



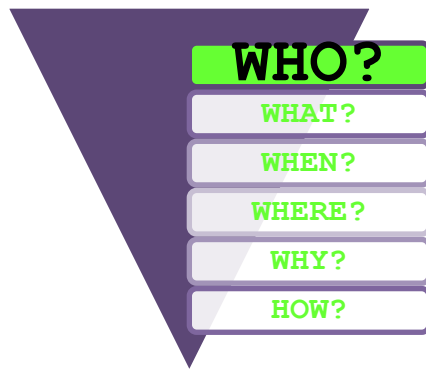
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## **A MESSAGE TO JOURNALISM PROFESSIONALS**

This media kit is designed to give you a succinct overview of hazing and our organization, HazingPrevention.Org. Our mission is to empower people to prevent hazing in college and university student groups and we recognize that you, as a journalist, are duty bound to report hazing incidents and the far-reaching consequences of those incidents. It is also our goal, as an organization, to be a source of accurate and comprehensive information about hazing. We hope that you will use us as one of your sources of information about hazing and hazing prevention if and when you are reporting a story on the issue. We are at your disposal and recognize not only your need for information but your need to meet a deadline.

You can reach us by phone at (303) 325-7831. Our newly redesigned and always improving website is at your disposal 24/7 at [www.HazingPrevention.Org](http://www.HazingPrevention.Org). It's packed with information ranging from the basics about the issue to personal stories about those whose lives have been adversely affected by hazing.

Hazing is a major societal problem that reaches far beyond the stereotype of college fraternities and sororities. We invite you to arm yourself with accurate information and above all, report both sides of the story when hazing – particularly criminal hazing – occurs.



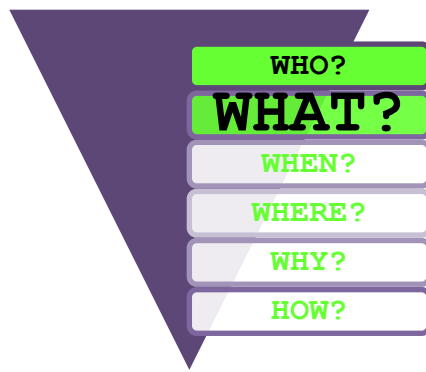
## **WHO is HazingPrevention.Org?**

HazingPrevention.Org grew out of a meeting hosted by the Association of Fraternity Advisors in 2003. A brainstorming session generated the idea of a national symposium on the issue of hazing, and CAMPUSPEAK, a college speakers' agency, began to plan such an event for the following year. Once the symposium was a reality, the idea for a national prevention week followed. CAMPUSPEAK operated both programs for three years with the help of sponsors.

During the summer of 2007, CAMPUSPEAK donated both programs to a newly formed non-profit organization, HazingPrevention.Org, with plans to reach even more students, athletes, parents, advisors, campus professionals and national organizations. We are largely a volunteer organization which means we don't have a lot of people on the payroll but we have a tremendous pool of incredibly talented people at our disposal who are researchers, writers, educators and trainers in the field of hazing prevention. These same individuals can serve as sources of information for you.

The mission of HazingPrevention.Org is to empower people to prevent hazing in college and university student groups. We carry out this mission by offering a variety of programs, products, services and resources designed to give people the information and tools they need to recognize hazing, understand its implications, develop intolerance for hazing, empower them to act when hazing occurs, and take steps to help ensure it doesn't happen again.

Benjamin Franklin wrote, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The best thing we can do, as a society, is to prevent hazing from happening in the first place. The key to prevention is knowledge because people who understand the issue will refuse to allow it to happen in their presence and will take steps to educate others to do the same. Prevention is what HazingPrevention.Org is all about.



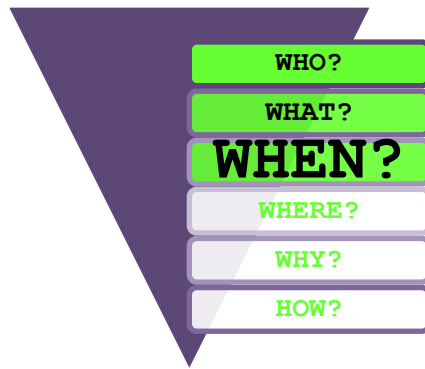
## WHAT is hazing?

Hazing is any action taken or situation created intentionally:

- that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule;
- risks emotional and/or physical harm;
- to members of an organization or team;
- whether new or not;
- regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

Still confused? Ask yourself these questions as you view a reported incident and decide to write about it:

- Would I feel comfortable participating in this activity if my parents were watching?
- Would we get in trouble if someone in authority (dean/law enforcement/advisor/coach) walked by?
- Am I being asked to keep these activities a secret?
- Am I doing anything illegal?
- Does participation violate my values or those of my organization?
- Is it causing emotional distress or stress of any kind to me or to others?
- If someone were injured, would I feel comfortable being investigated by the insurance carrier?
- When I apply for jobs, can I take the onus of having a criminal arrest on my record?



## **WHEN do pranks become hazing?**

The “it’s all in fun” and “we all had to pay our dues” and other similar arguments are a major part of the problem. There are no simple pranks because the gang and power mentality that are part and parcel of hazing often start as pranks and escalate into incidents where people suffer emotional distress, physical injury or even death.

***There really are no small acts of hazing just degrees to which those upon whom the acts are perpetrated are emotionally and/or physically harmed.***

Hazing is an act of disrespect leveled upon those who are new to something just because they’re new. Forget the idea that “boys will be boys” or that seasoned NFL players giving rookies audacious haircuts or making them pay thousands of dollars for one meal is just “all in fun.” Hazing is one of the ultimate acts of disrespect toward another human being.

There is also a subtle distinction between hazing and bullying. The same power dynamics are involved. The same intimidation tactics are used. The same second-class citizenship issues arise. The only real difference between bullying and hazing is that bullying can happen to anyone, anytime. Hazing is done to a person or group of people in order to gain entrance or acceptance into a club, organization, team, workplace or formal group.



## **WHERE** does hazing occur?

Hazing incidents occur virtually everywhere. From religious youth summer camps to the white-collar workplace, no environment is immune from hazing. Greek social organizations on college campuses have traditionally been the focus of hazing stories and that's part of the problem. When incidents involve fraternity members at a university, people recognize it as hazing. When incidents involve rookie pro sports players or the new guy on the job in corporate America, people often don't recognize them as acts of hazing. Hazing is still hazing no matter where it happens.

But the failure to recognize hazing for what it is isn't just the fault of those who read about it or hear about it. It's also the fault of those who have been hazed. In fact, nine out of 10 students who have experienced hazing behavior in college do not consider themselves to have been hazed. (Allan & Madden, 2008)



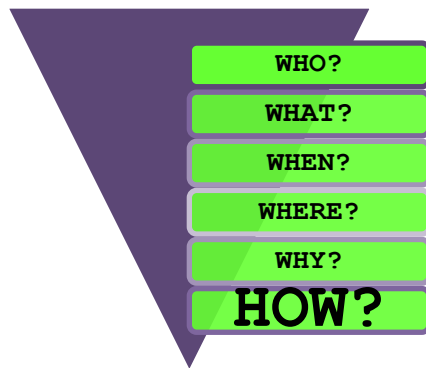
## **WHY does hazing occur?**

Hazing is about power – the power those who have “been around” have over those who want to be a part of something.

Hazing also occurs because people who witness it don’t do anything about it. This is called “bystander behavior.” The most important thing people can do to help reduce the occurrence of hazing is to report incidents whenever and wherever they witness them or hear about them reliably from other people.

Hazing is not just morally wrong. In most states, it’s illegal. Right now, 44 states have laws against hazing. (Visit [www.HazingPrevention.Org](http://www.HazingPrevention.Org) to view a list of state statutes.) Even in states lacking such laws there may be eventual related charges such as under-aged drinking, assault and sexual assault.

Virtually every college or university, school, national governing body, athletic department, fraternity/sorority, organization and workplace has an anti-hazing policy and most have procedures for reporting violations.



## HOW often does hazing occur?

Hazing is rampant. Take a look at some statistics:

1.5 million high school students are hazed each year; 47% of students came to college already having experienced hazing.#

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

Alcohol consumption, humiliation, isolation, sleep-deprivation, and sexual acts are hazing practices common across all types of student groups.

40% of athletes who reported being involved in hazing behaviors report that a coach or advisor was aware of the activity; 22% report that the coach was *involved*.#

2 in 5 students say they are aware of hazing taking place on their campus. More than 1 in 5 report that they witnessed hazing personally.

In 95% of cases where students identified their experience as hazing, they did not report the events to campus officials.

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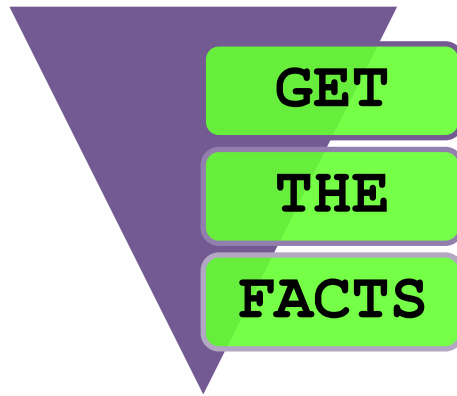
As of February 12, 2010, the number of recorded hazing/pledging/rushing-related deaths in fraternities and sororities stands at 96 - 90 males and 6 females.\*

### **Statistical Sources**

Data taken from the national study Hazing in View: Students at Risk (2008) conducted by Elizabeth Allan, Ph.D. and Mary Madden, Ph.D. from the University of Maine. The full report of both the pilot and complete national study are available at: [HazingStudy.Org](http://HazingStudy.Org)

#Information from Alfred University HS hazing study conducted by Hoover and Pollard, published in 2000. [http://www.alfred.edu/hs\\_hazing/](http://www.alfred.edu/hs_hazing/)

\*Information compiled by Hank Nuwer. <http://hazing.hanknuwer.com/>



For more hazing information, visit [www.HazingPrevention.Org](http://www.HazingPrevention.Org).

For stories that other reporters have written, see <http://hanknuwer.com/blog>

Visit [www.HazingPrevention.Org](http://www.HazingPrevention.Org) for information, statistics, breaking news, personal stories, program information and more. Or call us at (303) 325-7831.