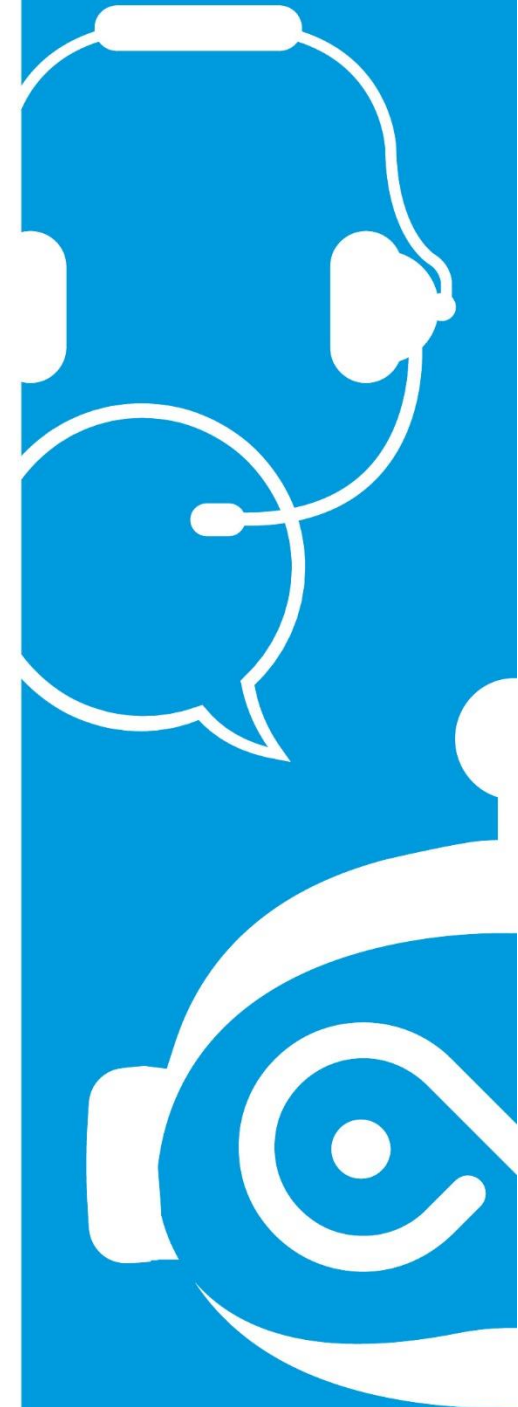




## APPS: PERIOD/FERTILITY TRACKING

### What is it?

A period tracker is a **digital tool** that functions as an application for smartphones or tablets (Apple or Android) which can help a person track their monthly menstrual or fertility cycle. The users can choose from a variety of applications, free or payable, depending on their needs.

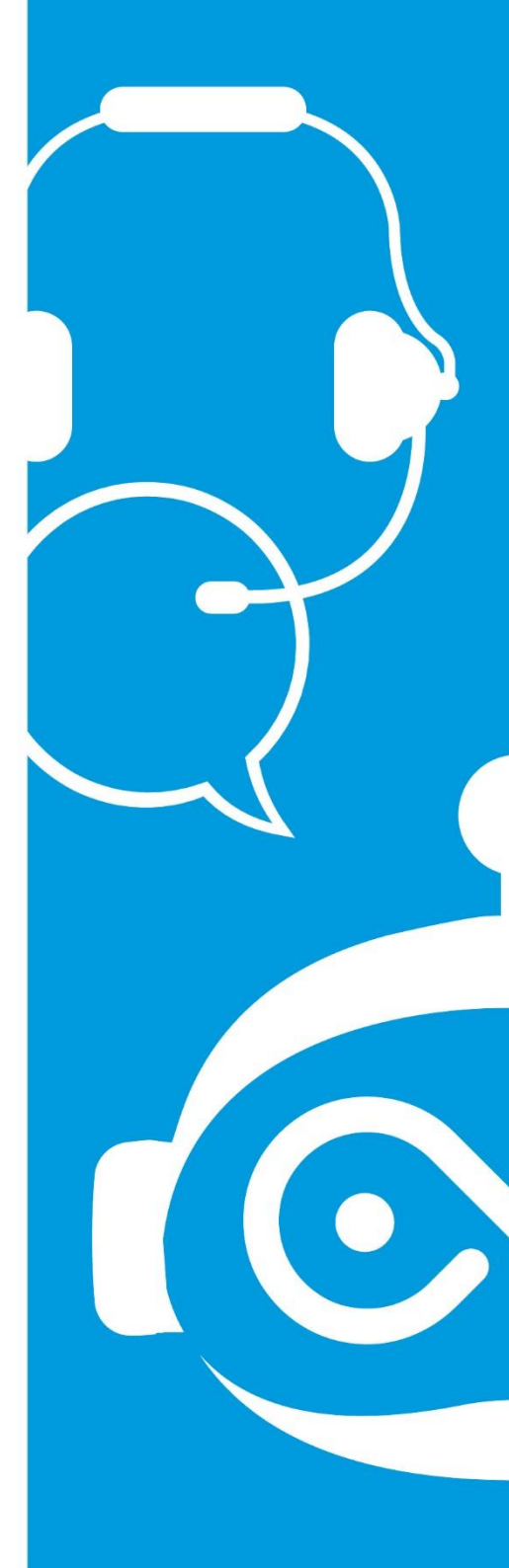


### How can it impact the sexual and reproductive health of youth?

Period tracking apps are resources that allow people with smart devices to log data related to their period, including: period start and end dates, menstrual flow rate, period symptoms and others, since it depends on who it is intended for (teenagers, adults with irregular cycles, women who want to conceive or avoid pregnancy, female athletes, etc.).

Period tracking can help people get to know their body and cycle and observe any symptoms that occur during a particular phase of it. They can also help identify any changes to the menstrual cycle that may indicate potential health issues. Another feature of period tracking apps is that they can usually predict when a person is ovulating and fertile. This means they are helpful for people who are avoiding pregnancy or trying to conceive.

Some apps are designed especially for adolescents and can help with SRH education. One such example is the [MagicGirl](#) app. It is a period tracker app, which provides menstrual education videos for young people. For example, the app can help users determine which sanitary product is right for them. Users can connect with others to share tips and advice. It is free to use with Android or Apple, users can enable a passcode to protect privacy, pregnancy mode is available and is developed with teenagers in mind to provide SHR education. However, youth should be aware that it may share information with third parties and it is not gender-neutral.



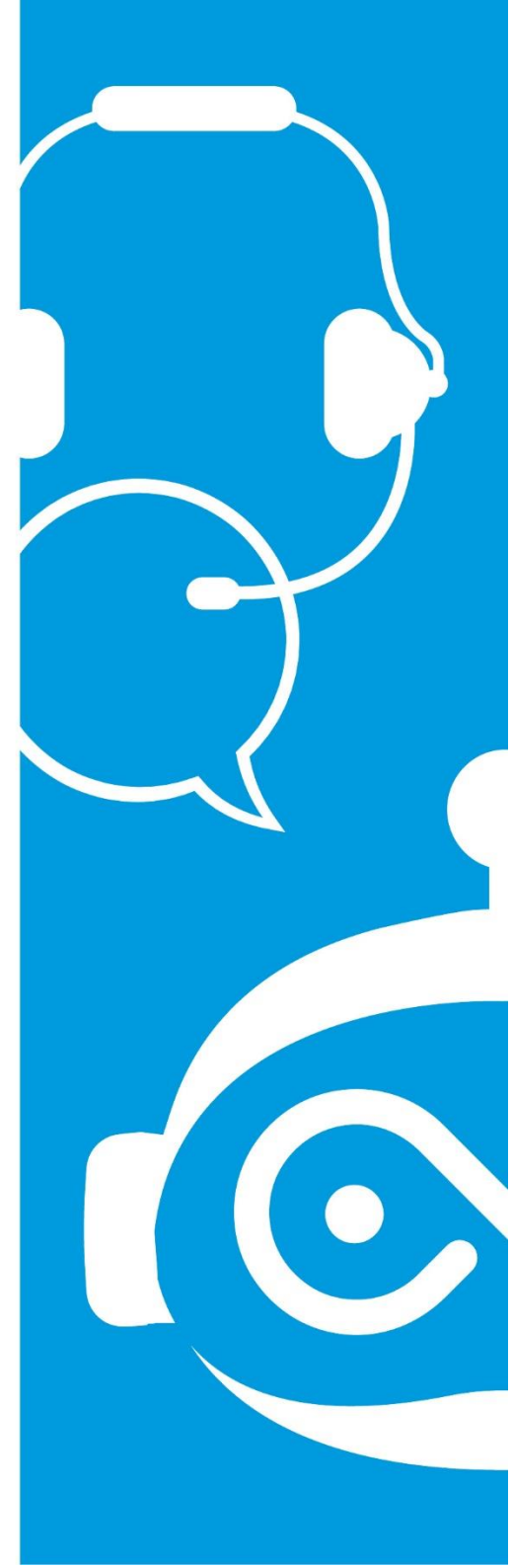
### What are some ways in which youth can be supported?

- Educate on being mindful of the data that they share as protecting privacy can be an issue when using these apps. If you are concerned about this violation of privacy, do not recommend apps to youth without prior research beforehand.
- Help with understanding the nature of inaccurate information. Although the app gives the impression that there is no way you can get pregnant based on the timing of your cycle, this is not necessarily true. There is always the possibility of getting pregnant no matter where you are in your cycle, as well as the possibility of contracting one of many contagious sexually transmitted diseases, so it is important that youth understand to always use a condom or other suitable protection during sexual intercourse.
- Prioritise the importance of in-person medical visits. Youth must be made aware that these apps cannot replace a real doctor or a medical examination. If a person notices any disease symptoms, a consultation with a doctor is necessary, instead of solely relying on the information provided on the app.

### Related digital phenomena/tools:

See sheets:

- Privacy: Setting privacy settings
- Apps: Mental & sexual well-being
- New tools: Artificial intelligence



### Further reading:

- “10 of the Best Period Tracking Apps for 2022.” Medical News Today. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320758#summary>.
- Osborn, Charlotte. “Are Period Tracker Apps Safe to Use? Here’s What You Need to Know.” MUO, August 3, 2021. <https://www.makeuseof.com/are-period-tracker-apps-safe/>.
- Worsfold, Lauren, Lorrae Marriott, Sarah Johnson, and Joyce C Harper. “Period Tracker Applications: What Menstrual Cycle Information Are They Giving Women?” *Women’s Health* 17 (2021): 174550652110499. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17455065211049905>.

