



**CITY OF TACOMA, WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Council Member Kiara Daniels and Policy Analyst Christina Caan
COPIES TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager; Chris Bacha, City Attorney
SUBJECT: Resolution – Sponsorship of Raising Girls Winter Care Bags
DATE: January 16, 2024

I ask for your support for a Council Contingency Fund expenditure of \$10,000 to sponsor 500 Raising Girls winter care bags with personal hygiene and menstrual products, as well as warm winter items, for low-income Tacoma students.

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

Council Contingency Fund Request: This Council Contingency Fund expenditure would enable the City to sponsor Raising Girls’ effort to provide winter care bags that include full size hygiene supplies, menstrual products, and warm winter items for 500 students at Tacoma schools. The bags will be compiled and distributed by Raising Girls to elementary, middle, and high schools with a focus on meeting the needs of low-income students. The winter care bags aim to improve the health and well-being of students, encourage school attendance, and promote pride and dignity among young people.

Raising Girls is the only non-profit in Pierce County that addresses adolescent hygiene insecurity and period poverty by providing essential products to students and young adults in the Puget Sound area.¹ The group has purchased, packed, and distributed more than 12,000 care bags to date and has previously partnered with nearly 97 schools, the Boys and Girls Clubs, Metro Parks, Eastside Community Center, People’s Center, and the Tacoma Urban League. Raising Girls focuses mainly on schools that have the highest free and reduced lunch percentages, enabling them to support those most in need.

Youth who cannot afford up to spend hundreds of dollars a year on menstrual products often resort to problematic alternatives such as toilet paper, paper towels, fast food napkins, rags, and socks or extend the use of menstrual products for too long to care for themselves each month. The lack of access to proper and sufficient menstrual hygiene products can lead to reproductive health issues, infections, and toxic shock syndrome.² It can also contribute to anxiety and depression at a critical time in a young person’s development. Additionally, those who lack access to proper menstrual hygiene products are often absent from school during their periods, damaging their education. Without period protection, students can also become reluctant to participate in important confidence-building activities in the classroom, on the sports field, and in extra-curricular school programs at a critical time in their development.

¹ “Period poverty” refers to limited or inadequate access to menstrual hygiene products due to financial constraints or negative socio-cultural stigmas associations with menstruation.

² [Period Poverty & Toxic Shock Syndrome - Alliance for Period Supplies](#); [Period Poverty - Alliance for Period Supplies](#)

This contingency fund request would allow the City to sponsor 500 winter care bags for Tacoma students. Each bag costs approximately \$20.00 and contains full-sized hygiene supplies, including menstrual products, body wash, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrush brush, lotion, and washcloths. The winter care bags will also include warm hats, scarves, socks, and gloves. Raising Girls includes menstrual hygiene information and hand-written notes of love reminding young people to feel pride in who they are. The group aims to provide care bags to any student that is in need.

FUNDING REQUEST: \$10,000

DESIRED RESOLUTION DATE: January 30, 2024

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ (CUSTOMER RESEARCH)

Raising Girls builds intentional relationships with school principals, administrators, staff, and counselors who know the needs of their students to ensure their care bags include the most useful products and inspirational messages. The group also engages community volunteers in Tacoma who assist with shopping for items, packing bags, and delivering them to partners.

2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Equity and Accessibility: Raising Girls is committed to changing the trajectory of the underserved and lifting them up by offering tangible solutions to period poverty and the lack of access to hygiene products. The latest “State of the Period” survey by Thinx and PERIOD shows that a quarter of U.S. teens struggle to afford menstrual products, with teens of color and lower-income teens being more likely experience access issues.³ In addition, 25 percent report being unable to do schoolwork because of a lack menstrual products, with 44 percent reporting stress and embarrassment due to a lack of period products.⁴

Education: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Demonstrate community support for education by increasing support for school levies and bonds; volunteering and mentoring youth.

Civic Engagement: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase the percentage of residents who believe they are able to have a positive impact on the community and express trust in the public institutions in Tacoma.

Livability: *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity

Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

Improve health outcomes and reduce disparities, in alignment with the community health needs assessment and CHIP, for all Tacoma residents

This contingency fund request will help provide access to menstrual products for low-income students, helping to mitigate the negative health and educational impacts of period poverty. Raising Girls also demonstrates community support for education by helping to ensure that hygiene issues do not impede school attendance and participation. Sponsoring Raising Girls winter care bags will help ensure that access to hygiene and menstrual products, as well as warm winter items, are not a luxury reserved only for some in Tacoma.

³ [2023-State-of-the-Period-Study.pdf](#)

⁴ [2023-State-of-the-Period-Study.pdf](#)

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts
Provide less funding	Preserve some additional contingency funds for other Council priorities.	Raising Girls would need to decrease the number of winter care bags they provide, minimizing the value to the community.
Provide more funding	Enable Raising Girls to provide a greater number of winter care bas, expanding the community benefit.	Raising Girls has not requested additional funds.

EVALUATIONS AND FOLLOW UP

These contingency funds are intended as a one-time funding source for the Raising Girls winter care bags. Event organizers will be provided with information on how to apply for future grants and funding opportunities at the City of Tacoma during standard application cycles for the winter care bags. Planning for this the Raising Girls winter care bags occurred outside the standard City of Tacoma grant application timeline.

SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION

Sponsors recommend providing \$10,000 for Raising Girls winter care bags.

FISCAL IMPACT

\$10,000 from Council Contingency Funds

If you have a question related to the Council Contingency Fund Request, please contact Christina Caan, Policy Analyst, at (253) 219-0679 or ccaan@cityoftacoma.org.



SUBMITTED FOR COUNCIL CONSIDERATION BY: _____
Council Member Kiara Daniels

SUPPORTING COUNCIL MEMBERS SIGNATURES

1.  POS# 2

2.  POS# 8

Mayor's initials: 