



## CAMPUS COMMITMENT TO HAZING PREVENTION: **Action Guide**

Hazing is a threat to student and campus safety and undercuts the missions of postsecondary institutions. As a form of interpersonal violence, hazing is particularly troubling because it occurs in group contexts—such as clubs, campus organizations, and athletic teams—that are considered living-learning laboratories for student belonging and leadership development.

Hazing prevention efforts must be a tailored approach that includes **Commitment**, one of eight components of the Hazing Prevention Framework. This Action Guide provides evidence-informed resources for those seeking to develop comprehensive prevention and response efforts, build leadership commitment for those efforts, and strengthen student belonging and safety.



# Background and Context

In 2018, StopHazing and Clery Center released the Hazing Prevention Toolkit for Campus Professionals, which describes a data-driven Hazing Prevention Framework (HPF)© based on key principles of prevention science and findings from a research-to-practice project, the Hazing Prevention Consortium (HPC) led by StopHazing™ and researchers at the University of Maine.



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The graphic above depicts the eight components of the HPF—including Commitment, Capacity, Assessment, Planning, Evaluation, Cultural Competence, Sustainability, and Implementation—to be carried out in conjunction with one another to create a campus environment where hazing is less likely to occur.

The *Campus Commitment to Hazing Prevention: Action Guide* (Action Guide) provides practical resources focused on one of the eight HPF components — **commitment** — to engage campus leaders and the broader campus community in transforming campus hazing culture and ultimately, building group environments that support healthy belonging and well-being for all students.

CAMPUS COMMITMENT TO  
HAZING PREVENTION: ACTION GUIDE

# Strategies for Engaging Families in Hazing Prevention



# Strategies for Engaging Families\* in Hazing Prevention

*\*In this document we use the term families expansively; we recognize that family may be defined differently by each student and that not all students may come from healthy or safe backgrounds. As indicated, these strategies can also be used with mentors or other important individuals to students.*

Families have an important role to play in supporting campus hazing prevention. In addition to their campus peers, students often look to their families for guidance when they encounter behaviors that do not align with their values. Hazing can be confusing for students who receive an invitation to participate in an organization that holds the potential for friendship, camaraderie, support, and networking, but may include joining activities that are humiliating, degrading, unsafe, and even violent.

When viewed through the Bolman & Deal (2017) framework, student perceptions of hazing can be understood as a symbolic yet powerful element of campus commitment to hazing prevention. Families can help students make meaning of the complexities and potential dangers of hazing while also supporting them in navigating healthy choices relative to group membership.

## Build Knowledge Through Hazing Prevention Education

Providing opportunities to learn and build a knowledge base about hazing and hazing prevention is a fundamental way to engage students' families and/or mentors. There are many ways to build knowledge and gain access to resources related to hazing prevention. However, a committed institution will provide opportunities to foster that knowledge development and share resources, updates on hazing prevention initiatives and goals on campus, as well as the state of the campus climate and hazing culture. Providing education opportunities for families to better understand hazing, the pervasiveness of it, and how it can impact their students, is a primary prevention strategy. Education for families should be offered regularly and be easily accessible; this education should begin early, such as at new student orientation.

Sample activities:		
<p><b>Host a workshop or training:</b> Provide education about hazing and its prevention through workshops or other types of trainings. A workshop format is engaging and useful in sharing information as well as discussing and providing key prevention resources and strategies. For example: Invite families to a viewing and facilitated discussion of the film <i>We Don't Haze</i> to provide hazing prevention education and discuss warning signs of hazing, how to intervene, and how to have discussions with their students about bystander intervention, reporting hazing, and how to seek help.</p>	<p><b>Include representation on campus hazing prevention coalition:</b> Provide education and prevention opportunities for family members and/or mentors by engaging them to participate in the campus hazing prevention coalition. Additionally, this representation can help provide more perspectives and input for planning hazing prevention work and the ability to spread hazing prevention messaging to a broader family and mentor audience.</p>	<p><b>Host a webinar:</b> Share information with families about hazing and make it available on the campus website afterwards. There is a lot of content a hazing prevention webinar could cover; a few examples might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Information about the campus' hazing prevention coalition, their core prevention strategies, and information on how to report hazing and access resources.</li><li>• The nature and extent of hazing, with specific data points on campus climate and hazing culture, past and present hazing prevention initiatives, and how to recognize warning signs of hazing.</li></ul>

Demonstrate Transparency about Campus Hazing and Prevention

Institutions committed to hazing prevention are transparent about the history of campus hazing as well as the prevention efforts in place. Demonstrating transparency about campus climate and a culture of hazing, past incidents, allegations, and sanctions publicly is an important part of hazing prevention. Families, students, the campus community, and external stakeholders have a right to know the potential risks of joining or being a part of a campus club, organization, or team. By demonstrating transparency, families and mentors are able to gather information and be informed about their students' potential experiences, be knowledgeable about hazing trends, as well as current initiatives and processes for educating about and reporting hazing.

Sample activities:	
<p><b>Use your campus hazing prevention website:</b></p> <p>A campus website is a powerful tool for sharing information and providing updates about campus hazing and its prevention. Be sure the website is easy for families and the general public to find using a basic keyword search and that it includes information about campus hazing prevention efforts, as well as past hazing incidents, allegations, and sanctions. Having access to accurate information allows the opportunity to gather information and thus help their students make informed decisions.</p>	<p><b>Send a message from leadership:</b> Institutional leaders can send a clear statement about campus commitment to hazing prevention and reiterate a stance that makes it clear hazing is not welcome in student clubs, organizations, and teams. The message can provide information about the prevention efforts in place, and repercussions of engaging in hazing. This statement can be shared with all students and families and be easily accessed on the campus website. When leaders provide transparent and clear communication about hazing and its prevention, their visible leadership can help families and/or mentors stay informed and ask their students the necessary questions to help keep them safe.</p>

Highlight Common Intersections

Hazing commonly overlaps with other health and well-being concerns such as mental health, high-risk substance use, sexual harassment and assault, bullying, systems of oppression, and even leadership development. While some of these intersections may be more visible than others, it is important to take the time to educate and highlight how hazing behaviors and other unhealthy behaviors can overlap and serve as warning signs of even more pervasive issues. Partnering with other departments and offices reflective of the intersecting health and well-being concerns to include hazing prevention information in their ongoing work and communications can be an effective way to garner more engagement.

For more information about the intersections of hazing, visit [StopHazing.org/intersections](https://stophazing.org/intersections).



### Sample activities:

**Provide presentations:** Look for opportunities to engage the families and mentors of students participating in student organizations and partner with offices across campus to send a more tailored message. This might include audiences such as fraternity and sorority life (FSL) recruitment information sessions, sessions for families and mentors of student athletes, or new student orientation. For example: A presentation may be delivered by staff from FSL, the counseling center, and the wellness office to share about specific Greek life experiences, processes, potential for risky behaviors, hazing, how to notice warning signs of hazing, education about alcohol, campus traditions, and how to help students access mental health supports.

**Collaborate to incorporate hazing prevention:** Collaborate with other offices and staff members, such as wellness, violence prevention, conduct, counseling center, multicultural center, student leadership, etc., to plan communications and social media campaigns for families and/or mentors and incorporate hazing prevention information. For example: Work with the Title IX coordinator on an email that includes information about sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and how the power, control, and consent dynamics are common in hazing as well. Be sure to include resources, prevention, and reporting information as well.

### Tailor Outreach Efforts

Tailoring messaging, modes of communication, and recipients of outreach efforts can seem daunting at first; however, planning and strategically identifying ways to successfully reach and engage families about hazing prevention is essential. We know hazing occurs beyond FSL and athletics, but not all families and students know the nature and extent of hazing. Thus, some outreach efforts may be focused on specific populations, such as to families of students participating in FSL or athletics, or perhaps other popular student groups. Other efforts, however, can be dispersed to engage all families regarding hazing in many types of student groups, campus communities, and beyond.

### Sample activities:

**Create and share infographics:** Infographics can help provide information about campus-specific and national data on hazing, what constitutes hazing, how to report, and how to intervene. Distribute them via email communications at the beginning of a semester as well as on social media.

**Incorporate hazing prevention in special events:** As themed weekends and special events are planned, incorporate hazing prevention information into pre-existing programs such as parent and family orientation or friends and family weekends. The audience will already be on campus and engaging in programs or events, thus working with campus partners to incorporate hazing prevention information and resources into such events increases the likelihood messaging is shared.

**Develop a newsletter campaign:** Newsletters can share information about hazing to increase likelihood of recognition, intervention, and reporting. Information can help to catalyze conversations with family and/or others. A post-assessment can provide feedback from readers to help improve the next newsletter.

## Sample Newsletter Content Breakdown for a Fall Semester

### August:

- Campus statement about hazing
- How to recognize hazing/what hazing behaviors are/may look like
- Statistics about the nature and extent of hazing
- How to report hazing

### September:

- Common language or descriptions of behaviors/activities that are warning signs of hazing
- Encourage families to ask these questions:
  - » What is the purpose of the group or organization my student may engage with?
  - » What type of activities do they do?
  - » What are the perceived outcomes of student organizations my student is affiliated with?
- Tips for identifying risky behaviors, activities, and group dynamics
- How to learn about campus hazing incidents and accountability

### October

- Healthy group activities
- Reasons why hazing is frequently underreported
- Reasons to promote reporting, how to report, and what to include in a report
- Information about how and when to intervene in a situation

## Develop Clear Communication Channels

While many of the previous strategies help to engage and provide information and education about hazing and its prevention, committed institutions can provide resources for families and mentors to easily access and build their knowledge about campus hazing. Institutions can provide clear information and set up open communication channels for families to engage when they need it. Often, family members don't know what questions to ask, who to ask, or even where to find information about to whom or how to ask questions.

### Sample activities:

#### Engage parent and family associations on campus:

Family may be defined differently by each student; however, if there are associations specific to parents and families on campus, work with them to coordinate the distribution of newsletters, infographics, webinars, and other resources.

**Utilize your website:** Include a “for families and mentors” section on your institution's hazing website or webpage. This section can provide more specific resources as well as reiterate warning signs of hazing and what questions to ask their students, and options for reporting hazing. Also include a visible and accessible contact person for family members or mentors to engage with if they have questions, concerns, or want to report hazing. In general, this website should be on a main page of the campus' website, easy to find and navigate, and not buried or siloed within the page of one department or office.

## Other Considerations

Like students, some families or mentors are reluctant to report suspected or known hazing activities to campus staff because they fear their student may be ostracized from the group or experience some kind of retribution. To overcome this potential barrier to reporting, some campuses have implemented amnesty policies.

The strategies in this resource highlight examples for engaging students and families and/or mentors in hazing prevention efforts. Engaging through evidence-informed and intentional implementation strategies is a necessary component of effective hazing prevention. As you plan and develop your engagement strategies, ensure you collect evaluation data to inform and sustain your practice. Use the **Campus Commitment Planning Resource** to help you plan these engagement strategies intentionally.

If you have any questions about this resource, reach out to Clery Center at [info@clerycenter.org](mailto:info@clerycenter.org) or StopHazing at [info@stophazing.org](mailto:info@stophazing.org).

## Use of Materials

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# Get the full Campus Commitment to Hazing Prevention: Action Guide!

The *Campus Commitment to Hazing Prevention: Action Guide* is designed to give you some practical examples of these Commitment activities:

- **Campus Commitment Information-Gathering Tool:** Assess what actions you're already taking within this framework.
- **PowerPoint Template: Making the Case for Hazing Prevention Support:** Make the case to campus leaders for strengthening structural support for hazing prevention.
- **Planning Resource:** Build combined, integrated processes for procedural planning, enhancing structural efforts on campus.
- **Strategies for Engaging Students and their Families:** Address student and family perceptions and their roles in hazing and its prevention as described in the symbolic frame.
- **Sample Letter from Campus Leadership:** Endorse hazing prevention initiatives and institutional transparency relative to hazing accountability, noted within the political frame.

You can download the rest of the Action Guide a la carte or as a whole at [clerycenter.org/hazing](https://clerycenter.org/hazing) or [stophazing.org/action-guide](https://stophazing.org/action-guide).

## We Don't Haze

*We Don't Haze* is a short documentary film created by Clery Center and StopHazing, which helps identify hazing behaviors and offers organization leaders alternative traditions that promote a safer, more positive team-building experience. Learn more about the film and get the supplemental resources at [clerycenter.org/initiatives/hazing-project](https://clerycenter.org/initiatives/hazing-project).

## Contributing Authors

Conceptual design, interpretation, and drafting of this project was completed by Abigail Boyer, M.S., Associate Executive Director for Clery Center and Meredith Stewart, M.Ed., Program & Outreach Coordinator for StopHazing; critical revision and adaptation of the project were completed by Elizabeth J. Allan, Ph.D., Professor of Higher Education at the University of Maine and Principal of StopHazing. All authors contributed to the final revisions.

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## Use of Materials

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