

DIGNITY

2020

Impact Report



"My teenage brother was sometimes sent to the supermarket to buy period products for me and thought nothing of doing that for his sister! educate & raise our boys to think like that, that would be a great shift towards removing menstrual stigma"

- Dr Sarah Donovan

Content

Founders' Words	03
Impact	04
Case Studies	08
Give One Two Three	10
Positive Periods	11
Awards	12
Operating Ethically	13
Dignity in the Workplace	15
Meet the Team	16
Our 2021 Focus	17

Co-Founders Words

2020 was a milestone year for Dignity. Covid-19 was a challenge, and with increasing levels of poverty, the need for period products grew significantly. However, thanks to the development of our new Give One Two Three gifting initiative and some amazing businesses who continued to donate their 'Give One' orders during lockdown - we have now gifted over 32,000 sustainable period products to people without access.

We also developed some great impact partnerships with organisations like Dress for Success and Brown Girl Woke, had Sophie Brooker join our team as Operations Manager and saw the Government announce \$2.6 million for period products in schools.

Anika Speedy has done an amazing job as General Manager over the last year and we are excited to continue to work together towards even more impact in 2021.

Jacinta Gulasekharam **Miranda Hitchings**

CO-FOUNDER

CO-FOUNDER



Our Strategic Plan

Values

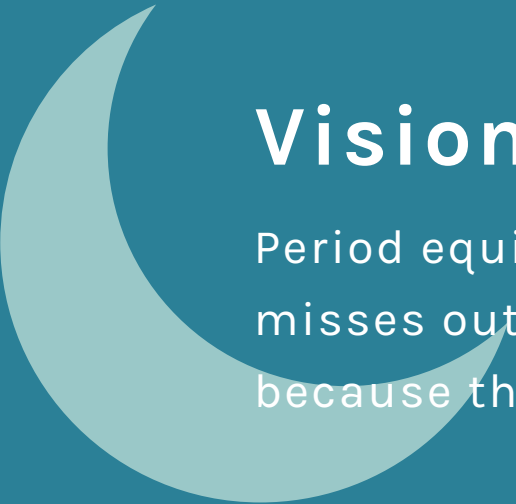
Diversity | Inclusion | Accountability | Sustainability | Transparency

Thanks to the Regional Business Partner Network, Covid-19 support fund and Creative HQ, Dignity worked with Hannah McKnight from Ngātahi Communications to build upon the foundations of Dignity's strategy to deliver period equity.



Purpose

Dignity exists to provide free period products to all people without access.



Vision

Period equity in Aotearoa: No-one misses out on opportunities simply because they have their period.



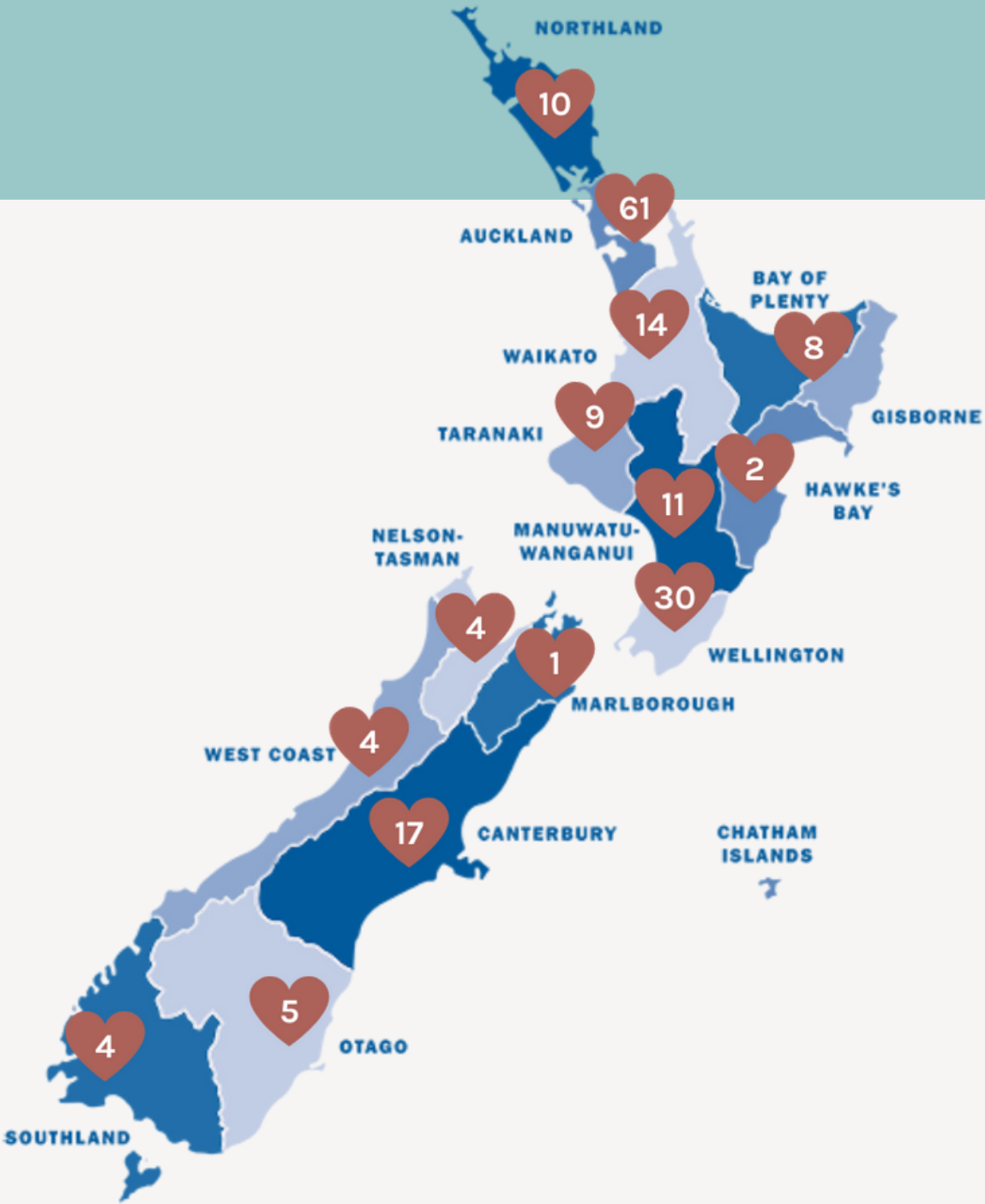
Mission

To provide free period products through our two Impact Initiatives. ‘Buy One, Give One’ partnerships and gifting initiatives for the benefit of kiwi workplaces, youth and community groups.

Impact Summary

32,105

Boxes Gifted



168

Menstrual Cups

1,203

Pairs of AWWA period proof underwear

180

Schools, youth and community groups

34

Impact Partners

36,647+

People given access to period products

“

“It empowers the students to feel good about themselves. One student says, "I live alone with my dad now. Sometimes he don't have money for pads..." These students having access helps their mental wellbeing by slowly accepting this phase in their lives without feeling a burden on others.”

What our Give Partners told us

Youth and Community Organisations

What do you see as the main barriers to accessing period products?

"The price and also stigma that comes with periods. A lot of our rangatahi are taught that its dirty to have a period."

"There is a lot of negative stigma around our young ones getting their periods early"

"Finance, and changing mindsets"

"Cost" "Financial"

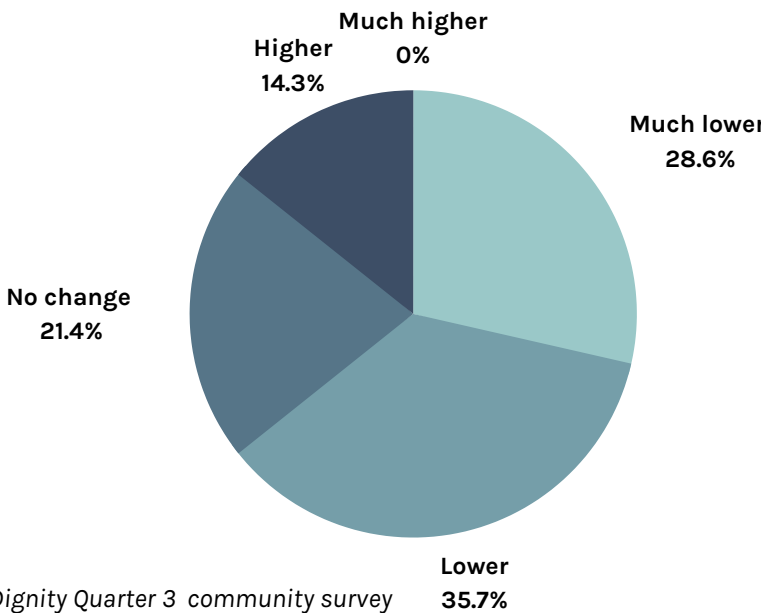
"A lot of our young people are living with their grand parents (great grandparents) and the cost is an issue"

"Money, families living in small rural community with no major supermarkets close buy. Products often a lot more expensive at smaller country shops"

"Thank you for supporting us to support our community"

"Very grateful to Dignity for making what seemed a difficult task extremely easy! thank you so much :)"

Since period products have been available, what have you noticed around period stigma?



Source: Dignity Quarter 3 community survey

"Students are still shy, embarrassed and disconcert when asking"

64% noticed much lower or lower stigma in relation to periods

"Thank you for normalising menstruation and empowering young ladies. :-)"

66% 100% 66%

Saw improved confidence

Saw increased self-esteem

Saw decreased stigma

"Eases financial strain for our clients"

"When they have access to products that the rangatahi find hard to access, the rangatahi show lots of confidence and proud of becoming women."

"It has increased the self confidence of our young girls, removed the shame of not being able to access these and it has decreased the absenteeism of our young girls :)"



What our Give Partners told us

Schools



90%

Increased attendance in school

72%

Improved confidence

57%

Increased involvement in sports

72%

Decreased stigma

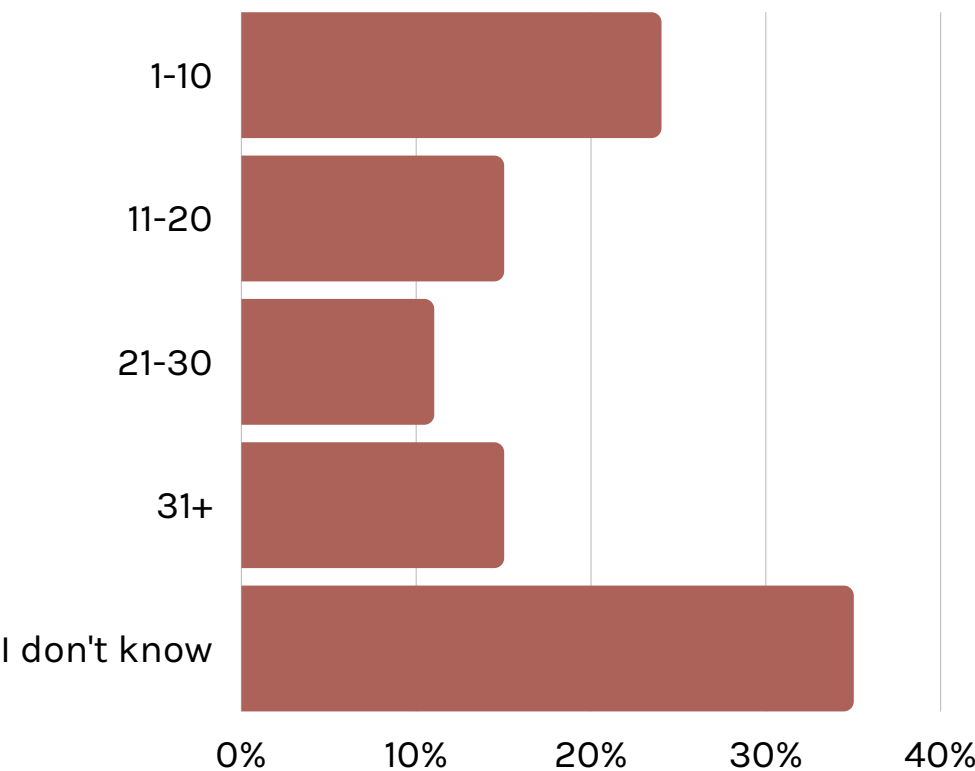
"Increased participation in clubs"

"Empowerment as we make them freely available in each dean's office for students to take if they want to"

"They have one less issue to worry about especially surrounding the expenses of menstrual products"

"Happier, engaged and more themselves"

How many students were able to attend school each term as a result of having access to these products?



Source: Dignity Quarter 3 school survey

"Relief, either because they do not have the finances to buy them or they don't have to go home"

"This is a very popular initiative among our students. Period products are expensive but very necessary. If you can not afford them it is all too easy to ring in and say you are sick during a period. This affects people's ability to complete work and puts them behind. Thank you for your support"

"Knowing that the products are freely available and easy to ask for when needed students feel supported with been able to attend school"



Case Study

Dress for Success New Plymouth

Dress for Success is an international charity helping women into financial independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and the development tools needed to help women thrive in work and in life.

They offer a free “wrap-around” service to our clients. Our programs and services aim to help women become job ready and succeed in gaining, and keeping, employment.

Their purpose is to offer long-lasting solutions that enable women to break the cycle of poverty. Dress for Success is part of a global movement for change, empowering women to obtain safer and better futures.

Each client is provided professional attire to secure employment, but they are about much more than simply a new outfit. Their programs offer support with CVs, interview tips and pre and post-employment mentoring. Most importantly, their clients leave with a new found confidence ready to take on this next step of their life journey.

48

**Boxes of pads
and tampons
donated**

150

**People gifted
access**



Who are the profile of women that come to Dress for Success?

The profile of our clients is hard to define or pinpoint. They range from 18-65 and come from a diverse range of backgrounds. Aside from the clothing and job seeker services we also offer subsidised haircuts, free personal care items and now your period product.

How many women do you help each year and has this increased with Covid-19?

Around 150 clients access our services each year. We anticipate this will increase as more women need help securing employment moving forward. Lately, we have been dressing women needing smart outfits for house viewings and court appearances.

What are the barriers for clients accessing period products?

Purely financial.

What is the impact for them on having these products provided?

It's a relief....something less to worry about. A lot of our clients have financial insecurity.

Case Study

Brown Girl Woke - Samoa

“A good reminder to me as a mother to fulfill my duty as a mother to teach my daughters so that they would be prepared when they reach this part of life”

Doris Tulifau runs a non profit called Brown Girl Woke, delivering school programs aspiring, educating and empowering young women to lead culture and policy changes for a transformative society.

Doris contacted us to ask if we could provide disposable Oi pads to be given to girls as part of educational menstrual health workshops run in local communities. Doris also teamed up with a local nurse to run workshops educating women and girls on reusable pads to help reduce the ongoing cost of the period products.

Dignity is proud to partner with Doris and Brown Girl Woke to help educate and empower young women in Samoa and help reduce the stigma and shame associated with menstruation.



What have been the barriers to access?

The cost associated with menstrual products contributes to the usage of other natural occurring materials and pieces of cloth. To address the issue of cost and availability, reusable pads have increasingly become more popular, not only reducing cost but addressing issues of disposal and non-biodegradability of the materials used in the manufacture of many menstrual products such as pads and tampons. However the challenge of cleaning reusable cloths remains a concern.

Background

Approximately 500 million women and girls around the world are affected by inadequate menstrual hygiene and management, which has a ripple effect on the quality of life, health, their ability to attend a school or participate fully in the workplace (World Bank 2018). In developing countries, this topic of discussion is often taboo, shrouded in secrecy and often a source of stigma. “menstrual blood is ‘dirty’ and that girls and women can bring bad luck to men.”

Project Methodology (with amendments due to COVID-19 lockdown)

Women and girls in Faleasi were invited to two workshops of 25 women each. An initial workshop where education on the use of the reusable pads and menstrual hygiene was delivered, in addition to focus group discussion on taboos and concerns related to menstruation in Samoa. A follow up workshop was held to get feedback on the experience of using the reusable pads and train participants on how to make the reusable pads. The overall feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

Give One Two Three

431 BOXES GIFTED

147 MENSTRUAL CUPS GIFTED

39 PAIRS OF AWWA GIFTED



Providing period products is only one part of our mission at Dignity. We are also fighting to reduce period stigma.

We launched 'I Stand With Dignity' to allow you to tell your stories, whether through social media or sending it in anonymously through our survey. Raising awareness and talking about our experiences with periods helps normalise them.

"I couldn't afford even \$5 for tampons, so I used rolled up toilet paper as a pad. For 9 months. It was humiliating."



In response to the impact of COVID-19, we had to look at how we could continue to create Impact with new revenue streams. This led us to launch our Give Two Boxes initiative, allowing people to easily donate to Dignity online.

To live our values of Diversity and Inclusion, it is important to us to offer a choice of period products to suit people's preferences, beliefs, and needs.

We extended the initiative to Give One Two Three where you choose what to gift; including reusable cups and underwear. Give One Two Three also gives you the choice of payment options by supporting people without access through a one-off or regular gift of Dignity.

Positive Periods

The vision of Positive Periods is to exist in a country where every young person has a positive experience with their period.

This campaign was a collaboration of organisations and people across the health, education and political sectors who were driven to end period poverty in Aotearoa.

Timeline:

13th June 2019 - Positive Periods Campaign Launched and discussion Paper presented in person to Chris Hipkins, Education Minister and Julie Anne Genter, Minister for Women.

31st August 2019 - National Council of Women AGM pass remit to support free period products in schools.

10th September 2019 - 500 signatures reached on the petition.

13th November 2019 - Petition presented to Parliament with 3105 signatures.

3rd June 2020 - Positive Periods campaign team meets with PM Jacinda Arden and Minister Julie Anne Genter.

3rd June 2020 - Period products are announced to be free in NZ for students from 2021.

November 2020 - Waikato roll-out of free period products from the Government.



Government announce \$2.6 million for period products in schools

Period poverty affects thousands of New Zealanders every year. Last year's Youth19 survey indicated that 12% of New Zealand year 9-13 menstruating students reported having difficulty getting period products due to cost. 8% have reported missing school due to a lack of items, for Maori and Pasifika students this rises to 19%. We know that when students don't have freely available period products, they are more likely to miss education, exacerbating the gendered cycle of poverty.

Sadly, this number is set to grow as the COVID-19 pandemic creates further financial, education and career inequities for many youth, women and people with periods. At Dignity we have seen the demand increase from community groups, such as libraries where many displaced people go,

Dignity is proud to have initiated the Positive Periods Campaign which led to the Government's \$2.6 million funding of period products in schools from 2021. We will continue to advocate for period equity and to reduce the stigma surrounding menstruation.

We have been working with the Ministry of Education (MOE) to help with the implementation of their rollout of free period products to schools who opt in to receive products.

Dignity will also continue to offer a choice of organic products including Oi tampons, pads, menstrual cups and AWWA period proof underwear to schools who request products from us.



Awards

We were honoured to be recognised for our impact in a number of awards:

- 2020 Wellington Gold Awards, Emerging Gold Services Finalist
- SheEO Semi Finalist in New Zealand for the 2020 Cohort
- 2020 Semi Finalist The Impact Award for Enterprise
- Finalist Social Impactor category for the 2020 Sustainable Business Awards, and
- Jacinta Gulasekharam has been selected as a finalist in the Change Maker category
- Jacinta Gulasekharam has been selected as a finalist in the 2020 Women of Influence Young Leader category

Operating Ethically

We believe it is critical that sustainable practices sit alongside the implementation of our social mission

Certified



This company meets the highest standards of social and environmental impact

Corporation



Girls should not miss out on education simply because they have their period. 14% of the schools we supported in Q3 2020 reported 31+ girls were able to attend school each month as a result of having access to Dignity products. 90% reported and increase attendance in school.



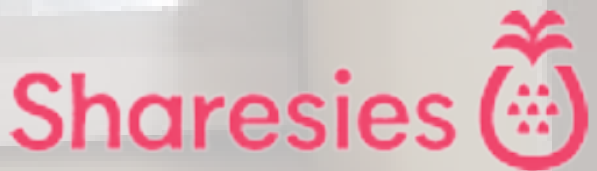
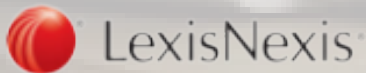
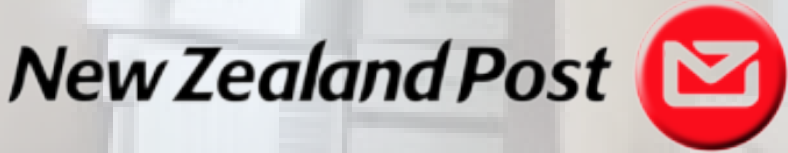
We have seen Covid-19 disproportionately impact women and we are committed to support, advocate, and provide a choice of period products to those without access.



Dignity aims to play a leading part in normalising menstruation through education, advocacy, awareness and women's experiences shared widely. We are proud to work with the Gender Tick to promote gender equity in the workplace, as the provision of period products in the workplace is now a criterion for accreditation.



We highly value our partnership with Organic Initiative. Their period products are biodegradable, compostable, 100% cotton and Fair Trade. We supply their certified organic cotton tampons, pads & liners and the zero waste Oi Cup. We also partner with AWWA to provide their period-proof NZ made underwear.



Championing Gender Equity



"Supporting woman to thrive and overcome obstacles in life is personally close to my heart so this is super important. A lot of people here at Yellow feel the same. To support local woman and woman in business is hugely important to the success of this country and our culture as a whole. We're proud to be part of this journey."

-Tracey Taylor (Chief Experience Officer at Yellow)

GenderTick™

The provision of period products in the workplace is now part of the criteria for accreditation with the Gender Tick. We are proud to partner with a number of businesses who hold the Gender Tick demonstrating their commitment to gender equity in the workplace including Yellow, Chorus, Xero, Kiwi Wealth, Z Energy and Pepsico.

85%

of employees surveyed said having Dignity at their work makes them feel more personally supported

"...I didn't have regular access to period products growing up which put me in some really uncomfortable situations. It feels awesome knowing that Sharesies supports Dignity in preventing that happening to other young kiwis."

- Sharesies Employee feedback



"I love that FINALLY, periods are starting to be bought into the mainstream - as something that women have to manage on a day to day basis... and no-one should be disadvantaged by them."

- Kiwi Wealth Employee feedback

Meet the Team



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Advisory Board



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Felicity Evans

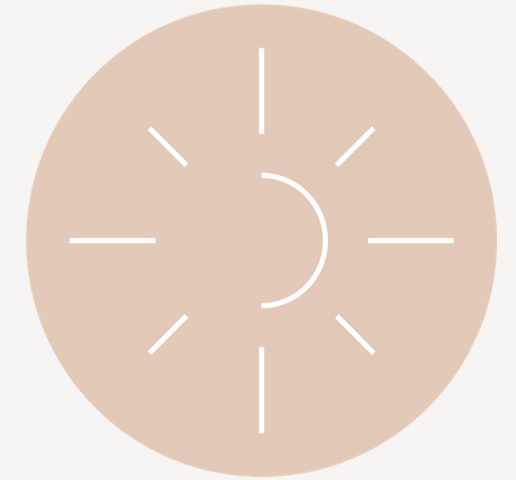


Melissa Clark-Reynolds



Justin Lester

2021 Goals



50,000

Boxes Gifted by our 5th Birthday

50

Impact Partners

- Remove the gender pay gap relating to the financial and emotional burden of periods.
- Strengthen our understanding, with our Community Give Partners, of the barriers to accessing period products.



DIGNITY

Delivering Period Equity

DignityNZ.com