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# Detox The Box *Party Kit*

Toxic chemicals don't  
belong in menstrual care  
products.

**Period** ●

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WOMEN'S VOICES  
FOR THE EARTH  
OUR HEALTH. OUR FUTURE. TOXIC FREE.

A PROJECT OF WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH

# Welcome.

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Welcome to your **#DetoxTheBox** *Action Party Kit*! In this kit, you will find information on period and personal care products, our *Summer's Deceive* spoof ad video links, opportunities to take action, and ways to take your party to the next level.

While we know our bodies inside and out, we may not be aware of the chemicals in the products we use. That's because companies aren't required to disclose all ingredient in period and personal care products, some of which are linked to hormone disruption, infections and cancer. To make matters worse, advertising tells us that we need to purchase products like vaginal wipes in order to feel confident and sexy. Companies are turning a profit from making women feel shame about our bodies.

People have a right to know what is in the products we use intimately, and our bodies are healthy and beautiful the way they are! Talking openly about menstrual and vaginal health can feel awkward. This action kit is designed to break down walls and spark dialogue between friends, to help de-stigmatize the issue so that we can focus on working to make period and personal care products safe, healthy, available and affordable.

THANK YOU for your passion and commitment! Now, time to crank up some tunes, send some invites, bust out the snacks, turn on the screen and #DetoxTheBox!

Love and empowerment,

Women's Voices for the Earth



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## Did You Know?

Vaginal tissue is much more absorptive than other skin, making the presence of hormone-disrupting and other toxic chemicals in period products especially concerning.

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Special thank you to WVE’s Detox the Box advisory committee: Black Women for Wellness, Period Equity, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, Turning Green, and Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights (COLOR).

# So, What's The Deal With Conventional "Feminine Care"?

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**TOXIC INGREDIENTS:** The average menstruator will be on their period for a cumulative 6.25 years in their lifetime. If a person uses pads or tampons, they may be exposed to toxic chemicals like dioxins, furans and pesticide residues - which are linked to cancer, reproductive harm and hormone disruption - for more than 400 periods, for more than 2500 days, for more than 6 years of her life, through some of the most sensitive and absorptive skin on her body. Couple that with "feminine cleansing" products like wipes and douches, and that's an even greater dose of harmful chemicals. For example, Summer's Eve wipes contain a potent contraceptive without a warning label, undisclosed fragrance chemicals, and a formaldehyde releasing preservative.

**LACK OF TRANSPARENCY:** Regulation is lacking in the menstrual and personal care products industry, and companies aren't legally required to disclose all ingredients in these products. Companies could take the ethical step of using safe, tested, and fully disclosed ingredients, but most do not, hoping that people will not pay attention to the chemicals being used. But we are watching!

**BODY-SHAMING MESSAGING:** Products like douches, sprays and wipes are marketed to women as though they are a necessity to be sexy, confident, and normal. Advertisements plant a seed of worry and shame, suggesting that women should be paranoid about the way their vaginas smell. Products are packaged with bright colors and floral patterns to seem fun and innocent, and attract young women and teens. But such marketing is based on cultural and historically biased attitudes meant to shame women about their bodies and odor, particularly women of color.

**DISPROPORTIONATE BURDEN OF EXPOSURE TO WOMEN OF COLOR:** Data shows that Black and Latina women use douches, washes, and sprays at higher rates than white women. This is not surprising when you consider that centuries-old attitudes about Black women reflect both racist and misogynistic ideas about their bodies and "odor." Companies making douches, powders and wipes are all too eager to capitalize on—and thus perpetuate—these harmful ideas that lead to Black and Latina women using "cleansing" products at higher rates than their white counterparts. Targeted advertising puts women of color at heightened risk of exposure to chemicals that are linked to cancer, hormone disruption, and fertility issues. For more on these issues, see the [TIME](#) and [Bloomberg](#) article links included in the online resource page.

## It's an all-around "feminine care" fail.

People are tired of companies using toxic ingredients, failing to provide full ingredient transparency, and promoting sexist, racist, and manipulative marketing to sell their products. Our bodies are OK just as they are, and we deserve access to vital information about product safety. The information and videos in this action party kit are meant to raise awareness and provide opportunities for you and your guests to first talk openly, and then use your collective power to demand change.

# The Power Of A Party.



How is a party going to change the world? It all goes back to women's immense social power. When women get together and talk about what's important to them, great things can happen. When these gatherings are organized to change a whole industry—like the \$4 billion "feminine care" industry—powerful social change is inevitable!

## Women are moving the marketplace toward safer product options **for all.**

Women control over 80% of all consumer spending in the U.S. And when it comes to "feminine care" products, that's of course near 100%.

Women and girls tend to begin using products based on what's available in their homes, which means older relatives like moms and sisters have tremendous influence over how young women learn about menstrual and personal care product use.

College is another important time, when young women live in dorms or share apartments with friends. They can learn about products they hadn't known about or used before, so the social influence of college friends can lead to women developing new product loyalties.

And all throughout their lives, the word-of-mouth power that women have to influence their friends and family when it comes to social issues and what products they recommend is *huge*.

Women across the country are throwing parties to raise awareness about the problem of hidden & harmful chemicals in period and personal care products. At every event, party-goers are taking action to stop the toxic assault. Just think about that! A national movement to stop the toxic assault on our health. And it can all start with a single party.

### Did You Know?

Chemicals used in "feminine care" products are virtually unregulated by governmental agencies in the United States.

Neither the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) nor the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has direct authority to monitor or require safety testing for "feminine care" products.



# How To Throw A #DetoxTheBox Party ●

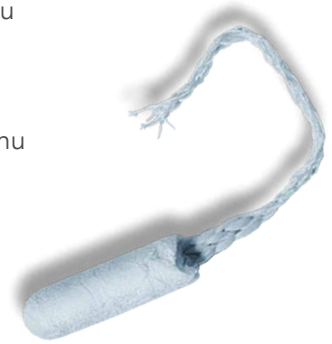
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## PLANNING

Draft a list of friends you think would be interested in this topic. Your group can be as large or as small as you like. #DetoxTheBox parties are meant to be fun, and not formal, so keep the pressure low and invite only people you feel comfortable around.

**Choose a date and send invitations!** Once you've picked a date, choose a way to invite your girl gang. Creating a Facebook event page is easy! You can send out cards, or invite friends using E-vite—whatever is your style. Check out the sample invitation provided. Don't forget to let us know when you pick a date, so we can follow-up to thank you and see how it went!

**Make a food plan.** Potlucks are a great way to bring people together, or you can tackle the menu yourself and provide a meal, light snacks and/or beverages. (We think it would be fun to provide a 'specialty drink' with cranberry to go with the theme!)



## WHAT YOU'LL NEED FOR YOUR PARTY

- Your #DetoxTheBox action party kit. Hold on to this kit! In here you will find the agenda, fact sheet links, video links, and action items.
- A TV with YouTube access, or a computer/tablet with internet access, to watch videos
- A computer with internet access or smartphone for taking action
- Food & Drinks
- Music player and your favorite playlist, or check out our awesome women's power-themed playlist on **Spotify** ([bit.ly/DTBPartyMix](https://bit.ly/DTBPartyMix)).

### Did You Know?

Summer's Eve is a popular hygiene brand that markets wipes, washes, and more as "must-haves" for both health and self-image. They capitalize on the blatant and absurd underlying message that vaginas are dirty and in need of cleansing.

# Sample Invitation●

You're **Invited!**

#DetoxTheBox **Party**

WHEN: [Date and time]

WHERE: [Address]

### DESCRIPTION:

Let's have fun together while fighting for safe period and personal care products! Come learn more about the movement that's sweeping the nation—people breaking taboos around menstruation and calling for safe, accessible, and affordable period products.

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On average, a woman will use  
over 16,000 tampons in her lifetime●

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Yet companies aren't required to tell you what they put in them. Toxic chemicals like talc, formaldehyde releasers and parabens are allowed be used in wipes, douches, vaginal washes and other deodorant products. Meanwhile, companies selling so-called "cleansing" products use body-shaming messaging to market to women.

That's crazy.  
Toxic chemicals don't belong in menstrual care products.

**Period●**

Join the fun and raise your voice for a toxic-free future!

# Suggested Agenda ●

**Welcome Guests:** Crank some tunes, grab some snacks and drinks, and get comfortable with each other. This topic might be taboo, but it's fun to discuss with your closest friends. If you don't all know each other, do an introduction and talk about why you're all there.

## Some Ice-breakers.

- What foods do you love to, or need to, eat during your period?
- How old were you when you started? - or - What's your 'first period' story?
- What are your go-to period products? Have you ever switched or stopped using products based on something you learned/experienced?
- What experiences have you had where you needed to "hide" your period?

**Distribute materials and watch videos:** Look over our fact sheets, and watch the videos ([links here](#)). The first three videos are spoofs of Summer's Eve advertising, drawing attention to their toxic ingredients and absurd messaging. *Detox The Box* is our campaign's theme song, highlighting the dangers of unregulated menstrual products (Timberlake fans will recognize the tune). Another is a short documentary video on our rally in Washington, D.C. in May, 2017, on our right to know what's in tampons and pads.

**Take Action!** Now that your guests are fired up about #DetoxTheBox, encourage them to take action for safer period and personal care products.

## Did You Know?

Many Summer's Eve wipes contain:

- Octoxynol-9, a spermicide
- Preservatives that release formaldehyde
- Powerful allergens
- Unknown fragrance and 'odor control' ingredients





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**Call Prestige Brands:** Get out your phones and call the makers of Summer's Eve to let them know how you feel about their ingredients and advertising. Call the parent company Prestige at **855-385-8959** and follow the instructions.

### Sample Script.

*"Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am concerned about harmful chemicals and hidden ingredients in Summer's Eve products. I am calling to ask Prestige Brands to eliminate chemicals of concern and to disclose all ingredients, including fragrance. Chemicals linked to cancer and other serious health problems DO NOT belong in products that come in contact with one of the most sensitive and absorbent parts of the body."*

**Write Letters To The Editor:** Use the "How to Write a Letter to the Editor" page included in this kit, and write some letters to your local papers about why you care about this issue ---let's get our communities talking! Some great topics for an LTE include:

- Why you're throwing a Detox the Box party - let your community know about your concerns with ingredient secrecy and ingredient safety of period and personal care products
- Accessibility and affordability of alternative menstrual products
- Body-shaming marketing messages used to sell wipes, washes, powders, douches, etc.
- Fragranced products

**Get Connected:** Have your guests sign up for WVE's newsletter, follow us on social media, and sign up for our texts so that they can keep up on legislative advances, new research, events, and more.

**[www.womensvoices.org/signup](http://www.womensvoices.org/signup)**

**Promote Alternatives:** Have you or any of your guests used alternatives to conventional menstrual products? These can include organic disposable pads or menstrual cups. Learning about safer products that work well is great, especially when you get a recommendation from a friend! There are some questions in the discussion guide you can use to spark this exciting conversation!

# Take it Up a Notch.

Extra motivated and want to take your party to the next level? Here are some optional ways to take your party up a notch!

## Make Your Own Cloth Pads.

Take charge of your personal care routine by making your own pads! You can choose your own cute fabrics (we suggest organic cotton). And these online resources have made the process really easy!

**How to Sew Cloth Pads** – Tutorial, from One Brown Mom

**Homemade Cloth Pads Tutorial & Pattern** – from Little House Living

**Make Your Own Cloth Menstrual Pads** – from Red & Honey

## Period Drive.

On the **resource page**, check out our amazing business partners making safer menstrual products. Request that every guest bring an alternative period care item from these brands to be donated (organic tampons/pads, cloth pads, menstrual cup). Many shelters, group homes, health facilities, and social justice groups accept period and other personal care products to help people in need.

## Turn Your Party Into A Fundraiser.

You can start a fundraiser right on Facebook! Choose Women's Voices for the Earth as the nonprofit/charity. Find more instruction on how to set up a Facebook fundraiser **here**. If Facebook isn't your thing, you can simply pass around an envelope and ask your party guests to make a gift to Women's Voices for the Earth before they head home. Donations keep our campaigns winning!

## Don't forget to Share!

Take photos and share on social media! Be sure to use the hashtags

**#DetoxTheBox**

**#SummersDeceive**

and tag **@WomensVoices** so we can see your smiling faces.



Get texts from WVE. Text VOICES to 52886

# RESOURCES ●

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## FACT SHEETS AND INFORMATION

This party kit includes the most useful and **up-to-date fact sheets and articles** you and your guests can use to learn more about the problem of harmful chemicals in menstrual and personal care products, and more importantly take action!

## MUSIC PLAYLIST ON SPOTIFY

Check out our women-power themed playlist on Spotify. You can play it right from the app or website if you are already a Spotify member or sign up (it's free). **[bit.ly/DTBPartyMix](https://bit.ly/DTBPartyMix)**

## VIDEOS

We have put together all the fun videos you need. Simply go to **[www.youtube.com/WomensVoices](https://www.youtube.com/WomensVoices)** and check under Playlists for the Detox the Box Action Kit!

### Personal Care **Products.**

**“Talking Box”**

**“Toxics To-Go”**

**“Fairy Fem Wipes Mother”**

### Menstrual **Products.**

**Detox The Box**

**Do you know what's in your tampons and pads?**

**Ingredient Disclosure in Tampons and Pads**

**is a Victory for Women's Health Everywhere**



## SAFER PRODUCTS

How do you know which products are safer? Our business partners believe in the power of women's voices to create and uphold a less toxic future. These companies commit to fully disclosing all their ingredients and to not using chemicals of concern to our health. We believe that any brand claiming to be “safe” should do the same.

Seventh Generation **[www.seventhgeneration.com](http://www.seventhgeneration.com)**

Natracare **[www.natracare.com](http://www.natracare.com)**

Good Clean Love **[www.goodcleanlove.com](http://www.goodcleanlove.com)**

Sustain **[www.sustainnatural.com](http://www.sustainnatural.com)**

Lunette **[www.lunette.com](http://www.lunette.com)**

Diva Cup **[www.divacup.com](http://www.divacup.com)**

Maxim **[www.maximhy.com](http://www.maximhy.com)**

Lunapads **[www.lunapads.com](http://www.lunapads.com)**

LOLA **[www.mylola.com](http://www.mylola.com)**

The Honey Pot **[thehoneypot.co](http://thehoneypot.co)**

## Discussion Guide.

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**Taking care of our bodies is personal and intimate.** Talking about our bodies, especially when it comes to menstrual or vaginal care, can be very difficult and uncomfortable. At the same time, when we can be open with close friends and family about our experiences, we can learn useful tips and share amazing truths. It can be quite empowering! As the host, be sure to set the intention of a safe space, where your guests can feel free to express themselves without judgment and with the agreement of confidentiality. No one should feel pressured to share personal details or stories about themselves, and all that is shared (or not shared) is welcomed and celebrated.

**Breaking period taboos, making menstrual products safer.** When you use an average of 16,000 menstrual products in your lifetime, it makes you wonder what chemicals or contaminants you're being exposed to. We can't get major corporations and policymakers to take this issue seriously if we can't break down barriers to talking about menstruation.

- How did you feel after watching the video "Do you know what's in your tampons and pads" video? What about the "Detox the Box" video?
- Did you recognize any products that you use in the videos? Were you surprised?
- Would you feel comfortable talking about the issue of menstrual care product safety with your family, friends, and co-workers? What do you think it would take for people to be able to talk about this issue more openly?
- Major companies Procter & Gamble and Kimberly Clark have started disclosing some ingredients in their pads and tampons. Why do you think they agreed to this change?
- What other period products have you used (such as menstrual cup or reusable pads)? What has been your experience?
- Do you see alternative products where you shop? Do you think they are affordable?



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## **“Feminine cleansing” products: adding harm to our body care routine.**

Companies market these products to make women feel “sexy,” “clean,” and “confident.” But the issue of harmful chemicals in douches, powders, wipes, washes, and sprays needs more attention. Cultural and historically biased attitudes about women’s bodies and odor have led to aggressive marketing campaigns by companies selling these products, predominately to women of color. Whether or not you use these products, products marketed for “vaginal health” should not put anyone’s health at risk.

- How did you feel after watching the Summer’s Deceive spoof ads?
- Did you already know something about this issue before watching the videos?
- Have you seen ads on TV for Summer’s Eve or other brands? What messages do you think these ads are conveying to women?
- Looking at the fact sheets on washes, douches, and wipes, was there anything you were surprised to learn?
- Have you ever used these products? What has been your experience using the products?
- Do you think that switching to safer alternatives will solve the issue?
- What are some ways we can approach body care practices and rituals that do not put our health at risk?

### **Did You Know?**

Many menstrual and personal care products contain fragrance. “Fragrance” can be made up of potentially hundreds of different ingredients, many of which are linked to health problems. What’s worse, most manufacturers choose to keep these ingredients a secret.

# SUPPORT WOMEN'S VOICES FOR THE EARTH

Please donate online today!  
[www.womensvoices.org/give](http://www.womensvoices.org/give)



When we can speak freely about the products we use on and in the vagina — when we can talk openly about our periods — then we will break the stigma and taboos that put our health at risk.  
#DetoxTheBox

**We want to hear from you.**

Email us stories and personal tips from your party to:  
[womensvoices@womensvoices.org](mailto:womensvoices@womensvoices.org)



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