

PREVENTION

INTERVENTION

RETENTION

HAZING PREVENTION ON
COLLEGE CAMPUSES
TOOLKIT



HAZING OVERVIEW

WHAT IS HAZING?

When a group expects a new member to do something that is humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous to join, that is hazing. They leverage the person's desire to participate or be part of the group to get them to do an activity regardless of that individual's willingness.

There are three key components of an activity that would define it as hazing.

1. *It happens with or as part of a group.*
2. *The act is humiliating, degrading, or endangering.*
3. *It occurs whether or not the person is willing.*

Hazing is often associated with fraternities; however, it can happen in any group, including sports teams and clubs. This guide outlines hazing in the context of universities and colleges, but it is important to note that hazing can occur in any group setting. Kids as young as middle schoolers have reported cases of hazing. It is also prevalent in the military and some workplace environments.

COMMON HAZING SITUATIONS

In college, young adults are seeking new friendships and feelings of belonging. Joining a sport, club, fraternity, or sorority house is a common way for university students to find a sense of community and support during the transition to adulthood. The need to be a part of a group can foster a sense of competition and exclusivity. The draw to join what is perceived as the best or coolest group can make it easier for members to manipulate interested people into doing shameful, embarrassing, and dangerous behaviors. This practice is hazing and can show up in three main forms: **intimidation, harassment, and violence**. 55% of college students who have participated in a team, club, or organization have experienced hazing (StopHazing, n.d.).

HAZING: INTIMIDATION

Intimidation is the least recognized form of hazing. Many of these examples are meant to degrade new members by making them feel less than or isolated. While there may not be direct physical danger in these scenarios, intimidation whittles down confidence, which can prompt unsafe decisions and mental health crises such as depression, excessive drug or alcohol use, and even suicide.

WEAPONIZED DECEIT

A new member is lied to so they do or say something humiliating. It can also take the form of giving a person a false sense of acceptance or friendship.

POINTS OR DEMERITS SYSTEMS

When someone fails or refuses to complete an activity, they lose points or are given a punishment.

THE SILENT TREATMENT

New members are forced to remain quiet or are actively ignored by the rest of the group. This tactic can also include isolating an individual and intentionally leaving them out of something until they prove their “worth.”

NICKNAMES

Sometimes nicknames are fun and easily adopted by the person it is given to. But when nicknames are demeaning or derogatory, it becomes intimidation.

HAZING: HARASSMENT

Harassment is often played off as a joke. However, it can have serious consequences, especially if the person is struggling with confidence, self-esteem, or mental health. By naming harassment as something that is fun or playful, it negates the feelings of those involved, further adding to that sense of degradation.

VERBAL ABUSE

Whether in the form of threats, insults, ridicule, or aggressive comments, enduring verbal abuse should never be a prerequisite to join a team, club, or organization.

EMBARRASSING OUTFITS

Some groups force new members to wear humiliating clothing or specific items that identify them as not yet part of the organization.

FORCED THEATRICALS

Being asked to play out an embarrassing skit or simulate a sexual act is a form of hazing. Even if a new member is willing to do it, that compliance does not matter. It is still hazing.

SLEEP ABUSE

Constantly waking a person up or keeping them from falling asleep is a form of harassment.

HAZING: VIOLENCE

Violent hazing is probably the most reported form of hazing. It is the most obvious and carries the worst physical consequences. From bruises to broken bones and fatal accidents, it is essential to stand up against violent hazing practices.

FALSE KIDNAPPING

You've likely seen this form of hazing in movies, but unfortunately, it happens in real life. Members abduct new members to instill fear.

BEATING

Sometimes called paddling, this type of violence involves the hitting, spanking, or slapping of one person by another member(s) of the group.

FORCED EATING OR DRINKING

Making people take substances, including alcohol, drugs, substances, and food, is a form of violence. This behavior can lead to overdoses, alcohol poisoning, and worse.

BRANDING

Forcing members to get a permanent mark as proof of their solidarity is hazing. This can include burns, cuts, or even tattoos.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Telling members they have to have sex to become part of the group encourages assault and violence. Violating a person by forced penetration or other non-consensual acts is another violent form of hazing.

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF HAZING



Hazing has a negative impact on everyone involved, including the victim, the hazer, and the organization. Understanding the short and long-term effects of hazing is important for prevention and the overall safety of the college.

IMPACT ON VICTIMS

It is estimated that 71% of hazing victims suffer a negative consequence from their experience (Northwestern University, n.d.). Some effects include:

- Difficulty focusing on coursework and lower grades
- Lack of sleep
- Mental health struggles: social anxiety, depression, and PTSD
- Lower self-esteem and self-worth
- Loss of relationships
- Physical injury or illness
- And more

IMPACT ON HAZERS

A common misconception is that only the victim suffers from hazing. However, studies have shown that there are consequences for those leading the hazing. Outside of disciplinary actions like suspensions, expulsions, and criminal charges, effects on hazers include:

- Shame and guilt
- Difficulty dealing with authority figures
- Challenges taking on leadership roles
- Feelings of mistrust in all close relationships
- Ruined reputations

IMPACT ON INSTITUTION

It is the responsibility of every college and university to protect its students and foster a safe campus environment by actively preventing hazing. When an institution is aware of hazing within a student organization and fails to take timely, effective action to stop dangerous or humiliating behaviors, it may choose to suspend or permanently ban the organization. In addition, organizational leaders may face civil liability in lawsuits seeking damages for harm to victims.

Incidents of hazing, whether confirmed or rumored, can severely damage a college's reputation, affecting institutional standing, recruitment, and retention. To safeguard student well-being and institutional integrity, it is essential to ensure that administrators, faculty, staff, and student organization leaders are thoroughly trained to identify, prevent, and report hazing.

Comprehensive prevention programs, grounded in evidence-based strategies and customized for your campus, are key to building a culture where safety, respect, and accountability are the norm.

SOCIAL HOSTING

RESPONSIBILITIES AND BEST PRACTICES

As a parent or guardian with college-aged kids, it is important to understand social hosting laws and the potential implications of allowing underage people to drink in your home. These consequences can extend to any person over the age of 21 supplying alcohol.

WHAT IS SOCIAL HOSTING?

Social hosting is the act of permitting people who are underage to consume alcohol in your home. In many cases, this includes the supply of beer, wine, or liquor. However, purchasing the alcohol on a minor's behalf is not the only offense. Permitting drinking by those under 21 carries just as severe consequences. In states where marijuana is legalized, the same rules apply to that substance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SOCIAL HOST

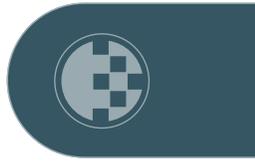
As a host who is over 21, it is your responsibility to ensure that anyone consuming alcohol or smoking marijuana at your house is legally able to do so. Many parents think that allowing their underage child and their friends to drink at home is safe and a good way to teach alcohol responsibility. However, studies show that the opposite is true.

Studies show that 80% of kids whose parents have strict policies against drinking under age are less likely to drink (Next Step Community Solutions, n.d.). People who are under 21 and drink, binge drink 90% of the time. These consumption trends show the dangers of allowing an underage person to have alcohol. Drunk driving accidents and alcohol poisoning are among the most serious health risks.

IMPLICATIONS OF SERVING ALCOHOL TO UNDERAGE STUDENTS

Each state has different laws pertaining to serving alcohol to people under the age of 21. If you are serving your own child, the legal implications are less severe. However, if they get in an accident, you can be held liable. Serving someone underage who is not your child can result in jail time and hefty fines. Again, if harm or injuries occur because of intoxication, there may be additional consequences.

HAZING PREVENTION



The first step in hazing prevention is understanding the common behaviors and motivations behind these dangerous practices. By learning how to identify hazing, students, organizations, and universities are better equipped to recognize and report when an incident occurs. Proactive education, clear policies, and easily accessible help can go a long way in preventing hazing on campuses.

MOTIVATIONS BEHIND HAZING

The most common motivation behind hazing is tradition (Alfred University, n.d.). This reasoning is particularly prevalent in fraternities and sororities. Leading members recall their experience joining the group and stories passed down by alumni. The idea that hazing is part of the history of the organization is often used as justification for hazing.

Additional motivations behind hazing may include:

- Assumed power imbalances between new and existing members
- Revenge for individual hazing experiences
- A desire to belong or prove oneself
- It seems fun or exciting
- Members don't feel like they have a choice
- It is easier to go along with the actions of the group
- Fear of exclusion for not participating

The late teen and early adult years can be very challenging. While trying to figure out who they are, what they want to become, and what their values are, it is easier to be manipulated or influenced to act inappropriately. The desire to belong intersects with newfound leadership for some students, leading to situations of power imbalances, misguided actions, and blind following.

HOW TO IDENTIFY HAZING

Hazing and bullying have similar warning signs. However, the distinction is the presence of a group. If a student or friend has expressed interest in joining a club, organization, or team and is showing these hazing warning signs (Syracuse University, n.d.), it is important to take action.

- Not sleeping in the dorm or leaving very late at night or very early in the morning for a secret reason
- Drastic changes to appearance, like a lack of hygiene, an unusual haircut, or wearing the same outfit every day.
- Signs of physical harm, including welts, bruises, and branding
- Lack of appetite
- Trouble sleeping
- Mood swings or general disinterest in daily activities
- Declining grades or poor attendance in class

Keeping an eye on social media is also important for hazing prevention. If someone is posting odd pictures or content that is out of character, that may be a sign of hazing.



PROACTIVELY ADDRESSING HAZING ON CAMPUS

Analyzing the culture on campus and developing a process to address hazing is key for prevention. Being proactive by instituting these measures early not only lowers a college's risk for hazing but also fosters a safer and more supportive environment for students (Debevoise & Plimpton LLP, 2023). To begin a hazing prevention plan, consider taking these steps.

1. GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Start by surveying the culture of the campus. Bringing in an independent party helps to instill trust, but colleges can conduct these assessments privately as well. Encourage students to submit anonymous answers to questions about hazing and the existing hazing policy. Additionally, review past incident reports and analyze how it was handled. This information will guide your reform practices and provide an accurate picture of whether or not hazing is prevalent on campus.

2. UPDATE HAZING POLICIES

Review your hazing policy and, using the data collected in step one, make any necessary revisions. An effective policy includes definitions and examples of hazing, a process for reporting, consequences, named staff who will handle investigations, and a process for handling complaints.

3. EDUCATION

Provide students, coaches, organizations, and faculty with resources about hazing prevention and the university's hazing policy. Mandated training and informational sessions are essential. Prioritizing education for incoming students is key.

4. EASY REPORTING

It can be scary for students to report hazing. Creating a system for complaints and being transparent about what reporters can expect helps instill confidence and trust.

5. TASK FORCE

Forming an internal task force to address hazing complaints and take preventative action reduces the time between a complaint being filed and action being taken.

6. RESPONSE PLAN

It is important that all faculty know what to do if they suspect hazing or are told about an incident by a student. In addition, students and the hazing response need to be clear on what steps the college will take, how an investigation will be conducted, and how allegations will be reported. This plan should include a media response.

STATE AND FEDERAL HAZING LAWS: IMPORTANT LEGAL COMPLIANCE CONSIDERATIONS



Due to the severe impact hazing has on students and campus culture, there are state and federal laws that protect victims.

CLERY ACT

The **Clery Act** mandates that all universities and colleges that receive federal funding generate a public annual security report (Clery Center, n.d.). This information must include crimes committed on, near, or in public areas associated with the campus. Crimes are broken down into five categories, including criminal offenses, hate crimes, hazing, violence against women offenses, and arrests/referrals for disciplinary action.

In addition to the crime report, this annual release should include access to the past 3 years of campus crimes, resources for victims, and what measures have been taken to improve campus safety.

TITLE IX

Title IX offers many protections for students. As it pertains to hazing, Title IX mandates that all colleges and universities have policies, prevention measures, and response plans. It also lays out legal requirements for handling sexual assault and harassment allegations (Title IX Defense Lawyers, n.d.). Title IX requires all colleges to investigate and conduct hearings for any accusations of discrimination or assault. These protections extend to any actions occurring on campus or during a campus-sanctioned trip or activity.

CAMPUS SAVE ACT

The **Campus SaVE Act** was implemented to supplement the Clery Act. It imposes stricter laws on how colleges and universities report and address sexual violence (RAINN, n.d.). Under the Campus SaVE Act, all institutions must:

- Transparently report sexual crimes that occur on campus.
- Provide accommodations for victims.
- Guarantee that victim rights will be protected.
- Mandate campus-wide education on sexual violence and provide resources.
- Disciplinary proceedings must follow certain protocols and meet federal standards.

STOP CAMPUS HAZING ACT

The **Stop Campus Hazing Act** requires all higher education institutions in the federal student aid program to issue an annual hazing report (U.S. Congress, 2024). This document must also include current hazing policies, prevention measures, reporting processes, and investigative protocols. The purpose of the Stop Campus Hazing Act is to ensure colleges and universities are being transparent about hazing on campus and are taking action to stop these harmful behaviors.

UNDERSTANDING THE BYSTANDER EFFECT

The bystander effect describes the inaction of a person observing violence because of the presence of others (Psychology Today, n.d.). The more people who see the incident, the less likely one of them is to stand up for the victim. The bystander effect impacts hazing because it contributes to why a group member doesn't intervene, refuse, or report.

There are several reasons why the bystander effect persists. However, psychologists suggest that each observer assumes someone else will step in. Unfortunately, in most cases, no one intervenes, and the victim doesn't receive help, despite the presence of onlookers. Learning how to be an active bystander is an essential educational component to help prevent hazing.

HOW TO BE AN ACTIVE BYSTANDER

The best way to be an active bystander is to pretend you are the only one who is seeing the events taking place. Ignoring the other observers helps instill confidence to act. Other measures you can take to be an active bystander include:

- Loudly voicing your concerns. Even yelling “Stop” or “Hey” can be enough to interrupt the abuser.
- Make eye contact with others in the group to convey solidarity and solicit support.
- Don't worry about judgments or whether you are misreading the situation. Many people don't help because they are concerned that there isn't actually a threat or emergency.

Your safety is also important. Using your voice and calling the police and campus

Hazing & Hosting 3RD MILLENNIUM CLASSROOMS

Our evidence-based online prevention course **Hazing & Hosting** helps students recognize and reflect upon their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors associated with hazing and unsafe social hosting. In an effort to foster awareness of the legal, social, and personal consequences of hazing and underage drinking, **Hazing & Hosting** focuses on identifying hazing situations, understanding root motivations, and taking proactive bystander actions. State-law specific content and customizable campus resources ensure learners are prepared to promote values-based traditions and a culture of safety.

Hazing & Hosting Staff 3RD MILLENNIUM CLASSROOMS

Our evidence-based online intervention and prevention course **Hazing & Hosting Staff** helps faculty and staff recognize and reflect upon their responsibilities, attitudes, and actions related to hazing prevention and response. In an effort to foster awareness of legal obligations and best practices, **Hazing & Hosting Staff** focuses on the 2024 Stop Campus Hazing Act, real-world case studies, and effective reporting procedures. Customizable to reflect institutional policies and resources, the course equips participants to identify, prevent, and respond to hazing—turning awareness into accountability and supporting a campus culture of safety, respect, and inclusion.

HAZING VULNERABILITY QUIZ

A hazing vulnerability quiz helps bring awareness to hazing on campus. The questions determine a student's understanding of what hazing is and guides them in learning how to identify the signs of hazing. It also tells universities whether students know how to report hazing.

1. Which of the following best defines hazing?

- A) A friendly team bonding activity
- B) Any activity expected of someone joining a group that humiliates, degrades, or risks harm, regardless of consent
- C) A traditional rite of passage
- D) A way to build loyalty among new members

2. Which of these is an example of hazing?

- A) Hosting a welcome dinner
- B) Mandatory study sessions
- C) Forcing someone to consume alcohol
- D) Creating a mentorship program

3. Can a person still be a victim of hazing if they agreed to participate?

- A) Yes
- B) No
- C) Only if they were physically harmed
- D) Only if they report it

4. What is the most important factor in determining whether an activity is hazing?

- A) If someone complains
- B) Whether someone was hurt
- C) Whether the activity causes humiliation, risk, or pressure
- D) If the group leaders say it's harmless

5. Does consent make hazing legal?

- A) Yes
- B) No

6. Who is responsible for preventing hazing in a group?

- A) The university or school
- B) Group's leaders
- C) Everyone in the group
- D) New members

7. Which of the following would be considered hazing even if the group calls it "tradition"?

- A) Requiring new members to wear embarrassing clothing
- B) Asking members to clean up after an event
- C) Holding an optional trivia night
- D) Offering leadership training

8. Hazing can occur in which of the following settings?

- A) Sports teams
- B) Fraternities and sororities
- C) Academic clubs
- D) All of the above

9. What's the best alternative to hazing for building group cohesion?

- A) Competitive tasks
- B) Initiation games
- C) Shared goals, team-building, and open communication
- D) Making everyone stay up all night

10. A bystander who fails to report hazing:

- A) Can sometimes be held accountable
- B) Is never responsible
- C) Is showing loyalty to the group
- D) Is making the situation safer

ANSWERS: B, C, A, C, A, C, B, C, A, D, C, A

SOCIAL HOSTING SELF-ASSESSMENT

If you are hosting a party, it is important to create a safe environment. These precautions include preventing people under the age of 21 from drinking. To make sure you understand the responsibilities of a host, take this self-assessment.

- 1. If underage guests bring their own alcohol to your party, what would you do?**
 - A) Let them drink—it's their choice
 - B) Confiscate it and ask them to leave
 - C) Warn them to be careful
 - D) I wouldn't know what to do

- 2. Who is legally responsible if an underage person drinks at your house and then gets injured?**
 - A) Hosting a welcome dinner
 - B) Mandatory study sessions
 - C) Forcing someone to consume alcohol
 - D) Creating a mentorship program

- 3. Have you ever felt unsure whether guests were underage?**
 - A) Yes, and I didn't ask
 - B) Yes, and I asked to confirm
 - C) No, I always know who's attending
 - D) I don't host gatherings

- 4. If someone shows up intoxicated to your event, how do you respond?**
 - A) Let them in as long as they don't cause problems
 - B) Let them in and watch them closely
 - C) Deny entry or help them get home safely
 - D) I've never thought about this

- 5. Do you set clear expectations about alcohol or drug use when inviting people over?**
 - A) Always
 - B) Sometimes
 - C) Rarely
 - D) Never

- 6. Are you aware of your state's social host liability laws?**
 - A) Yes, and I understand the consequences
 - B) I've heard of them, but not sure what they mean
 - C) No, I didn't know such laws existed

- 7. If you don't provide alcohol but allow guests to bring their own, do you think you're still responsible?**
 - A) Yes, I know I'm still responsible
 - B) No, they brought it—it's on them
 - C) I'm not sure
 - D) I never allow BYOB

8. Have you ever monitored how much guests were drinking at your event?

- A) Yes, actively
- B) I tried but it was hard to keep track
- C) No, it's not my responsibility
- D) I don't host events where drinking happens

9. Have you ever arranged safe transportation (e.g., Uber, designated driver) for someone at your gathering?

- A) Yes, regularly
- B) A few times
- C) Never, but I would if needed
- D) No

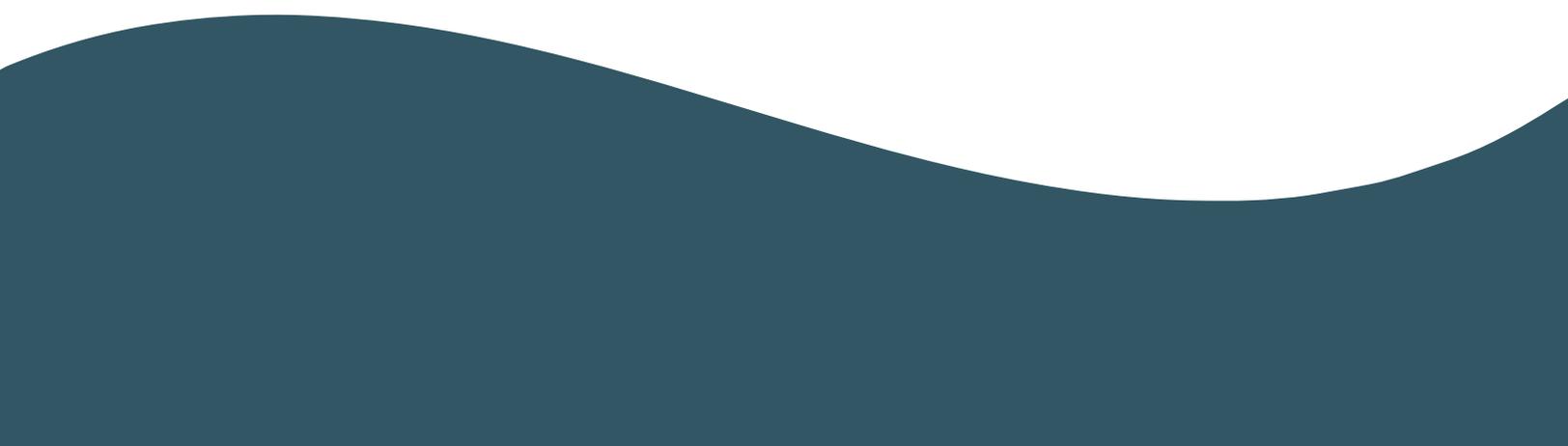
10. How likely are you to intervene if someone underage is drinking at a party (even if it's not your house)?

- A) Very likely
- B) Somewhat likely
- C) Unlikely
- D) Not my business

11. Do you know the signs of alcohol poisoning?

- A) Yes, and I would know what to do
- B) I know a few but not all
- C) I've heard of it but not sure what to look for
- D) No, I don't know the signs

12. Do you think it's possible to host a fun event without alcohol or substances?

- A) Yes, absolutely
 - B) Maybe, depends on the crowd
 - C) Not really
 - D) No, alcohol is expected
- 

HAZING PREVENTION PLEDGE

As a member of _____, I _____
[insert organization name, team, chapter, or group] [individual's name]

pledge to uphold the values of respect, safety, and integrity in everything I do.

I understand that hazing, defined as any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that causes humiliation, risk, or harm, regardless of intent or consent, is never acceptable. I recognize that traditions, peer pressure, or “just joking around” do not excuse harmful behavior.

By signing this pledge, I commit to the following:

- I will treat all current and prospective members with respect and dignity.
- I will not participate in, encourage, or stay silent about any activity that could be considered hazing.
- I will actively promote a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment within _____
[insert group name].
- I will speak up and report any concerns to _____
[insert relevant contact: advisor, coach, dean, etc.]
or use the appropriate reporting channel, such as _____
[insert hotline, website, or office]
- I will support positive team-building or bonding experiences that reflect our shared values and do not put anyone at risk.

This pledge reflects my personal commitment to making [insert organization or school name] a community where all members feel safe, valued, and supported.

Name (Printed): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Group/Team/Chapter Name: _____

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