



We Don't Haze

COMPANION GUIDE

We Don't Haze is intended to help viewers gain a better understanding of hazing, its harmful consequences, and how groups, teams, and organizations can build bonds and traditions without hazing. Hazing is a complex phenomenon and while there are no simple solutions, there is much we can do to prevent hazing and its associated harm. *We Don't Haze* can be used as one tool among many to broaden understanding of hazing and propel widespread hazing prevention.



HAZING
PREVENTION
CONSORTIUM

WE DON'T HAZE COMPANION GUIDE

Discussion Guide for Students



Before You Begin

Inform the audience in advance that this film discusses hazing, *a topic that can be difficult for many viewers*. Remind participants to take care of themselves and leave the room if the film is too difficult to watch. Highlight on- and off-campus resources available to students.

Audience

These discussion questions are geared for college students but with discretion and appropriate discussion, this film can be used for high school students entering college.

Student Discussion Questions

These questions were designed to be used throughout the film (by pausing for discussion) or after the film is over to facilitate a discussion around hazing. The facilitator should use the questions most appropriate for the time available and the specific audience. It is also helpful to identify opportunities for small group work to create a comfortable environment for students to share opinions. **Please see the companion “We Don’t Haze” Activity Guide for more information.**

For more information on this film project or for other campus safety resources, contact:

Clery Center | clerycenter.org **StopHazing** | stophazing.org

Before Viewing the Film

Questions to discuss as a group prior to viewing:

QUESTION: What are some traditions you have with your friends/family that bring you together to bond as a group?

DISCUSS: Ask students to share examples of traditions they have with their friends or family. This could be done as a large group or small groups could document their ideas on poster paper. The facilitator could offer examples before hearing from the group, such as, “Our family watched a movie every Wednesday night” or “My team eats dinner together the night before every game.”

After the group discusses a number of different examples, the facilitator should reinforce what makes these activities traditions – the behavior continues over time. It’s usually an activity a person finds special or important.

TRADITION:
A long-established
custom or belief.

During or After the Film

Pause the film and ask these questions as appropriate throughout the film or lead a discussion using these questions after viewing the film.

QUESTION: What is hazing?

DISCUSS: Hazing is any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person's willingness to participate (Allan & Madden, 2008). Three key components of this definition include:

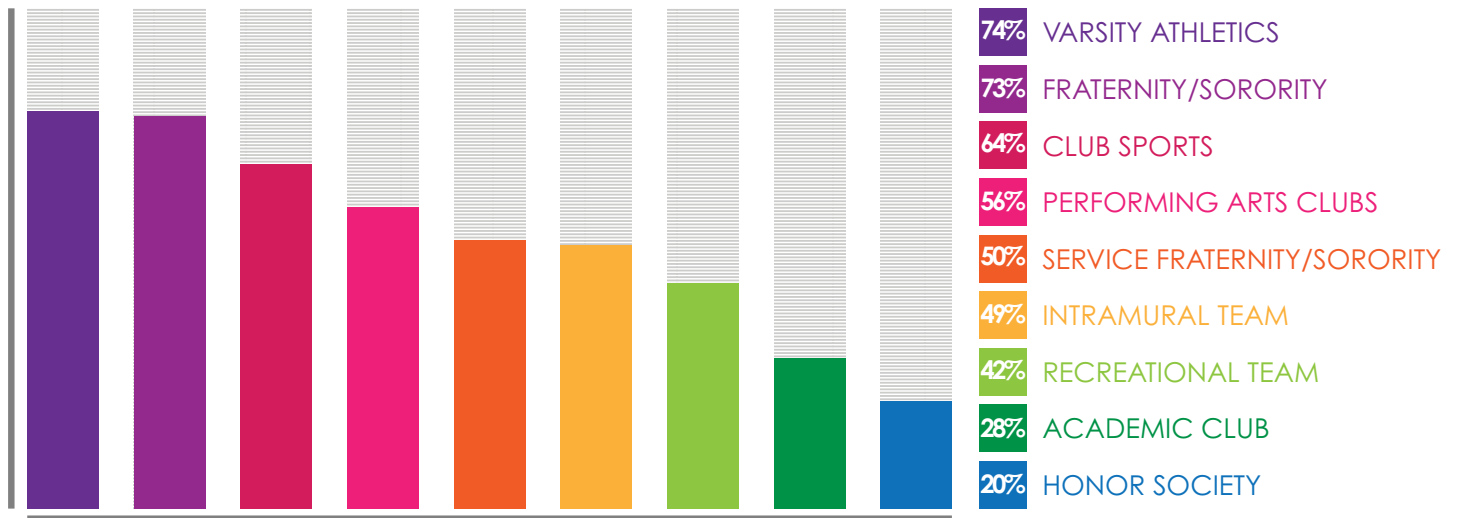
1. **Group context:** Associated with the process for joining and maintaining membership in a group;
2. **Abusive behavior:** Activities that are potentially humiliating and degrading, with potential to cause physical, psychological and/or emotional harm; and
3. **Regardless of an individual's willingness to participate:** The "choice" to participate may be offset by the peer pressure and coercive/power dynamics that often exist in the context of gaining membership in a group.

(Allan, 2014)

QUESTION: How many individuals are hazed during their time at college?

DISCUSS: 55% of college students involved in clubs, teams, and organizations experience hazing. They report hazing in a wide range of organizations, with highest numbers for varsity athletics, fraternities/sororities, club sports, and performing arts clubs (Allan & Madden, 2008).

PERCENT OF STUDENTS THAT EXPERIENCE HAZING



Allan & Madden, 2008

QUESTION: What were some of the different types of hazing you observed within the film?

DISCUSS: In discussing other examples of hazing, help students refer to the key components of hazing to explain why a behavior is hazing. Include discussion of why some behaviors may be harder to define as hazing (e.g. it's easier to define hazing that includes physical harm, but harder when participants are "willing" or "choose" to participate or when the harm is hidden, psychological, or emotional). Some examples of hazing from the film include:

- Forced and coerced alcohol consumption
- Required to wear pledge pins
- Required to take organizational tests or perform specific menial tasks in order to continue involvement with the group
- Paddling
- Beating, zip ties
- Transported to and dropped off at unfamiliar location
- Required to do humiliating or degrading acts
- Sexual harassment hazing
- Reckless driving

QUESTION: What are some other examples of hazing?

DISCUSS: Other examples of hazing include:

- Public humiliation (like wearing embarrassing clothing or requiring a specific object to be in one's possession)
- Yelling and screaming at group members
- Servitude
- Sleep deprivation
- Isolation
- Sex acts
- Drinking games
- Sexual assault

(Allan & Madden, 2008)

QUESTION: What was the impact of hazing on individuals within the film? What are other ways that hazing might impact an individual or organization?

DISCUSS: Some of the families within the film lost a loved one to hazing; their lives are forever changed as they try to navigate a world without that person in it. Some student hazing victims want to leave campus or choose to transfer institutions. Many hazing victims feel confused, upset, or isolated but don't feel comfortable speaking out. They also talk about wishing they had support in changing some of the behaviors they were seeing on their campus. Some students who experience or observe hazing feel guilty, even when the hazing isn't their fault.

Other negative effects of hazing include:

- Relationship problems (such as difficulty trusting others)
- Trouble sleeping
- Impaired concentration
- Loss of academic progress
- Feelings of humiliation or depression

(Allan & Madden, 2008)

QUESTION: What are some of the barriers to speaking out against or reporting hazing behaviors?

DISCUSS: Have students discuss barriers they observed in the film, experienced themselves, or imagine they or others would experience. Some barriers reported by hazing scholars include:

- Don't want to get their team or group in trouble
- Fear of retaliation and/or negative consequences from other team or group members
- Fear that others would find out about the report and they'd be excluded
- Don't know how or where to report
- Don't recognize an experience as hazing
- Rationalize or normalize the experience (as "tradition," as part of group bonding, etc.)
- Think they shouldn't report because they chose to participate in the hazing activity
- Conclude that an incident was not notable enough to report

(Allan & Madden, 2008)

In the film, Diana talked about how someone speaking out or showing they cared about her safety might have changed the outcome and prompted her to stay at the institution rather than transfer. Given the group dynamics, it can be difficult for someone subjected to hazing to stand up to hazing on their own. Therefore, even just reaching out to someone who may be a victim of hazing can be an important step in helping them take steps to get the support they need.

Victims of hazing may minimize, rationalize, or normalize hazing behaviors, or feel as though what happened was their fault.

(Allan & Madden, 2008)

QUESTION: What could others have done to make a difference in relation to some of the stories you saw in the film?

DISCUSS: Sixty-nine percent of students who belonged to a student group reported that they were aware of hazing activities occurring in student organizations other than their own (Allan & Madden, 2008). This means that oftentimes students may know hazing is occurring within an organization, but are unsure of what they can do to change it.

There are a few critical steps bystanders can take to address hazing on campus. **Discuss what each of these bystander intervention strategies might entail in action:**

- Notice hazing
- Interpret hazing as a problem
- Recognize a responsibility to change it
- Acquire the skills needed to take action
- Take action!

(Stapleton & Allan, 2014; adapted from Berkowitz, 2009)

ACTION ITEM:

At some point during the presentation, highlight where a student should go to report hazing on your campus. Consider what resources might reinforce this information (examples include handouts, infographics, hotline numbers, wallet-size cards, etc.).

Here are a few other ways students can make a difference:

- Leaders within organizations could choose not to implement hazing practices.
- Engage the group in healthy activities that promote group unity.
- Anticipate that hazing may occur, talk with other members of the group who do not support hazing, and plan ways in which you can work together to intervene if it does occur.
- Reach out to individual members to see how they feel about specific activities. Learning about how members feel about hazing is critical to acquiring accurate perceptions of peers' actual beliefs and values related to hazing. Research suggests that students often misperceive the extent to which their peers are comfortable engaging in high-risk behaviors like hazing and that if they thought a majority of their peers were uncomfortable with hazing, they would be more likely to decline to participate (Berkowitz, 2013).
- Many hazing activities are planned in advance. Having conversations with group members and friends about the definition of hazing and various hazing behaviors can help others shift their perceptions, intervene effectively or stop a hazing activity. Talking about hazing broadens awareness and helps others notice it and take action to stop it.
- Listen carefully to stories shared by friends and be available to talk with them about how they feel about their own experiences relative to hazing and other behaviors. Students are most likely to tell friends or family about hazing experiences.
- Report hazing to a trusted campus staff member and/or campus official.
- Call 911.

QUESTION: What are some team-building traditions that could build positive relationships and group unity without hazing?

DISCUSS: Ask participants to share examples of positive team-building traditions mentioned in the film or that they have experienced or seen groups use. Some examples include:

- Community service activities or trips
- Attending a movie or concert together
- Mentoring (in the film, Meredith talks about a program in which students from the same major are paired together)
- Group outings or activities (Steven talked about going bowling)
- Ropes courses and problem solving games with trained professional guidance and supervision
- Leadership training that focuses on ethical leadership and positive group bonding
- Service projects that involve the whole team or membership (not just the new members)
- Physical "challenge by choice" activities, organized and facilitated by trained staff
- Attending a campus or community event together

See StopHazing's ongoing list of group activities and common group goals to consider as other activities that align with your group's mission, values, interests, etc. and are free of hazing at <https://stophazing.org/resources/healthy-groups/>. (StopHazing Research Lab, 2021).

Hazing isn't simply about the activity... it's also about the process—the ways in which power and control are exercised among group members and how new members or rookies are made to feel about their place in the group.

(Allan, 2004)

References

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Get the full *We Don't Haze Companion Guide*!

Updated in 2022, the *We Don't Haze Companion Guide* provides you with the tools to educate yourself and your community about campus hazing and facilitate programming for students, staff, and faculty using the short documentary film, *We Don't Haze*.

The *We Don't Haze Companion Guide* includes:

- A **Prevention Brief** highlighting what research teaches us about hazing on campus and emerging evidence-driven strategies for hazing prevention;
- A **Discussion Guide for Students** and a **Discussion Guide for Faculty/Staff** to use in tandem with *We Don't Haze*;
- A **Bystander Intervention Guide** with strategies for intervening against hazing; and
- A **Workshop and Activity Guide** for optional activities to incorporate into *We Don't Haze* programming.

You can download the rest of the *Companion Guide* a la carte or as a whole at clerycenter.org/hazing or stophazing.org/we-dont-haze.

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.

Use of Materials

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