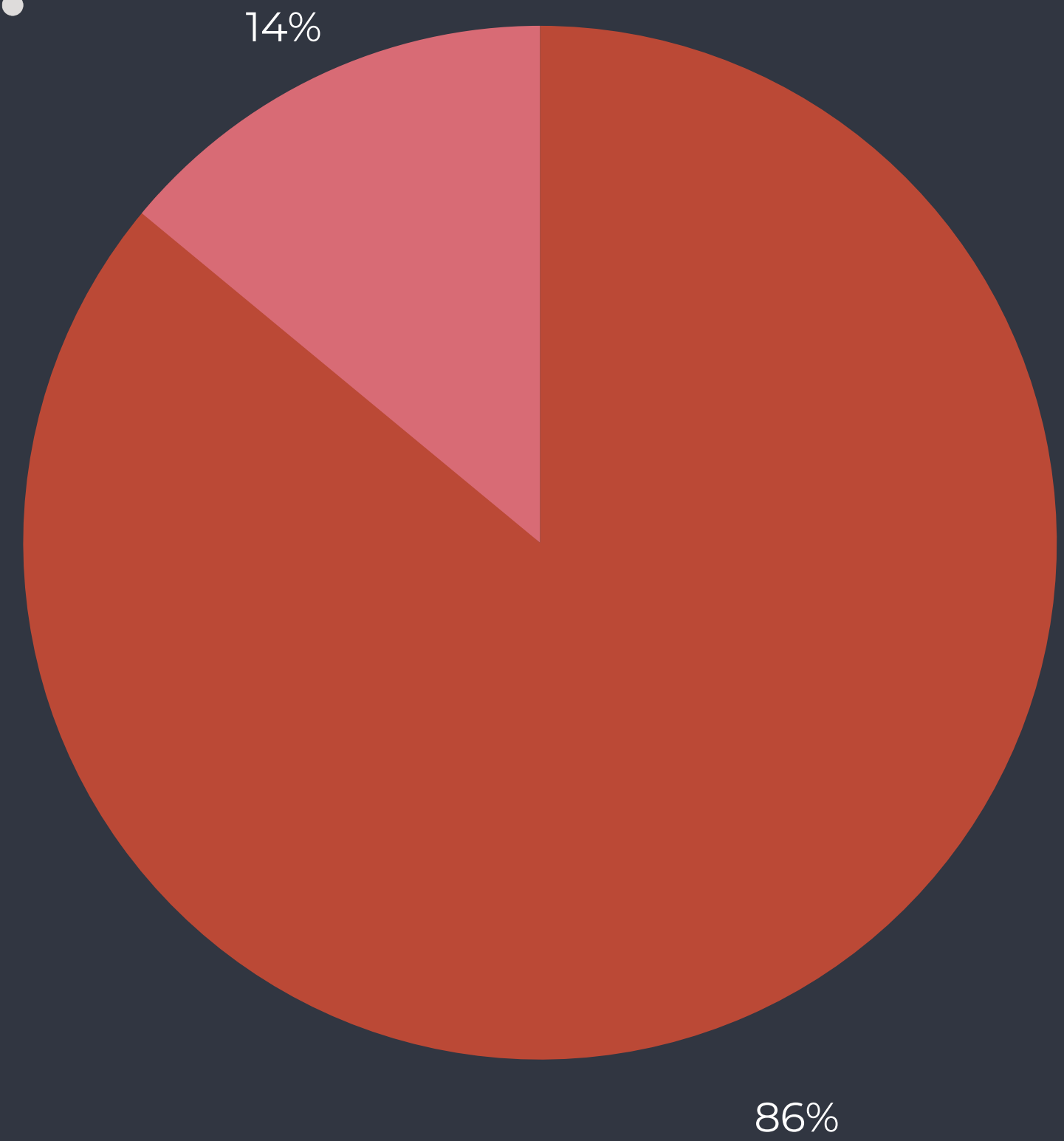
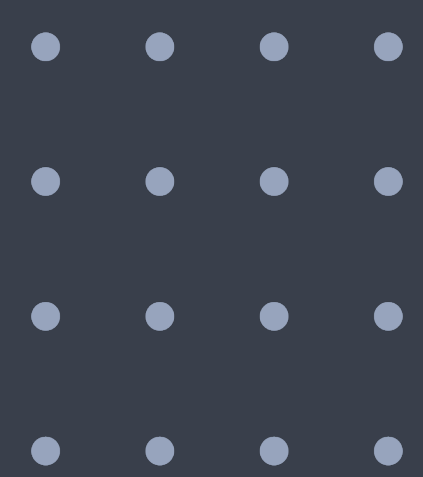


Inclusive Terminology

- Not all people who menstruate are female. Using the term "menstrual products" creates space for inclusivity.
- The term "hygiene products" suggests that this usual, biological function is "dirty", and contributes to stigmatization for people who menstruate.



- According to Free The Tampon (2013), 86% of people who menstruate have reported experiencing an unexpected period start in public without the supplies they need.

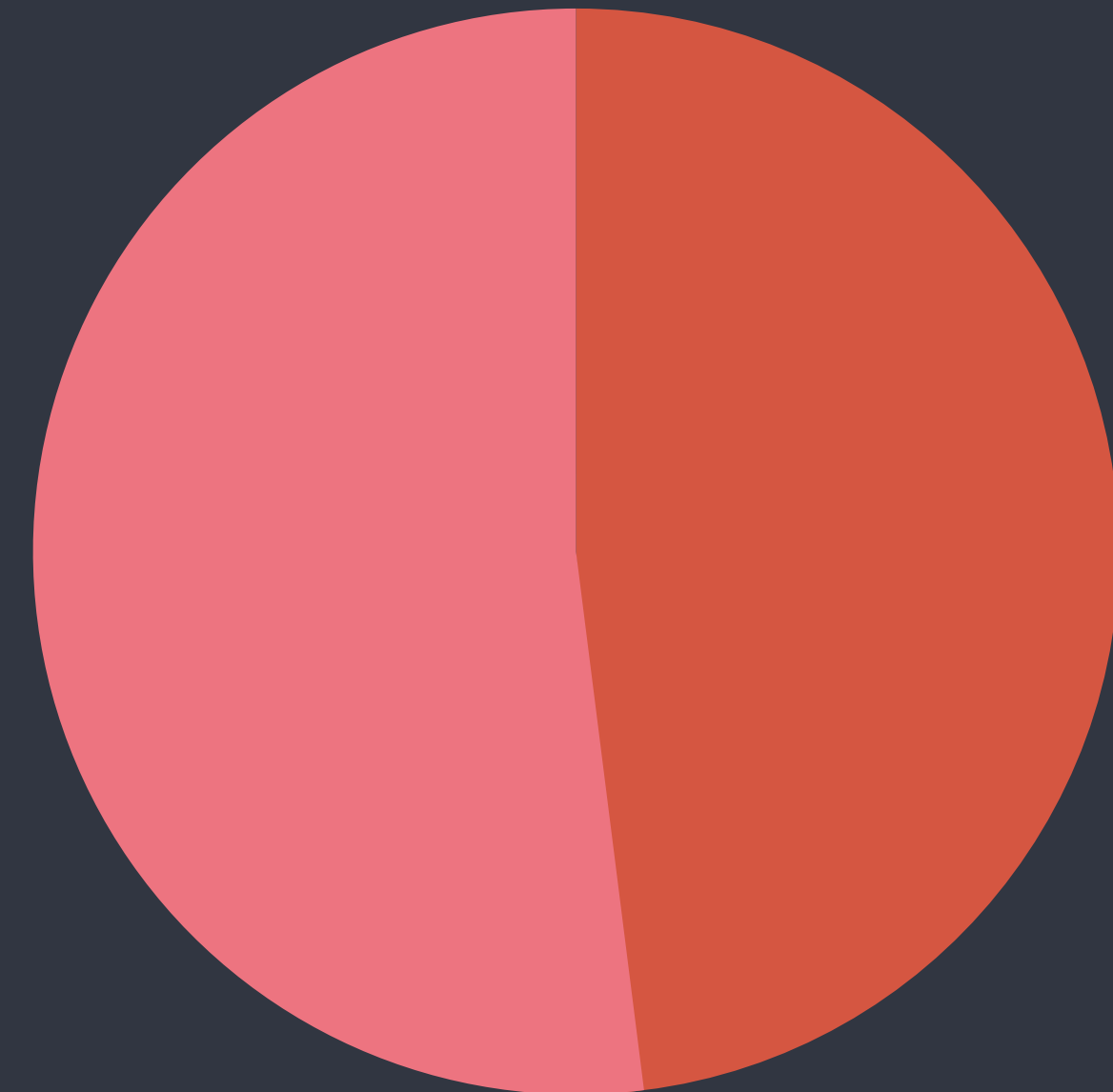


How many people menstruate?

- According to 2021 census data, self-identifying females account for approximately 52% of the K'omoks Valley population.
- Total population of 72,445 (Statistics Canada, 2022).



Self-identifying
females
52%



Other
genders
48%



The Impact...

- If our community has 1000 members, we can assume that 50% of those community members menstruate.
- Decrease this figure by 20% to account for people who may not actively menstruate, this means that 400 community members out of 1000 experience a monthly period.



The Impact...

- If 86% of these community members experienced an unexpected period start in public just one time per year, this means that 344 people experience their day being disrupted, and concern about how they will manage their day without the resources they need.



About Toilet Paper...

- What if we did not have toilet paper available in public?
- **That used to be a reality!**
- If you forgot your book of toilet paper at home, it was probably going to be a rough day...
- Along the way we decided as a society to provide paper products in the washroom to support public health and comfort.



United Way's Period Promise Campaign

Make your Period Promise today.



Nobody should have to pick between feeding their family and buying basic hygiene products. But, too many people are forced to make these kinds of tough choices. Too many young girls and vulnerable kids are missing school because they don't have period products. Too many are scrambling to use old cloth scraps or have to ask others for help.

**Nearly 1 in 4
Canadian women**

has struggled to buy period products for themselves, or their children.

Period Promise is an easy way to help vulnerable people live with the dignity we all deserve.

Donate products today.

Find out more at:
periodpromise.ca

United Way's Period Promise Campaign

Research gathered in Victoria, Nanaimo, Vancouver, Prince George, Cranbrook, Terrace, Powell River, Hope, Surrey, and Kelowna.

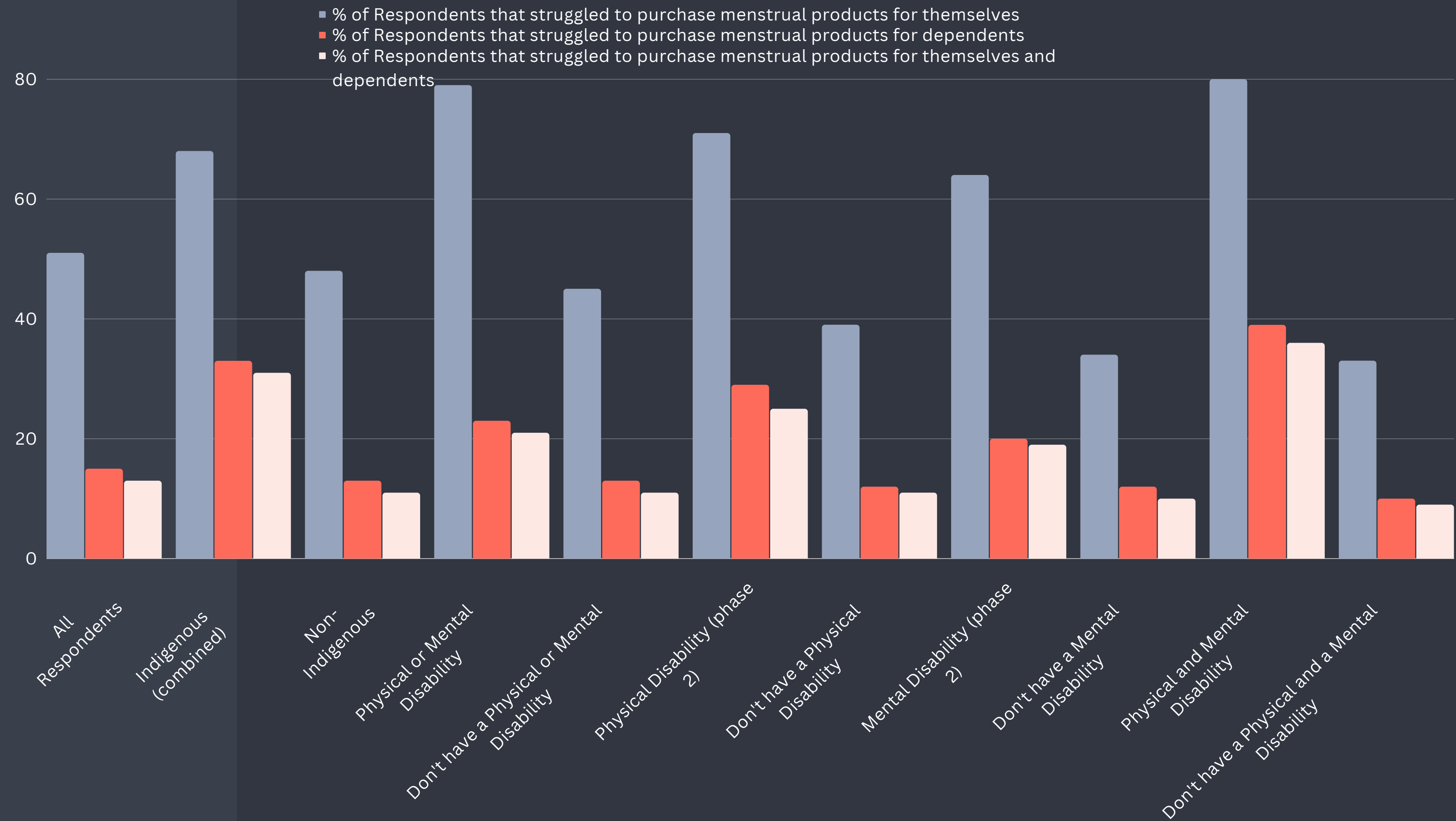
The 2021 report indicated that period poverty is common, and that families with an annual household income of <\$40k per year, people of Indigenous ancestry, and people living with physical and/or mental disabilities are most profoundly impacted by the cost of menstrual products.



United Way Period Promise Research
Project Final Report
January 2021

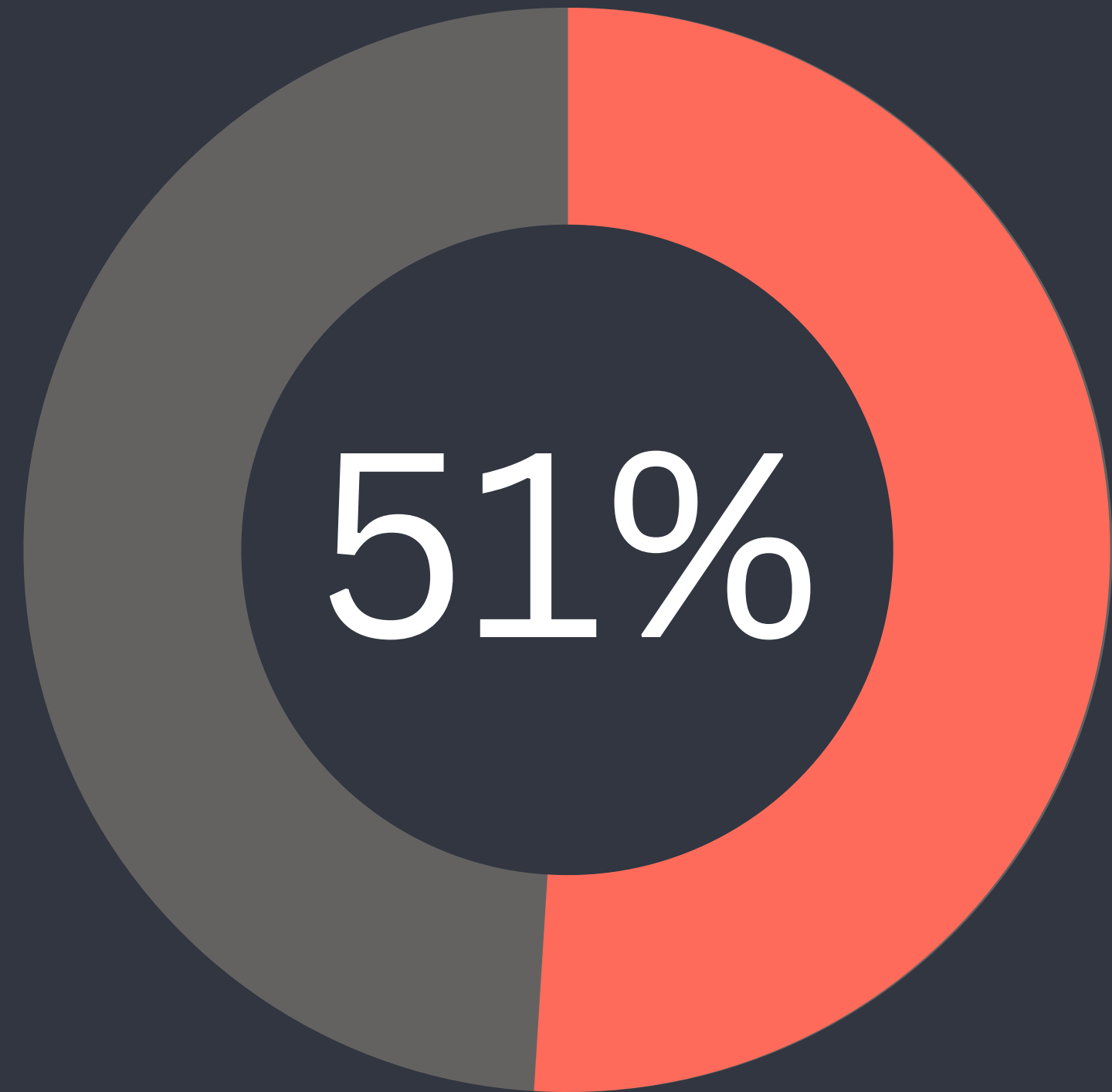


Major findings: The Struggle to Purchase Menstrual Products



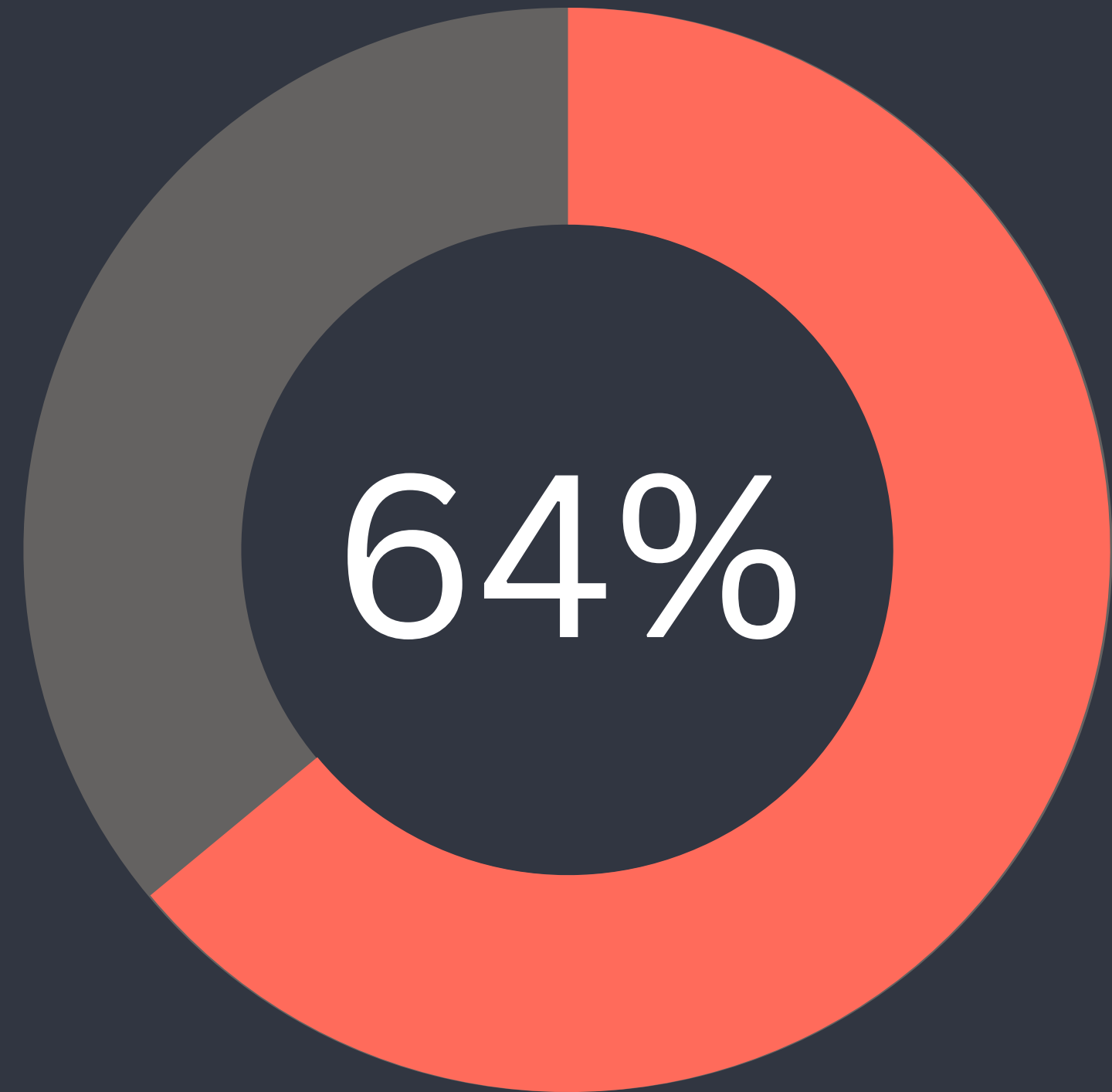
Major Findings

Approximately 51% of all Respondents indicated that they had struggled to purchase menstrual products for themselves (United Way, 2021).



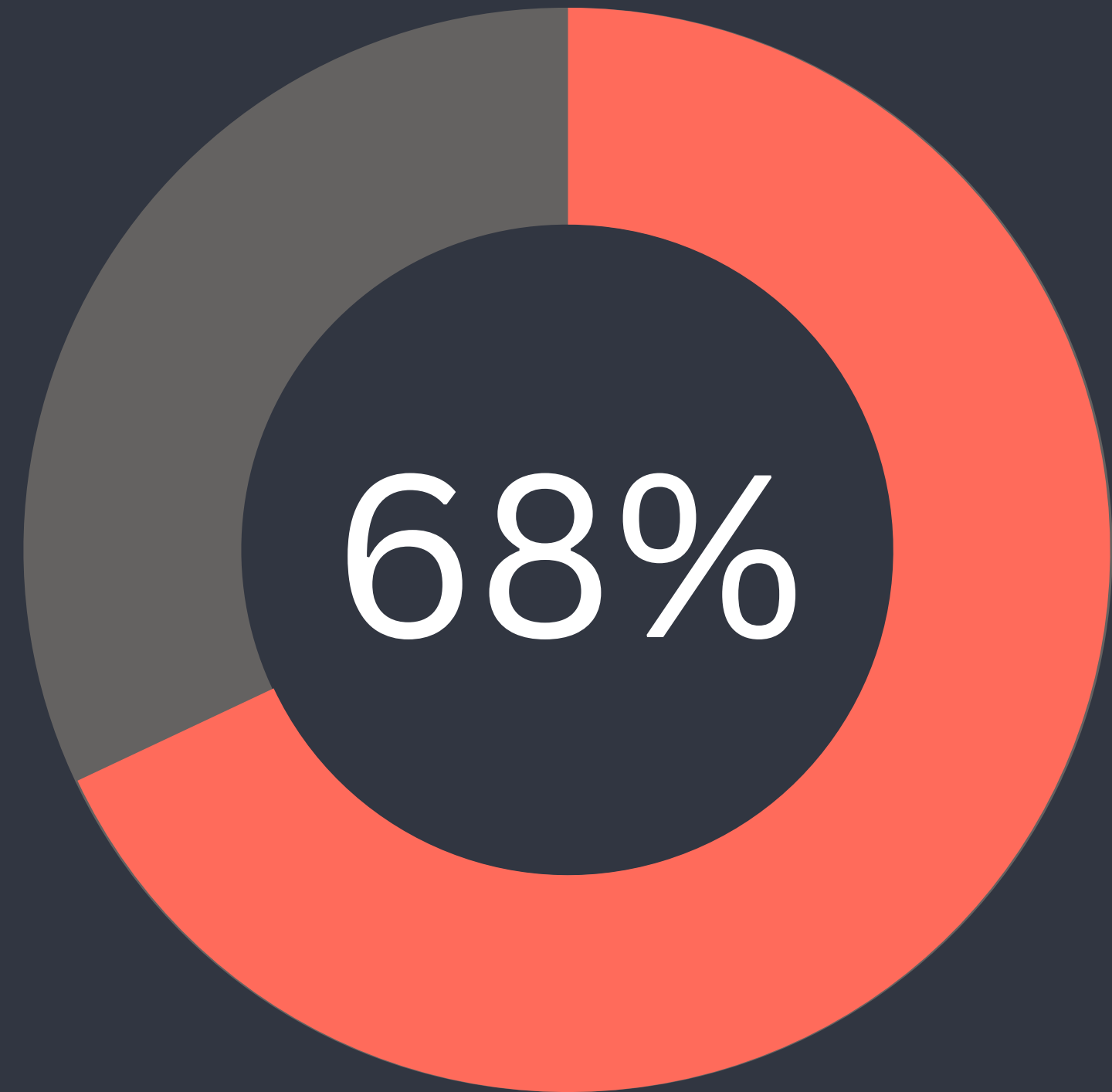
Major Findings

Approximately 64% of Respondents who reported an annual household income of <\$40k had struggled to purchase menstrual products for themselves (United Way, 2021).



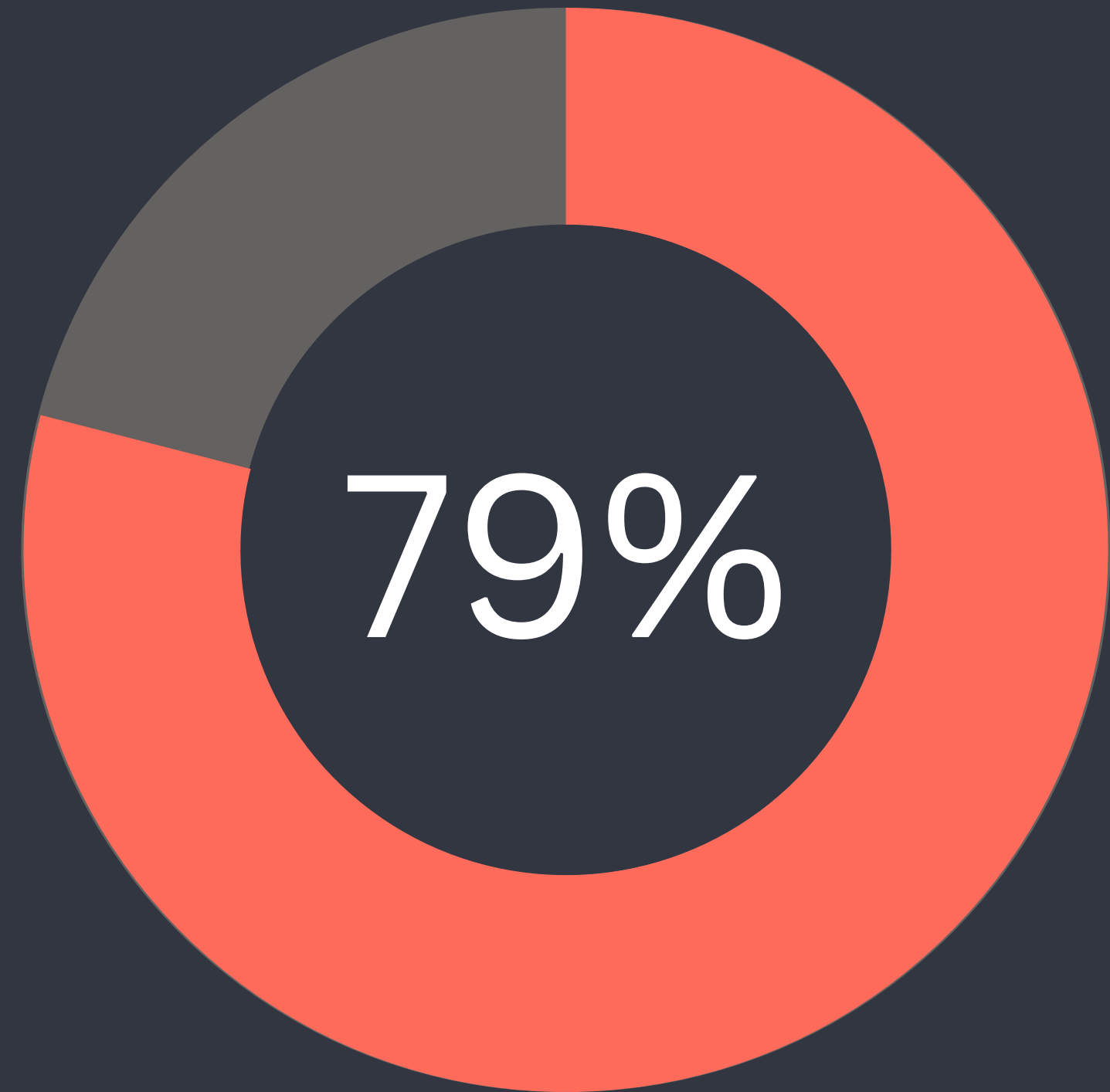
Major Findings

Approximately 68% of Respondents who identified as Indigenous had struggled to purchase menstrual products for themselves (United Way, 2021).



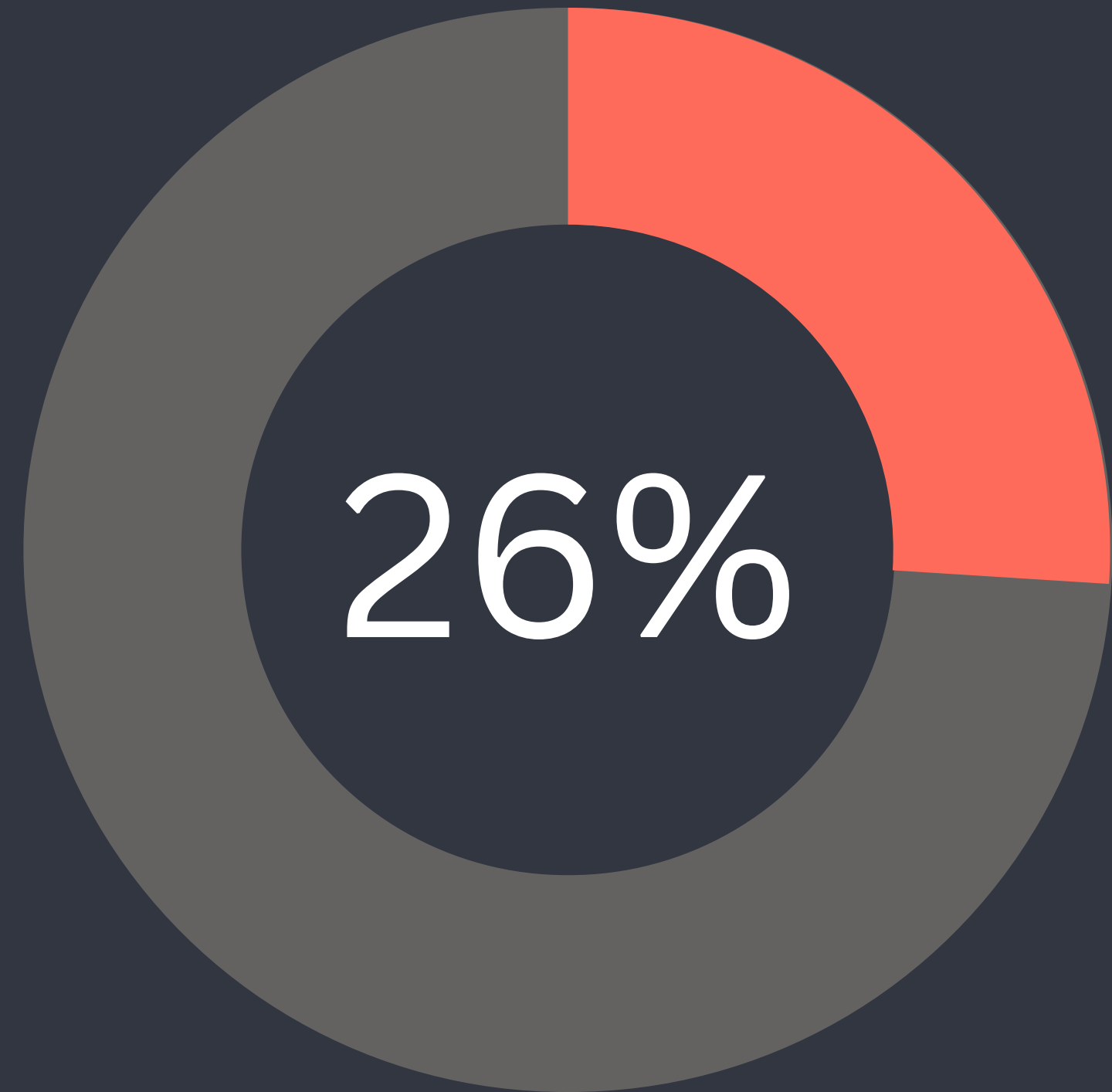
Major Findings

Approximately 79% of Respondents who indicated that they live with a physical or mental disability had struggled to purchase menstrual products for themselves (United Way, 2021).



Major Findings

Approximately 26% of Respondents indicated that they have experienced a period with zero menstrual products available to them (United Way, 2021).

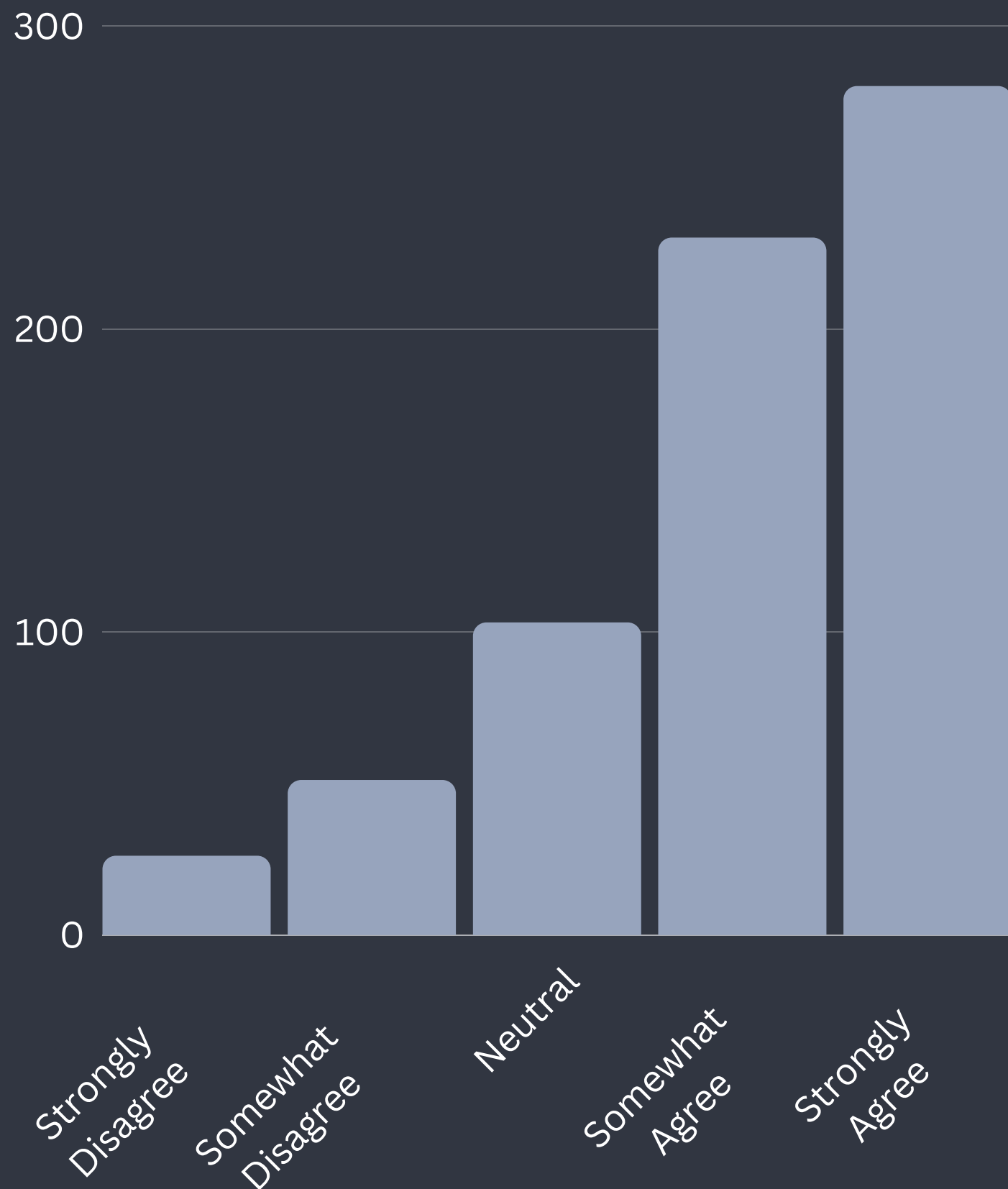


Major Findings

Menstrual stigma is a significant factor that contributes to an individual's likelihood to feel that they can ask for help when an unexpected period start occurs (United Way, 2021).

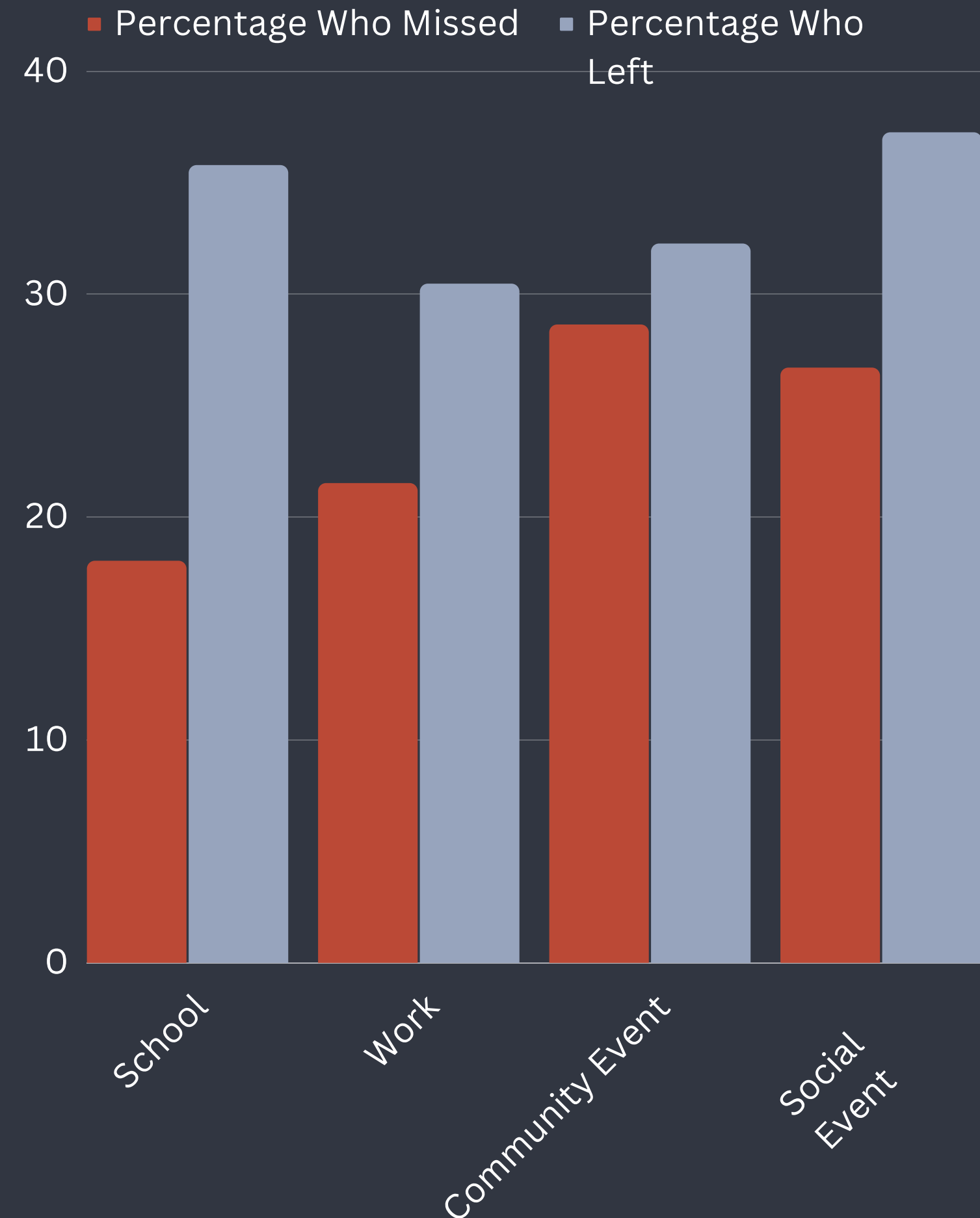


Menstrual stigma makes asking for help difficult (Scale of 1-5)
1 - Strongly Disagree, 5 - Strongly Agree



Major Findings

A substantial number of people who menstruate are missing out on opportunities to engage with, benefit from, and contribute to the public life and well-being of their communities because they do not have access to menstrual products (United Way, 2021).



What NISU is doing to help...

- In May of 2018, NISU Board of Directors committed to funding a pilot project providing low waste, organic menstrual products in 3 bathrooms at NIC's Courtenay campus.
- Available in one female identified, one gender neutral, and one male identified bathroom.



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As of February 2023...

- The Menstrual Equity initiative has now expanded to include **three bathrooms in every building on each of NIC's four campuses**, and the college has now committed to funding 100% of the costs associated with the project.

What NISU is doing to help...

- Providing products from Victoria based company, joni, which was established in 2020.
- joni creates low waste, biodegradable, organic cotton, bamboo, and cornstarch fiber menstrual products with a smaller ecological footprint than mainstream brands.
- NISU has been sourcing joni products for NIC student since 2023.

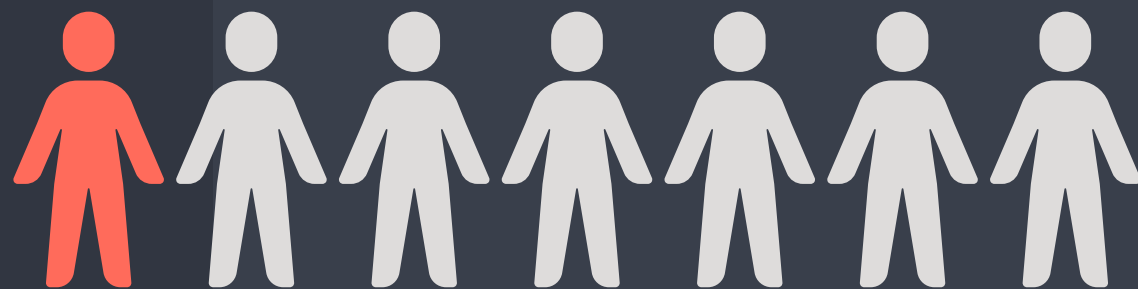
The joni logo consists of the word "joni" in a bold, blue, lowercase sans-serif font, set against a white rectangular background.

joni Period Care Dispenser

In addition...

- Since April 2019, the Ministry of Education has mandated that menstrual products be available in washrooms for students at the Kindergarten to Grade 12 level.
- Education Minister Rob Fleming has asserted that we must normalize and equalize access to menstrual products in schools to create a better learning environment:

"Students should never have to miss school, extracurricular, sports, or social activities because they can't afford or don't have access to menstrual products", said Fleming, adding that current research demonstrates that one in seven students has missed school due to their periods because they cannot afford products. This is a common sense step forward that is, frankly, long overdue. We look forward to working with school districts and communities to make sure students gets the access they need with no stigma and no barriers".





How does the community show up for its members?

- This move aligns with the ultimate goal of decreasing barriers to accessible, equitable education in our province.
- having the continuity of being able to rely on products being there and available when you need them will foster a sense of confidence and security that the municipality shows up for its members, and values their engagement with, and contributions to the community.

Examples of Period Promise Policy Signatories

- BC Federation of Labour
- Health Employee's Union (HEU)
- Pacific Blue Cross
- City of Victoria
- City of North Vancouver
- AIDS Vancouver
- BC NDP Caucus
- Houle Electric
- CUPE BC
- New West Minister Schools, SD40
- Thompson Rivers University
- Vancity
- ...and many more!
(United Way, 2023)





The Official Community Plan

- Two of the four cardinal directions prioritize community wellbeing and equity.
- Many of the *"equity-priority groups"* outlined in the plan intersect with those who will benefit from access to free menstrual products available in public spaces.
- Taking action by providing menstrual products in publically accessible places aligns with the city's goals to increase opportunities for all community members to "participate, prosper, and reach their full potential" (City of Courtenay, 2022, p. 21).



(City of Courtenay, 2022).

"Equity-priority groups" are people who often face discrimination or other forms of systemic disadvantage. They include but are not necessarily limited to persons of colour, persons with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQIAP+ individuals, and women.

(City of Courtenay, 2022, p. 21).

Communities benefit when equitable opportunities exist for all members...

Unexpected period starts cannot be controlled, but the City of Courtenay has the opportunity to **empower** people who menstruate to engage in their communities, remain at events and opportunities, and go about their day with dignity even when the unexpected happens, by providing products in City spaces.

Equity is created when community members have the resources to make healthful, autonomous decisions for themselves.



Council members
are requested to
vote in favour of a
staff report on the
costs and
implications of
providing free
menstrual
products in city
operated facilities
and to join the
Period Promise
campaign.



Thank You

References

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