



DIGNITY

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2019 IMPACT  
REPORT





# Introduction

Dignity's core mission is to champion period equity and make sanitary items available and accessible to everyone who needs them in Aotearoa.

Dignity uses a Buy-One Give-One model to partner with organisations to provide free sanitary items to both their staff and local schools, youth and community organisations in need.

This Impact report summarises Dignity's growth over the last 3 years and the combined impact achieved. Feedback has been collected from our corporate partners, schools and community organisations to get a snapshot of how the initiative is working; how many people we are supporting and how important the donations have been for those impacted.







2019 has been a busy year for us!

We have achieved some big milestones including our 3rd birthday, submitting our Positive Periods Petition to parliament, signing new corporate partners and expanding our product range with Oi Menstrual Cups and AWWA Period Underwear.

The biggest change for us personally is that we have welcomed a new General Manager. Anika Speedy. Allowing us to step back from the day to day and focus on the strategic direction for Dignity going forward.

We value your continued support for the Dignity initiative and we hope you feel proud to be a part of this growing movement and impact in New Zealand.

Warm Regards,  
**Jacinta Gulasekharam**

CO-FOUNDER

**Miranda Hitchings**

CO-FOUNDER

# Impact Summary 2019

Throughout 2019 we donated 12,313 boxes of Oi products. That's over 172,382 individual sanitary products to those in need. We expanded the initiative to include youth and community organisations. including;

## Teen Parent Colleges

Teen Parent Colleges in which we sent 1,729 boxes throughout Aotearoa.

## Family Planning

We found Family Planning were in need of support so we are now supporting high need clinics, beginning with Porirua and Whangarei this year.

## Wellington City Mission

In addition to these regular partners, we donated 164 boxes to the City Mission through the Soap for Society drive.

## Samoa Relief Fund

78 boxes to Samoa for relief packages during the measles outbreak emergency.

Number of  
Schools  
supported  
110

23,219  
Total boxes  
given away

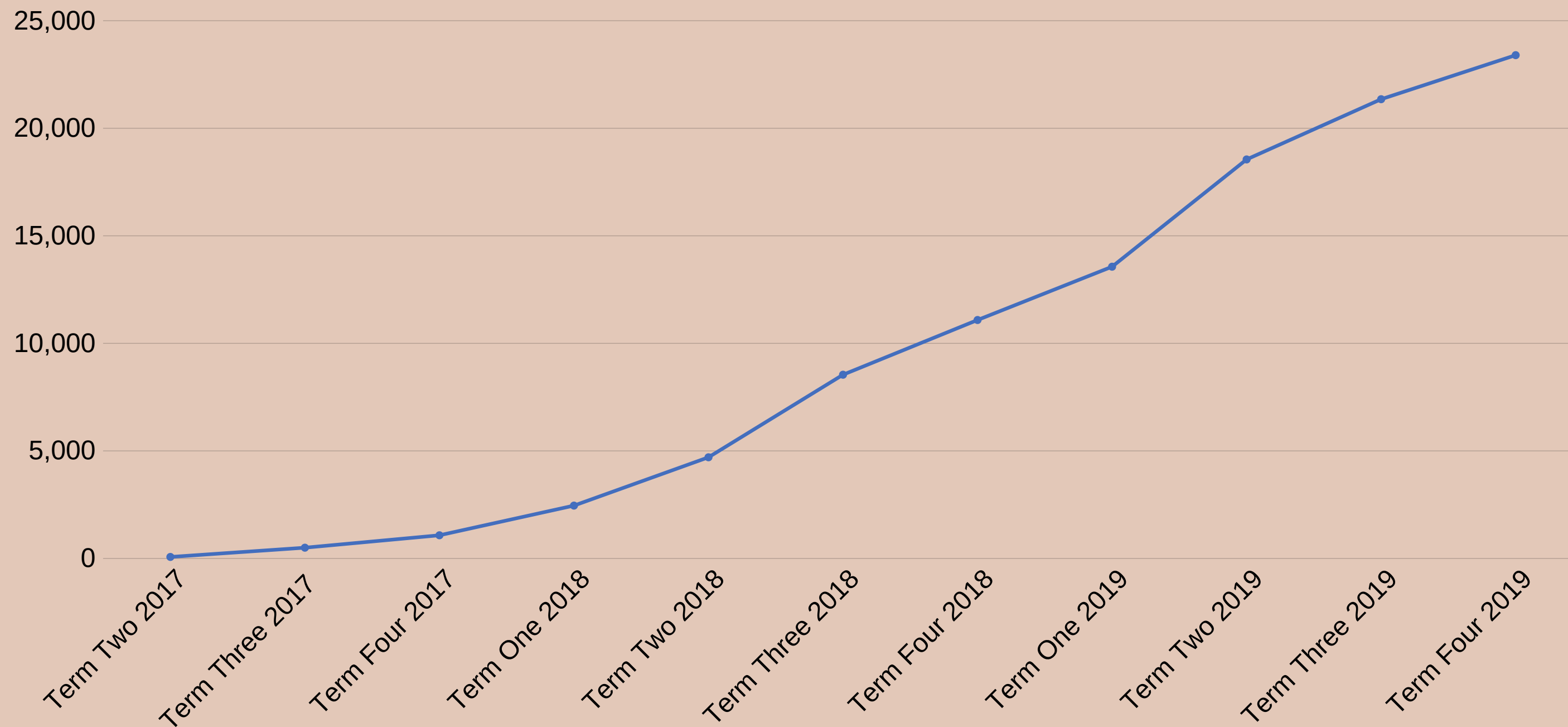
Number of  
students with  
access  
over 13,000





# Growth Over the Past Three Years

Over the past three years we have secured 17 corporate partners which has enabled our donations to expand throughout Aotearoa. The chart below shows the significant growth of the quantity of boxes we have donated each term.





# Feedback

"It definitely improves their health as they are able to refresh/replenish and not wear an item for too long; it improves their overall well-being as they feel more comfortable and their dignity is maintained - and if they don't have to worry about accessing tampons/pads they are able to focus/concentrate in class better and their learning is improved."

"We are often overlooked because of where our school is situated. Dignity has helped us address some basic human rights/equity issues. Dignity support means that we can support more of our students and their whānau."

"This helps with some kids who do not feel comfortable talking with some family members about it just yet. It also normalises the experience for the students so they feel like they are 'in the same boat'."





# Locations

Dignity has grown from a local initiative supporting a few schools in the Wellington region to now having a nationwide distribution of schools from Northland to Southland of which we send donations of sanitary items each term. These schools include regions such as Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Northland.

In the past three years we've moved from hand delivering the items to each schools (as shown in the map alongside) to having a storage unit, Operations Manager and courier company relationship. With the usage of diesel couriers we have chosen to offset these emissions alongside others including flights and waste using the Ekos carbon neutral programme.







# Team and Operating Ethically

The Dignity team was started by co-founders Jacinta and Miranda in 2017. From there as the initiative has continued to grow. In 2019 we welcomed 3 new members to our team.

Ana came on board as our Impact Specialist. Ana manages our Social Media and liaises with schools and community organisations on the receiving end of our 'give one' component.

Anika joined the team in October 2019 as our General Manager, taking over the day to day running of Dignity.

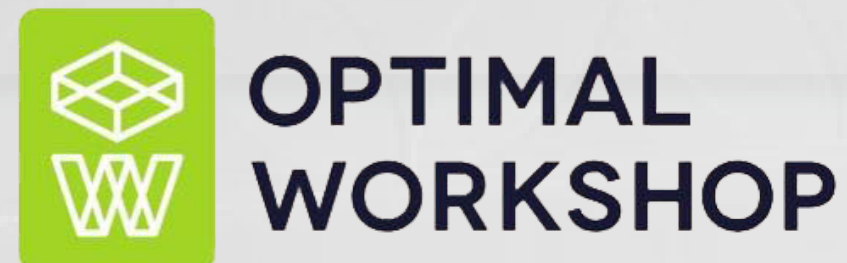
We make sure all our actions are embedded in sustainable and socially conscious practices. Dignity is Ekos accredited and carbon neutral.

We are a a Living Wage accredited employer, an accredited Social Enterprise and a member of the Sustainable Business Network. Additionally, the tampons and pads we supply are from the New Zealand based Organic Initiative.





Thank you to our corporate partners





# Period Poverty

This year, the annual Youth19 NZ research showed that of the 7,700 young people with periods they surveyed, 13% said they found it difficult to get menstrual products. The number was closer to 20% for Māori and Pacific people. The data also showed that one in ten students with periods miss school because of it.

Dignity quarterly school research reports provide an opportunity for schools to share their solutions and opinions on period poverty, as well the impact of Dignity on students.

## Key Findings on Period Poverty

Generally, schools consider period poverty to be the inability to access sanitary items. The key barrier to period poverty is financial, however in some instances cultural and social situations may exacerbate the lack of access.

Many schools believe a government lead, community involved initiative to reduce or remove the cost of sanitary items would be beneficial in finding a sustainable solution to period poverty.

Schools noted many implications of period poverty, including:

- Social embarrassment, stress and reduced self-esteem.
- Exacerbating inter-generational poverty, and other social and gender issues.
- Make-shifting items out of ineffectual products such as toilet paper, increasing the risk of accidents and public bleeding.
- Increased workload from missing school and dealing with the stress associated to 'catching up'.
- Missing out on education, school sports and social activities during days when students have their period.

# Positive Periods Petition

It was an honour to be invited to Parliament to formally present the Positive periods petition calling on the government to provide period products to all students in New Zealand and provide better menstrual education.

Jacinta lead the campaign for Positive Periods with Nest Consulting, The Period Place and Wa Collective.

The petition gained 3105 signatures within 90 days. Advocating on behalf of the 500,000 menstruating students in which periods should never be a barrier to their education.

We are so grateful for this opportunity and hopeful this call to action will be heard. Let's make periods a positive experience for our young people.



**Presenting the Positive  
Periods Petition to Parliament**







At the start of November, we were lucky enough to have 100 pairs of period proof underwear donated from AWWA (formerly I Am Eva).

The feedback so far has been great! Many of the younger students have found reusable cups a bit intimidating when they're first getting their period, so we are finding these underwear a great alternative for those wanting something easy and non-invasive.

## Offering more choice

This year we expanded our product range to offer reusable options and creating more choice. This will help us make an impact on more women throughout NZ.

All employees at Dignity workplaces can now purchase a subsidized Oi cup. Plus we are able to donate cups to schools and community groups.





# Championing Women and Wellbeing

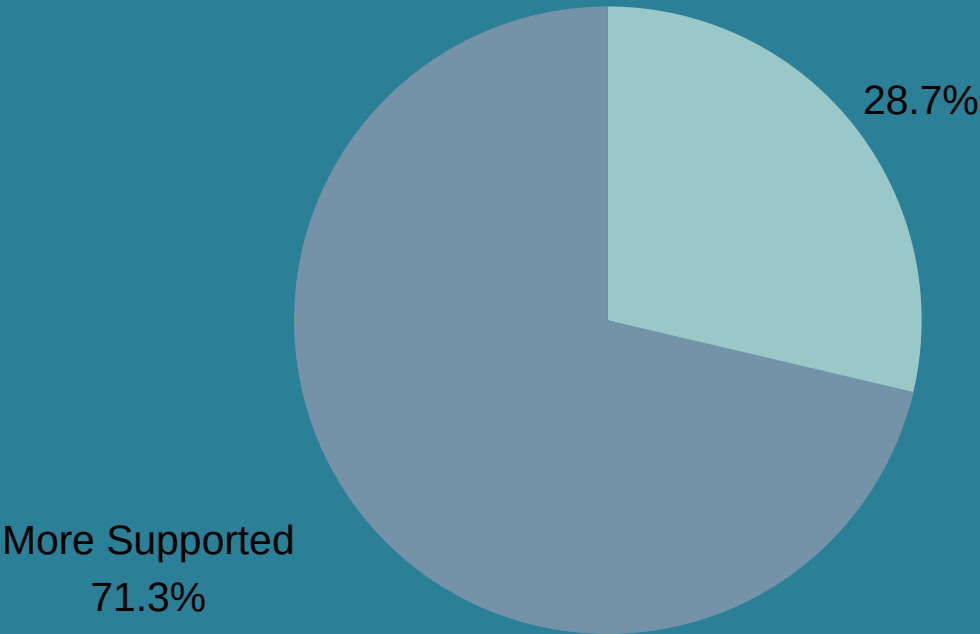
93% of people want to work for a company that cares about them as an individual. There is a reason why wellbeing initiatives increase productivity and talent retention.

75% of women are caught out by their period at least once a year, often while at work.

Acknowledging this problem and taking it a step further to provide sanitary items at all times, businesses can become more female friendly and wellbeing focused.

It is a small part in a very large problem- But we provide an actionable step that companies can take to achieve their larger diversity goals.

Please signify if having Dignity at work makes you feel more personally supported\*.



\*Source: Survey of 448 women who have access to Dignity in their workplace.

"I'm so impressed by this initiative. I've told all my friends about it, makes me proud to work here"

"Sometimes when I get my period, I might not have access to sanitary items at that point in time (very common). If that happens, I'll be very self-conscious. Dignity is such a huge life saver to help relieve the stress from those situations"







**23,219** boxes given in 3 years

Supporting **110** New Zealand schools,  
women's groups and  
youth organisations





## Awards and Media

2019 Wellys Finalist - Youth

2019 Kiwibank Awards - Mitre 10 New Zealand Community of the Year Semi-Finalist

2019 Wellington Gold Awards - Emerging Gold Services Finalist

2019 MYOB Women Entrepreneur of the Year Finalist (Jacinta)

2019 Impact Awards - Enterprise Finalist & Wander&Wonder scholarship recipient (Jacinta)



# 2020 Focus

Our focus for the 2020 year is to have new community organisations to assist with the wider, systematic issue of period poverty.

With this comes more collaborations and innovation methods of expanding on the way we provide Dignity to those in need.

To achieve this we are excited to welcome additional corporate partners to our Dignity fold and support more women in the workplace with our tangible initiative for diversity and inclusion.

Thanks to all those who have supported us and get in touch with us at [hello@dignitynz.com](mailto:hello@dignitynz.com) if you can help with our mission.







DIGNITY

Championing Period Equity



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