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Wendy Bulawa Agudelo

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Wendy Bulawa Agudelo is the creator and founder of Period Packs, a celebratory gift package aimed towards preparing and educating young girls about getting their period and entering womanhood.

WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO CREATE PERIOD PACKS? I grew up on a farm with just my dad and three brothers, so when I got my period I felt very lost and alone. I went to my school nurse and she threw together a box of pads and other information and it was the greatest thing in the world. We celebrate huge milestones like sweet sixteen and graduations, but getting your period is a big deal, too. I hope to change people's mindset and that we learn to pay homage to this milestone in a young woman's life.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST EMBARRASSING PART OF GETTING YOUR PERIOD FOR THE FIRST TIME? The most awkward or uncomfortable part we've heard from young ladies in our focus groups is the part where blood actually comes out [of your vagina.] Getting their arms emotionally and psychologically wrapped around that point seems the most difficult as all they've known to date is to put a band-aid on a cut. Your period is much different in that you can't use a band-aid to cover it up, and girls just ask "why is this happening, what is going on?"

DO YOU THINK PERIOD PACKS HELP GIRLS BOND WITH THEIR MOM? Yes, but I think dads, sisters, grandmothers, and other relatives and close friends can use it with the special young lady in their life. Giving a gift like this helps to open the line of communication about an awkward subject, and I know with my own daughter, my hope is that a Period Pack will help her feel more comfortable when we begin talking about her getting her period.

WHAT AGE ARE PERIOD PACKS APPROPRIATE FOR? I, personally, would give it to a young lady in advance of the onset of menses, and feel that any young lady between the ages of 9 and 14 would benefit. The products inside Period Packs are both celebratory and preparatory, and the book that comes with it is something she might want to browse through ahead of time, so when she does get her period she'll be more comfortable with it—and may also have some well-thought out questions. By becoming more familiar with what is biologically expected to occur, she may not be as shocked or scared and when she gets her period, be it at a party or elsewhere, she'll be prepared and know what to do.

WHAT ARE SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT GETTING YOUR PERIOD? Menstruation seems to frequently get tied to sexual activity, and to me, that's not appropriate. When a girl gets her first period many aren't mature enough to talk about sex. It is my feeling that we should completely separate the two, which may actually help parents eliminate the negative or taboo connotation of their daughter getting her period and having sex—and simply focus on the celebrating menstruation as a critical time of change in a young woman's life!

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THE PRODUCTS YOU INCLUDE IN THE PACKS? Grooming and personal hygiene is a big part of coming into womanhood so we included both preparatory and celebratory products. We wanted to include more than the basics and give recipients something special so that the pack is received as both helpful and fun—and we feel we've achieved that balance.

PERSONAL ADVICE FOR MOMS GOING THROUGH THIS WITH THEIR DAUGHTERS? As both a woman and a mom, my personal mission is to ensure that all young ladies -- including my daughter when she comes of age--have a positive experience when getting their period. We hope parents will empower and celebrate their daughters and honor her with the tools she needs to understand all of it.

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