



STUDENT

ACTION

GUIDE

FOR HAZING PREVENTION





Introduction

This is a guide intended for college student leaders who are working to prevent hazing on their campuses. Throughout this guide, we will discuss...

1. What hazing prevention is
2. Why hazing prevention is important
3. Strategies for engaging other students and leaders on campus to prevent hazing

Please use this guide as it is helpful to you. Feel free to shorten/adapt any materials or templates to what is applicable to you and your campus.

Note: to learn more about the resources & research being produced by StopHazing, visit StopHazing.org.



Goals

In reviewing this resource you will:

- Gain familiarity with the key components of hazing and hazing prevention
- Reflect on personal experiences and consider how to engage your community in hazing prevention
- Learn about the campus structures in place to support students and hazing prevention efforts
- Connect the benefits of hazing prevention to health promotion and the overall well-being of the campus community

Table of Contents

Start here: A note from Bianca 4

A message from a student leader: Ella 5

Hazing Prevention: What is it and why should it matter to you as a student leader? 6

Types of Groups Experiencing Hazing 7

Spectrum of Hazing 7

State Hazing Laws & Campus Policies 8

Strategies for Engaging Students: Peer Support in Hazing Prevention 9

Changing the Culture and Attitudes 10

Resources & Downloadables 11

Making a Difference on Your Campus 12

Why is Hazing Prevention Important on Your Campus? 13

Sample Email or Letter to Campus Leadership 14

Start here: A note from Bianca

Testimonial from a student leader who led hazing prevention and education on campus. Bianca used the resources highlighted in the Action Guide to support her mission and overcome institutional challenges.

Dear Hazing Prevention Student Leader,

Welcome to the StopHazing Student Action Guide! My name is Bianca, and I joined the StopHazing team as a Research-to-Practice Intern during my junior year at the University of Pittsburgh! I was active in many on-campus organizations and through my involvement held leadership positions where I became really passionate about hazing prevention.

*My journey championing hazing prevention at my school has not always been smooth sailing. Hazing can be a difficult subject for students and staff to engage with. However, hazing prevention must be a **collaborative process** in order to be successful. That is why it is up to passionate students, like yourself, to drive prevention and partner with your campus staff to keep the work going.*

*As a student leader, **you are responsible for creating campus clubs, teams, and organizational environments that are safe spaces for students, especially those who are younger or new to your group.** Involvement is a huge part of any student's college experience. Most importantly, you, as a student leader, are who younger or newer students look up to, and it is necessary to make sure they are in a safe environment in your organization.*

***Use this guide to your advantage!** We have outlined several ways for you to start conversations on your campus about hazing prevention and emphasize the importance of hazing education to your campus professionals. We've even included sample guides and resources to help seamlessly implement hazing prevention at your school.*

*Know that by engaging your campus leadership and strengthening your school's hazing prevention efforts, **YOU** are making a safer school culture, and a huge difference in your community.*

StopHazing has built a community of passionate hazing prevention student leaders like yourself, and we are SO happy you're here!

Good luck and thank you for your dedication to hazing prevention!

— Bianca, Class of '24, University of Pittsburgh

“Knowing that many of my peers likely had little idea of what hazing is, never mind, how to effectively intervene in hazing situations, I knew something needed to change.”

— ” —

If this sounds similar to your campus experience, [read more](#) about what one StopHazing intern did to promote hazing prevention and educate the students and staff on her campus.

A message from a student leader: Ella

Testimonial from a student leader who started campus conversations about hazing prevention and pushed for more education and transparency to the issue.

Hello Fellow Leader,

My name is Ella and I am going to share with you some reasons to be involved in hazing prevention and ways to do so.

*I have been an intern with StopHazing for over a year now, and entering college, I felt well-educated about hazing. However, I did not feel like my institution had many hazing prevention initiatives in place. **I saw an opportunity to be a leader and promote a healthy campus culture.***

*I started by having conversations with staff in the student affairs office. They were extremely receptive to my concerns about the hazing climate at my institution and a lack of hazing prevention efforts in place. During those conversations, I guided them to StopHazing's plethora of resources. Since then, more hazing prevention initiatives have taken place around campus, and education about hazing is more comprehensive. While starting the conversation was a bit daunting, knowing that I was being a leader and improving the safety of my school empowered me to take action— **and it led to change!***

You too can make an impact on your campus. Having a conversation with leadership at your institution is a great way to start. I also encourage you to talk with your friends and members of your organization about the dangers of hazing and new ways to bond that help foster healthy and inclusive group dynamics.

*These conversations are a great way to start shifting the culture at your institution. **Many small conversations can make a big impact!***

Use the Student Action Guide for more ideas about how to take part in hazing prevention on your campus.

Knowing about hazing and what you can do to prevent it helps create healthy group environments and is crucial to being a leader on your campus.

Thank you for your commitment to keeping campuses safe through hazing prevention.

— Ella, Class of 2026, Bryn Mawr College

“I’m sure we’ve all thought ‘There is no way [hazing] would happen at my school.’ So, at a school that ‘doesn’t haze,’ why do you need to be concerned with hazing prevention?”



Read more about the importance of hazing prevention and education in every school, even if you don't believe hazing will happen at yours, [here](#).

Hazing Prevention: What is it and why should it matter to you as a student leader?

There are several research-based resources and materials that can provide guidance for hazing prevention. The following information will help provide you with background knowledge, resources, and suggestions for beginning a conversation with a campus leader, staff member, advisor, or health and wellness office.

Hazing is defined “**as any activity expected of someone seeking or maintaining membership in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person’s willingness to participate.**” (Allan & Madden, 2008; Hoover, 1999)

In order for hazing to occur, there needs to be:

GROUP CONTEXT

It’s happening in relation to a person seeking out or maintaining membership in a group.



HUMILIATING, DEGRADING, ABUSIVE, OR ENDANGERING BEHAVIOR

Refer to the *Spectrum of Hazing* behaviors on page 7 to see what this could look like.



REGARDLESS OF A PERSON’S WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE

Due to the impact and power that peer pressure has, it negates the ability to give true consent.

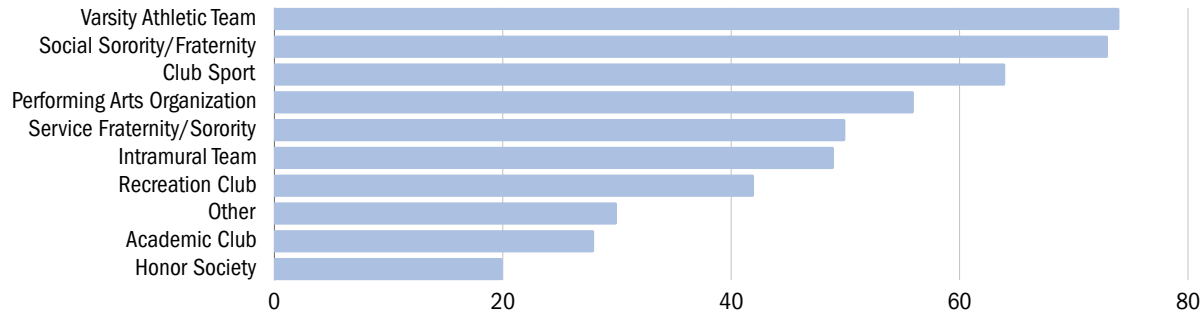


47% of students have experienced hazing prior to coming to college.

55% of college students involved in clubs, teams, and organizations experienced hazing.

Types of Groups Experiencing Hazing

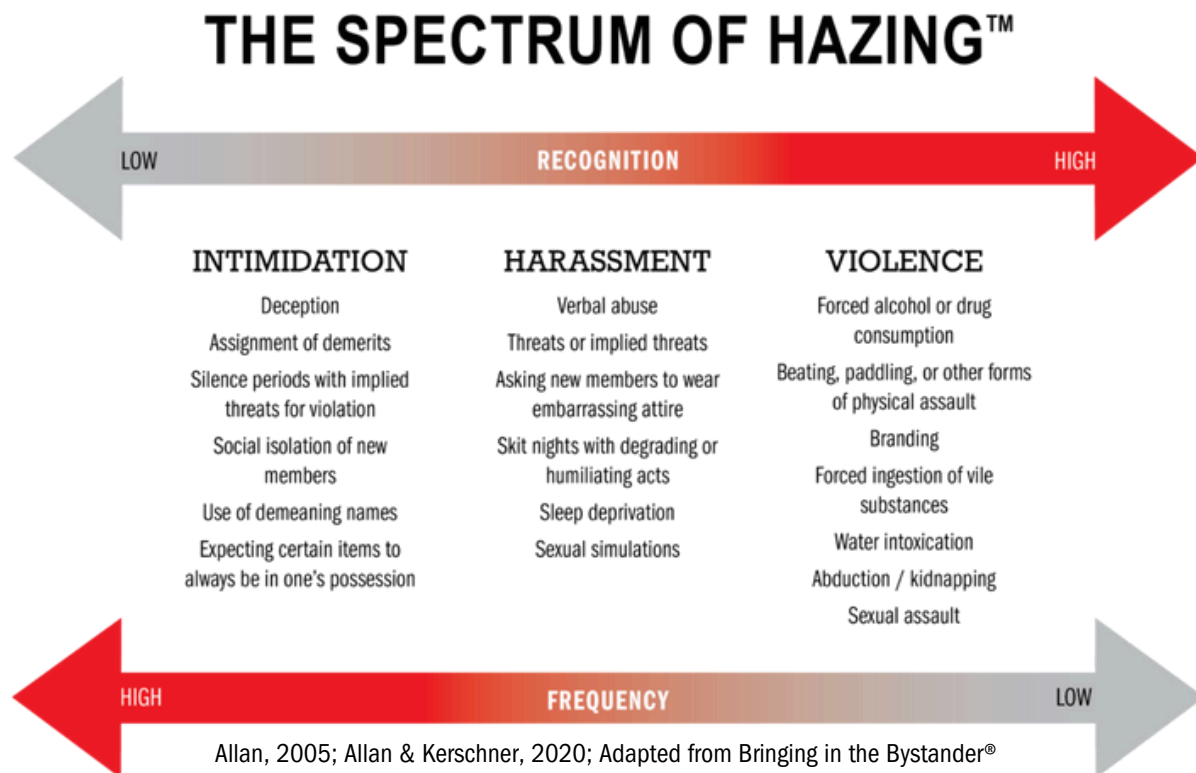
Findings from the 2008 National Study show that 55% of college students in clubs, teams, and organizations experienced hazing, and while most commonly associated with varsity athletics teams and fraternities and sororities, hazing occurs across a wide range of organizations (Allan & Madden, 2008).



Spectrum of Hazing

This visual, developed by researchers at StopHazing, conveys a continuum of hazing behaviors and the relationship between the frequency of those behaviors and the degree to which they are generally recognized as unacceptable in a caring and inclusive community. We want to shed light on instances that are often deemed as jokes, pranks, or just for fun. Those behaviors do not contribute to healthy teams and groups.

A comprehensive approach to hazing prevention helps build capacity for campus community members to recognize all forms of hazing (not just the most extreme), to have the skills to intervene when needed, and ultimately, support group behaviors and belonging that is safe, healthy, and supportive of student well-being.



Strategies for Engaging Students: Peer Support in Hazing Prevention

One of the most prominent questions you might be thinking about is: **“How do I get my campus and peers to become interested in hazing prevention?”** We have some tips for that!

How to Start the Conversation and Bring Awareness

Hosting general awareness events can be a low-stress way to bring attention to hazing and its prevention on your campus! As a member of an organization or group, an easy way to raise awareness about an issue is to host an awareness campaign or tabling event in a visible spot on campus.

Some awareness campaigns and tabling ideas for you to consider:

- **“We Don’t Haze” banner signing** to pledge against hazing and host a viewing of We Don’t Haze, the 16min award-winning film)
- **“Donut Haze” breakfast** and informal discussion about anti-hazing initiatives
- **Tabling events** during summer/fall orientation, welcome weeks, Homecoming, National Hazing Awareness Week, or other high-traffic weeks on your campus.
- **Partner with large, governing organizations to host awareness campaigns**, for example, Student Government, Residence Hall Association, Fraternity & Sorority Life Governing Councils, Student-Athlete Advisory Council, Music / Fine Arts Performing Honor Organizations, etc.

Note: all campaigns should have some type of hazing prevention action and reflection associated to help promote further attention and importance placed on the issue.



After bringing awareness to your campus, it's important to ensure educational programming continues! This is where you'll further describe the issue of hazing and how it can show up in group settings and with power dynamics. Here you can share hazing prevention strategies and discuss how to build healthy groups and teams without hazing. On the following page are several resources to help keep these conversations rolling.

Other important items to share are the campus policies on hazing and how to report if someone has experienced hazing or has knowledge of hazing taking place. You may also want to include the state and possible federal laws.

Some key events where hazing prevention education is especially helpful to include:

- Fraternity and Sorority Life Primary Recruitment and New Member Sessions
- Student Organization Officer Training
- Club Sport Orientation
- Any student club, organization, or honor society initiations
- Resident Assistant (RA) Training
- Residence Hall Beginning of Term Floor / Hall Meetings
- Student Athlete Orientation
- Marching Band Camp / Orientation



Changing the Culture and Attitudes

Hazing directly impacts the safety and well-being of every student. As described in the attached presentation, hazing takes many forms, some with varying levels of recognition and frequency. Hazing has negative impacts on a student's emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Hazing occurs on a continuum, and it is vital that hazing prevention is prioritized to ensure no type of harm is experienced.

Beyond empowering students to stop hazing on your campus, students need to be equipped with healthy alternatives to team building, especially in scenarios and environments ripe for hazing to potentially occur. If this sounds like something students on your campus need education on, check out the [10 Signs of Healthy and Unhealthy Groups](#), which includes a toolkit and training material!

Resources & Downloadables

There are several ready-to-use resources for hazing prevention available [here](#). Many resources are designed for staff to implement and tailor to campus and staff-led hazing prevention efforts, but as demonstrated by the student leaders quoted in this Action Guide, students can lead the change in hazing prevention on campuses.

StandUp to Hazing Online Course

We know that capacity and time is often a barrier for campus professionals to deliver prevention education to students, this online course, [StandUp to Hazing](#), could also be licensed, at-cost, to your institution to help solve that issue and deliver research-based hazing prevention education at scale.



Guides & Toolkits

StopHazing is a resource and support to *you*, as a student leader passionate about creating a hazing-free campus! Students can facilitate one of StopHazing's many recommended [workshops](#) for groups on campus. The nice thing about these workshops is that they are centered around [leadership development](#), how to [build healthy groups](#), and [make change](#). These are great workshops to discuss hazing prevention in a practical way that anyone can benefit from, while also teaching about leadership and group dynamics. The workshops come with a guide that you, another student, or advisor, can use to facilitate the discussion. Another option is that a StopHazing [facilitator](#) lead this discussion on campus, at cost. Students can also share StopHazing-developed [media resources](#), [hazing prevention guides](#), and [toolkits](#) to students and groups around campus. StopHazing can tailor outreach efforts to support the needs of any student and institution.

StopHazing Internships

If you are interested in learning more about hazing prevention and collaborating with leaders in the field, [StopHazing Internships](#) may be a perfect place to start! StopHazing interns represent college and graduate students who are passionate about preventing hazing, keeping students safe, prioritizing student well-being, and are committed to using effective, research-based tools to prevent hazing.





Making a Difference on Your Campus

Another way to promote hazing prevention on your campus is by starting conversations with the dean of students, student affairs, chancellor, directors of health promotion offices, fraternity & sorority life directors, or other similar leadership positions. These conversations can help determine how committed your campus is to hazing prevention, and recommend to campus leadership that more be done to create a healthy school environment. To start the conversation, go to the appropriate office on your campus, or contact leadership using our letter template (page 14).



HazingInfo.org may also be a useful tool for to learn more about your institution and identify ways to increase transparency.



Questions and topics to start with that may be helpful to consider in your meeting:

What is the hazing policy at your institution? Is the policy public and accessible?

What is the process for investigating hazing at your institution?

What hazing prevention initiatives are already in place?

Is there hazing education incorporated into new member intake, orientation, etc.?

Does your institution publicly post reports of hazing?

Do you feel like your institution has a culture of hazing? Why might this be?

Note: You could also encourage them to complete this [Information Gathering Tool](#) or walk through it together as you talk to help create transparency on the state of hazing prevention there.

You can discuss these questions with your peers, group/team members, or your advisor. You can help build a healthy culture that incorporates hazing prevention by starting small at your institution! On the next page is a graphic to help you start a conversation with a peer or staff member, fill in why hazing prevention is important to you, and identify how it relates to your campus.

WHY IS HAZING PREVENTION IMPORTANT ON YOUR CAMPUS?



Sample Email or Letter to Campus Leadership

Dear *(Insert Campus Leadership/Senior Student Affairs Officer Name)*,

As a student leader, I feel passionate about making campus a safe and fun space, and one that provides the opportunity for growth and development for all students. With that being said, a topic that I really want to stress to you, is the importance of cultivating a campus culture free from hazing.

As I walk around our campus, I see the ways we interact with one another - in the classroom, on the field, in small and big ways every single day. Those everyday actions are what create our campus culture; they are what set our campus apart, and what make me proud to be a student leader here.

Over the past few years, there has been a national conversation about campus hazing and its impact on individuals, families, members of organizations, and people in the surrounding community. Hazing is a community issue with ripple effects beyond the immediate groups or settings where it occurs. Hazing is a type of abuse that can interfere with the ability of students to thrive as learners and as leaders, whether they are part of a campus community, or in a workplace, in the military, or a part of any other type of group or organization.

As a community issue with far-reaching effects, each of us has a responsibility to make a difference by being informed about hazing and committing to hazing prevention. Hazing is not isolated to a certain student organization - national studies of hazing show that hazing can occur across student organizations, such as athletics, Fraternity and Sorority Life, club sports, performing arts, and academic clubs, to name a few. And a national study about hazing found that 55% of college students participating in groups or teams experienced hazing. Too often, individuals excuse hazing in the name of “tradition” or “bonding”, whereas hazing behaviors do not build positive relationships, group unity, belonging, or trust, but rather undermine our institutional mission and can lead to outcomes including damaged relationships, anger, resentment, mistrust, physical harm, and even death.

Hazing can and does occur in many group settings. As an institution with many student organizations, groups, and teams, we need to recognize that there is a lot of room for hazing to occur, and it is our responsibility to educate ourselves on how to recognize and prevent it. Hazing can take many forms from intimidation behaviors and demeaning names, to harassment and threats, all the way to assault and forced consumption of alcohol and drugs. There is no room for hazing on our campus and even if we don't necessarily hear about it, we need to be aware that it can be occurring here, regardless of a lack of incident reports.

In my research of hazing prevention resources, I've come across resources from StopHazing, a research-to-practice organization, and with your help, I would like to implement these on our campus. With that in mind, here are some steps I propose to prevent and address hazing within our own campus community and here are some action steps we can implement:

- **Support a redesign or launch of a hazing prevention website to include more information about hazing, hazing prevention, and our institution's hazing policies.** Students need to learn what hazing is, our school policies on hazing, resources to prevent it, as well as support to report hazing if it happens to them. Students must also be aware of hazing violations on our campus and within our community.
- **Host upcoming campus programs.** StopHazing has numerous free workshops and programming for students and campuses. *[Insert original examples or ideas from above.]* I believe that all students need to better understand hazing, learn how to successfully intervene if they witness hazing or become aware of its occurrence, and implement effective healthy group bonding and cohesion strategies without hazing.
- **Report incidents of hazing on campus.** From my perspective, a barrier to reporting hazing is that students do not know when to report incidents or how to report them. I am eager to work with you on ways to eliminate this barrier and provide access to all students.
- **Developing leaders. Inclusive, healthy, and strong groups and teams are vital to our community.** Cultivating positive environments in our groups is a shared responsibility. Can I chat with you about ways our leaders are getting the resources and training they need to succeed in hazing prevention efforts on our campus?
- **Increase campus education around hazing.** One of the most prominent reasons that hazing is not reported is because people can't recognize what hazing is. This is a huge problem for every student which is why we need to increase hazing education across our campus. StopHazing has developed, with both student and professional staff input, a 20-minute self paced online curriculum that can educate students and staff on what hazing is, how to recognize it, and how to intervene when it is occurring.

Is it possible to set up a time to further discuss these initiatives together? *(Or insert other tangible items/call to action here.)*

Thank you for all you do to keep our institution a safe and welcoming place to live and learn.

Sincerely,

[Insert Your Name]

[Campus Affiliation(s)]