

Testimony of Elizabeth J. Allan, Ph.D.

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP)

July 13, 2016

“Hazing is emotionally and physically hurting our youth and young adults and can lead to death. In the case of my son, [he] would be 27 years old [today]. No parent ever expects to send their child off to college and come home in a coffin. There is not a day that goes by that I do not think about my son and it is time for each and everyone of us to make a difference NOW for our children and generations to come. My 18 year old daughter will be leaving for college in the next few weeks and I worry for her and her fellow students, not only for hazing but including sexual abuse, alcohol abuse, campus violence, etc.”

Lianne Kowiak, mother of Harrison Kowiak killed by hazing in 2008.

Chairman Alexander, Ranking Member Murray, and Members of the Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this roundtable discussion about campus safety and violence prevention in higher education. As a Professor of Higher Education and researcher who studies aspects of campus culture and climate, I am honored to be invited to talk with you about my research and work related to student hazing and its prevention. My remarks are grounded in more than 25 years of research and education about hazing and its prevention. Over the past two and half decades, I've talked with thousands of students and education professionals about hazing; I coordinated efforts to pass a state law prohibiting hazing, I founded the first educational website about hazing (www.stophazing.org); have led research teams to survey more than 12,000 college students and interview hundreds more about hazing on college campuses (<http://www.stophazing.org/hazing-view/>), and I currently lead a team of prevention specialists who are working to guide a consortium of eight universities as well as several high schools across the country to implement and evaluate strategies for hazing prevention.

In preparation for this testimony, I reached out to a network of constituents from across the country who are invested in this issue to let them know I would be testifying today and to ask for their input about the most important information I needed to convey to you today. Scholars, educators, prevention practitioners, parents of victims of hazing incidents, and others who are deeply concerned about this issue responded. Here is some of what they said,

“Hazing has no place in any organization. . .the lasting and irrevocable damage is permanent. A hazing death is senseless and preventable. Time honored ‘so called traditions’ must be ended. A life lost is a tragedy that can be stopped with education and awareness. Hazing is cruel and has claimed innocent lives affecting a family for all time. Nearly 40 years have passed since my son Chuck died needlessly. Not a day passes that we don’t remember the loss we all suffered. The life snuffed out that would have contributed to society. A young and intelligent man who anticipated a bright future - who was denied his family, his future, and not by choice.” Eileen Stevens, mother of Chuck Stenzel killed by hazing in 1978.

“Hazing is a very serious problem on high school and college campuses. It does not have the carnage that gun violence does. However, it does cause tragedy and death at an alarmingly increasing rate. There has been at least one death every year as a result of hazing. From 2000 to January 2015, there were 57 documented fraternity hazing related deaths. This does not take into account the numerous lesser, more subtle forms of hazing that happen nor other organizations where hazing occurs. What happened to our oldest son, Gary Jr., should have never taken place. His tragic death was totally preventable and avoidable had one person done the right thing and stopped the hazing well before this deadly night. Had universities been required to report hazing incidents and posted on their websites, Gary Jr. would not have been a pledge.” Julie DeVercelly, mother of Gary DeVercelly Jr. killed by hazing in 2009.

“Hazing has operated as a secretive, accepted, organized, and institutionalized form of physical, verbal, psychological, and emotional torture affiliated with group initiation practices. The urgency is now to prevent hazing before another life is lost.” Pamela Champion, mother of Robert Champion killed by hazing in 2011.

My comments draw from years of research on hazing, the theories and science of prevention, my experience as an educator and student life professional, and my most recent work to build an evidence based framework for hazing prevention in college and high school settings. But as indicated by the previous quotes from parents of hazing victims, I am also here to speak on behalf of, and to reflect on, the perspectives of the countless stakeholders from throughout this country who have knowledge about and have been deeply impacted by the

prevalence of hazing in our educational institutions. It is my hope that I can do justice to their views and to the sense of urgency they have conveyed to me upon learning that I would be speaking with you today.

My journey into this field was catalyzed by my role as a campus professional at a public university where I worked with talented, capable, and dedicated undergraduate students to promote learning and enrichment outside the classroom through student activities, including leadership education and advising for Greek-letter organizations. As I coordinated leadership development programs with these college students, I also became aware of hazing and its impact. The students with whom I worked were intelligent, hard working, and well-liked. Yet, many of these rising stars were experiencing the abuses of hazing or watching silently as new members of their organizations were hazed. There was the student who visited my office after he was hospitalized with kidney damage from paddling; or the students burned from being sprayed with oven cleaner, the numerous sexual assaults, the “lock-ups,” days and weeks deprived of sleep, the alcohol intoxications, the verbal abuses and other indignities to name a few. Little did I know, this was only the tip of the iceberg. Since then, I have heard hundreds, if not thousands, of similar stories from students and their loved ones about the painful and sometimes tragic consequences of hazing.

Early on, as I became more aware that students at my university were both suffering and perpetrating abuses of hazing and not wanting to be a bystander myself, I felt compelled to take action. Not sure where to begin, and with no “best practices” as a guide, I did whatever I could to educate others about the possible dangers of hazing. I brought guest speakers to campus, I helped to develop trainings, peer education, more stringent accountability for hazing, high-risk drinking, and sexual aggression. I worked to add more rigor to hazing investigations and develop innovative educational consequences for hazing by working with students to develop alternatives to hazing traditions. We instituted a hotline for anonymous reporting and I also led an initiative to enact state legislation – an effort that included press conferences, lobbying efforts

at the statehouse, and courageous students telling their personal stories of hazing experiences – all of which eventually culminated in the passage of a state law to prohibit hazing. However, as we know, a state law isn't sufficient to stem the tide of hazing. And workshops and trainings may help, but they are not enough. Attitudes and practices that sustain hazing are often embedded in campus (and school) culture. Like sexual violence, high risk drinking, and other forms of campus violence, hazing prevention efforts need to be data-driven, strategic, and comprehensive.

Hazing is an emerging field of research and prevention practice. Those of us invested in this field still have much to learn about the nature of hazing, challenges in hazing prevention, viable and sustainable alternatives to hazing, and promising strategies for substantial transformation away from a culture of hazing. Resources for further research, trainings, and education about hazing as well as mandates for its prevention are vital next steps in achieving educational environments free from hazing.

As a campus safety issue, hazing is problematic because of the harm that can, and often does, result. However, it is also particularly troubling because it occurs in contexts (clubs, campus organizations, and athletic teams) that are living-learning laboratories for our country's future leaders and citizens. So while we need to eliminate hazing to enhance campus safety, we also need to eliminate hazing to promote educational environments that are most conducive to learning and the development of ethical leaders who treat others with the dignity and respect each deserves.

Hazing and its prevention as a field of research is in early stages of development. However, a recent three-year long collaboration between researchers and campus professionals has produced a promising framework for hazing prevention. Beginning with a brief overview of hazing including research on the nature and extent of hazing and a review of some of the particular challenges related to hazing prevention, this testimony provides more detail about that framework for hazing prevention and how we can continue to build on this foundation

to expand the research base and capacity for more wide-reaching and sustainable prevention in higher education and beyond.

What is hazing?

Hazing is defined as “any activity expected of someone joining or maintaining membership in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them, regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (Hoover & Pollard, 1999). Three key components are embedded in this definition:

1. Hazing is behavior that occurs for the purpose of gaining membership *and/or trying to maintain membership* in an established group, organization, or team.
2. Hazing involves behavior that risks emotional or physical harm.
3. Hazing can occur regardless of a person’s willingness to participate.

In my experience, many well-meaning individuals are quick to dismiss hazing as harmless antics or pranks, but in reality, hazing can leave lifelong scars and in some cases, it can be lethal. Hazing needs to be addressed because it is a threat to campus safety. But further, hazing can damage relationships, breed anger, mistrust, and resentment that erodes the educational and leadership benefits of belonging to student organizations and athletic teams. The ripple-effects of hazing are far-reaching; its harm is not limited to the boundaries of campus. We need to prevent any more senseless tragedies and loss of human potential as a result of hazing, and we also need to care about hazing **because it is a leadership issue**. Hazing occurs in a context where students are learning how to be leaders and team members and hazing - humiliating, degrading, and abusive behavior - is not the kind of leadership we want to cultivate in future leaders of our country.

Nature and extent of hazing

What comes to mind when you think of hazing?

When asked this question, people often cite prominent examples of hazing from popular culture or the media. Many refer to the 1978 movie *Animal House* and associate hazing with specific types of organizations such as fraternities, sororities, and athletic teams. Or they consider hazing to be exceptional and, referring to high profile accounts portrayed in headlines, conclude that hazing is not an issue within their community. We know from research, however, that these depictions don't tell the full story.

In 2008, I led a research team in a national study of student hazing (Allan & Madden, 2008). That investigation included more than 11,000 students at 53 colleges and universities throughout the U.S. We gathered data with an online survey and followed-up with more than 300 in-person interviews of students, staff, and administrators. We found that hazing is widespread on college campuses and in high schools throughout the U.S with 55% of college students experienced hazing and 47% in high school – *and* that it occurs in many different types of organizations including athletic teams, fraternities and sororities, and marching bands, but also in other kinds of groups, like recreation clubs, intramural sports, and even honor societies. Indeed, it can be argued that hazing is a part of the culture and tacitly supported by individuals, groups, and institutions.

- Men (61%) and women (52%) experience hazing on campus. □
- Hazing cuts across racial identities, meaning all students on campus are at risk.
- Hazing occurs across different types of student groups.
- Varsity athletic teams (74%) and fraternities and sororities (73%) haze at the highest rates, but they are far from the only domains on campus where hazing is common. □
- Groups such as club sports (64%), performing arts organizations (56%), service organizations (50%), intramural teams (49%), and recreation clubs (42%), and even students involved in academic clubs (28%) and honor societies engage in hazing behaviors.

The data also indicate that hazing extends far beyond pranks and antics as often assumed – many behaviors are dangerous, demeaning, and abusive. Troublingly, alcohol use, sexual harassment and assault are commonly used in hazing practices on campuses. At least one hazing death each year has been documented since 1970 and this tally does not account for the many hazing deaths labeled “accidental but were associated with hazing activities” (Nuwer, 1990; 2004). Journalism professor Hank Nuwer has kept a chronology of the senseless loss of life due to hazing (see: <http://www.hanknuwer.com/>). And while the physical harm entailed in some hazing is highly visible and problematic, hazing also involves forms of psychological and emotional harm that are not necessarily apparent on the surface and can be exceptionally complex to treat.

It’s vital to remember that hazing is not just defined by a list of behaviors or activities. Focusing solely on a list of behaviors fails to sufficiently address the power dynamics involved. Being familiar with problematic and prohibited behaviors or activities as a means to inform yourself or others is important, but not enough to prevent hazing from happening. For example, it would seem absurd to include consumption of water on a list of prohibited activities, however, if it’s implemented in an abusive way, consuming excessive water can cause grave harm and can be considered hazing. In fact, tragically, several college students have died from water intoxication in hazing incidents.□

Given the severe nature of many hazing activities, the physical, psychological, and emotional harm they can cause, and their prevalence throughout a wide-range of organizations, much more needs to be done to prevent hazing in our colleges and universities. Hazing does not align with institutional missions and can result in tragic outcomes. And from a practical standpoint, hazing can also consume a significant portion of staff time and resources and stretch already thin budgets.

Often, despite a willingness to address the issue of hazing, community members and campus professionals believe hazing occurs in areas shrouded in secrecy and isolation and

they are unsure of how and where to begin addressing the problem. Hazing, however, is not nearly as underground as many might think. Students talk to their friends (48%), other group members (41%), and family members (26%) about participating in hazing (Allan & Madden, 2012; 2008). Twenty-five percent of students surveyed perceived their coach or advisor to be aware of hazing, with some indicating that their coach or advisor was present and participated in the hazing activity. Twenty-five percent of students also report that alumni were present during their hazing experiences and 36% indicate that some hazing behaviors occurred in a public space.

While we often associate hazing with college students, another striking finding from our study was the high percentage of students (47%) who went to college having experienced hazing in high school (Allan & Madden, 2012; 2008). As in college hazing, hazing in high school cuts across a range of groups including athletics, performing arts groups, class hazing, ROTC, and other types of clubs and organizations. And the types of hazing activities involved cover a similar spectrum, highly abusive and physically dangerous as well as seemingly innocuous but degrading and emotionally damaging experiences. These findings suggest the critical importance of early education and intervention to interrupt the onset of patterns of hazing behavior in high school and even middle school but also to ensure that fewer students enter college with the expectation that hazing is an inevitable and acceptable part of group participation.

Taken together, these statistics indicate environments where students are seeing, expecting, and normalizing hazing behavior. Those who wish to speak out against and/or report hazing might lack the skills to do so, be unsure of where to go, or face considerable barriers such as retribution from their peers and becoming an outsider, amongst other negative consequences.

Prevention specialists know the first step to preventing a problem like hazing is to recognize the behavior. Doing so can be especially difficult for hazing because of strong

evidence that a gap exists between students' experiences of hazing and their willingness to label it as such. Of students belonging to clubs, organizations and teams, 55% experience hazing, yet only 5% say they were hazed (Allan & Madden, 2012; 2008). In other words, when asked directly, approximately 9 out of 10 students who experienced hazing do not consider themselves to have been hazed. This disconnect reflects a number of challenges related to hazing, including:

- Students tend to overlook the problematic aspects of hazing if they perceive that the activity had a positive intent or outcome for themselves or the group. □
- Hazing is often normalized as an inherent part of organizational culture that is accepted by the majority as a tradition, initiation, rite of passage, group bonding, or youthful antics, pranks and stunts.
- Individuals may be more likely to recognize hazing if it involves physical harm. □
- Emotional and psychological harm that can result from hazing is often minimized or overlooked entirely. □
- Hazing is commonly perceived as a positive part of group bonding or "tradition," rather than as a form of interpersonal violence.
- There is a lack of clarity around consent and factors that create a coercive environment, including the common perception that if an individual "goes along with" an activity it is not hazing.
- Students are challenged to reconcile the cognitive dissonance between their notions of group participation--e.g., cohesion, unity and belonging and the harm of hazing.

The normalization of hazing and the difficulty many people have with recognizing when such experiences cross the line into hazing combine to make the problem of hazing particularly difficult to address. Hazing is a complex problem that is embedded in campus culture and is extremely resistant to change.

Intersections: hazing and bullying

As a common behavior among students from high school to college, hazing is a school safety issue in its own right. But as noted, hazing is frequently associated with other forms of interpersonal violence such as bullying and sexual assault. The complexities of hazing need to be understood as both distinct and connected with other forms of interpersonal violence.

Both hazing and bullying are forms of interpersonal violence, they both involve a power imbalance, and they can include abusive behaviors that are verbal, physical, and social in nature. The key distinction is that hazing is part of a membership, induction, or intake process. While the behaviors may look similar when they play out in a school or campus, the context and underlying dynamics are what differentiate them. In simple terms: bullying is typically thought of as a means of exclusion – or ostracizing peers whereas hazing is generally for the purpose of inclusion.

In some cases, incidents of hazing can meet the criteria that define bullying (aggression, intent to cause harm, and repetition) and in those cases, we might refer to hazing as bullying (Olweus, 1999). For example, fraternity pledging can involve aggressive behavior like paddling, kidnapping, lock-ups, or line-ups where new members are screamed and cursed at, and these activities occur over a period of weeks culminating in what's often referred to as "hell night" prior to initiation. In that scenario, it seems hazing meets the criteria that commonly define bullying. However, most instances of hazing do not fit squarely within the scope of bullying as defined by these criteria. For example, sometimes hazing can occur as part of a "rookie night" or "initiation night" and sometimes the activities are not explicitly aggressive - for instance, scavenger hunts, skits, and requirements to "get to know" the older members of the group. Yet frequently those activities cross the line into hazing when they include expectations for sexual favors, other forms of personal servitude, or the consumption of alcohol and/or other drugs.

Why is it important to understand the distinctions?

I've worked with many educators who believe that the bullying policy is sufficient to address hazing as well. However, because hazing is more expansive than bullying by definition, and because it is associated with *inclusion*, many hazing incidents may be go unrecognized or be overlooked if a school simply relies on its bullying policy to "cover" hazing. Campus professionals need to be aware of hazing and recognize it can cause physical and emotional harm - and even death.

Intersections: hazing and sexual violence

Just as there are some common dynamics between bullying and hazing, there are also intersections between hazing and sexual violence. Some of the common elements include issues of power, control, and consent. We've heard far too often of locker room assaults with broomsticks and similarly heinous scenarios--hazing and sexual assault can occur simultaneously. Or put differently, acts of sexual violence are among the arsenal of weapons used in hazing. (For more on this topic see my blog post: <http://www.stophazing.org/sayreville-case-yet-another-wake-call-hazing/>).

Prevention

Given the harm and potential harm of hazing, and the extent to which it is normalized or goes unrecognized, what can be done to prevent it? The problem of hazing is not about a few "bad actors" or anomalous groups; hazing is pervasive, exceedingly complex, deep-rooted, and resistant to change. We know there is no simple solution – no "one size fits all" strategy or remedy for any of these problems. Given these challenges, the work of hazing prevention requires systemic thinking and creative solutions that both draw from and expand established frameworks in order to address the specific characteristics of hazing as a form of interpersonal violence.

As a relatively new area of research and practice, hazing prevention builds off of other fields that address prevention of sexual assault, violence, high risk drinking, other substance abuse, among other phenomena, as a public health issue. The public health approach informs a “science of prevention” in which strategies to intervene and prevent behaviors are grounded in theory and research, including rigorous assessment and evaluation. This approach supports efforts to expand understanding and recognition of hazing based on accurate information and analysis. Another foundational principle from the science of prevention is that effective and significant changes are generated by comprehensive prevention efforts that address the issue at multiple levels and through diverse strategies.

A comprehensive approach that involves collective action on multiple levels is needed to create meaningful change. Thanks to dedicated researchers and practitioners, we know a lot more than ever before about what works to advance prevention efforts in many arenas like high-risk drinking and sexual assault. We know it’s essential that prevention be data-driven – grounded in assessment and that it be coalition-based, strategic, and synergistic.

If we want to prevent hazing, we need to analyze the factors that contribute to hazing on multiple levels including: individual, group, campus/school, and community. We further need to examine factors that help to mitigate hazing at all those levels. We need to work collaboratively with diverse stakeholders to amplify factors that protect youth from hazing and at the same time, work to reduce factors that foster environments that are conducive to hazing. For example, at the group level, a contributing factor may be that students are more likely to engage in hazing if they don’t see alternative paths to promote group bonding. Desirable, “cool,” alternatives that meet needs for group bonding and challenge without hazing would serve as a protective factor.

As part of a three-year research-to-practice initiative called the Hazing Prevention Consortium (HPC), my organization, StopHazing, LLC, has collaborated with with eight pioneering universities to develop a framework for comprehensive hazing prevention (<http://www.stophazing.org/hazing-prevention-consortium/>). This framework is grounded in new

data and reflects key components and principles that have emerged from a research base in prevention science. Building on the Strategic Prevention Framework

(<http://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework>), our hazing prevention

framework is based on a progressive, synergistic, and multi-pronged approach that combines:

Assessment: Collection and analysis of data on hazing climate, activities and the groups and organizations involved in order to identify prevention needs, priorities and target audiences.

Capacity: Building knowledge and capacity in hazing prevention among campus stakeholders through formation of hazing prevention coalitions, stakeholder training and ongoing technical assistance on hazing prevention.

Planning: Evidence-based strategic planning for campus hazing prevention strategies using assessment data and coalition engagement to outline campus- specific action plans.

Implementation: Implementation of multiple hazing prevention programs and activities targeted to specific audiences and desired outcomes.

Evaluation: Evaluation of hazing prevention strategies to inform design and improvement and to measure impact.

Cultural Competence: Efforts to ensure that hazing prevention initiatives factor in and are responsive to differentials of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status and other cultural variables that inform the attitudes, beliefs, behaviors and impact of hazing in specific institutional settings.

Sustainability: Generation of financial, staff and programmatic resources to sustain hazing prevention initiatives.

Efforts to prevent hazing that engage and resonate with institutional culture will be most effective. And since contributing factors that feed into hazing vary from one institution to another, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Collection of data to assess campus climate and culture is critical. The culture of an institution can both reinforce and protect against hazing – meaning that some aspects of institutional culture are assets to build upon for prevention, while

others present barriers to achieving a hazing-free campus. For further delineation of this framework for campus hazing prevention, please see: Allan, Payne, and Kerschner's (2016) *Hazing Prevention Brief for College and University Professionals*: <http://www.stophazing.org/we-dont-haze/>

Core Strategies for Hazing Prevention

The Hazing Prevention Consortium promotes a comprehensive approach in which campuses work to formulate prevention strategies that respond to institutional culture, align with institutional mission, and address hazing in numerous ways and through varied modes of intervention. Working with experts to translate what has been learned from the research on prevention of sexual assault, bullying, and substance abuse, we have tested and are continuing to work with the following strategies:

Visible campus leadership anti-hazing statement: Development and widespread dissemination of statements from leadership regarding anti-hazing position and positive institutional values and mission that supports a safe campus climate.

Example: President of the college or university provides public statement to make it clear that hazing is not an acceptable practice and not in alignment with the mission of the institution. The statement is presented as part of new student orientation and included on campus hazing website along with hazing policies and procedures for reporting and enforcement.

Coalition-building: Establishment of a hazing prevention coalition or team with stakeholders from across multiple divisions and levels of the organization (including students), with a mandate to lead institutional efforts in hazing prevention, including oversight of campus climate assessments, stages of planning, design, implementation and evaluation of prevention strategies, and sustainability of prevention efforts.

Example: A campus hazing prevention coalition is established, with members appointed by the institution's President or executive level leadership, with meetings on a monthly basis of entire

group, as well as monthly meetings for subgroups focused on Assessment and Evaluation; Coalition Capacity Building; Policy and Procedures Review; Educational Program Design and Implementation; and Sustainability.

Policy and protocol reviews: Regular review and refinement of institutional policies on hazing and procedures for addressing hazing incidents, with emphasis on widespread dissemination and accessibility, confidential reporting, consistent response protocols, referral systems, professional staff roles and transparency.

Example: *Based on a review of hazing incidents and interviews with Student Conduct staff and a search of other campus resources, campus stakeholders collaborate on revising a hazing policy handbook and website to include a clear definition, statement of policy, resources on prevention, information on reporting, protocols for enforcement, response, and accountability, and a list of staff contacts for referrals and questions.*

Hazing Prevention Trainings: Programs, presentations, and activities to educate and engage stakeholders in building knowledge and awareness of hazing and skills to prevent it.

Example: *A campus with a strong student leadership tradition includes trainings on ethical leadership and hazing for all incoming students, with regular update trainings for students in group leadership positions that emphasize strategies and skills for identifying group values, developing positive group bonding activities, and bystander intervention.*

Social norms messaging: Dissemination of research-based information regarding institutional or campus hazing norms, addressing misperceptions regarding prevalence of values, beliefs and engagement related to hazing, with focus on positive norms that counteract and are alternatives to hazing.

Example: *Based on survey data, a campus stakeholder group that includes students develops a social norms poster campaign reporting on the percentage of students who believe it is not cool to use coercion or abusive behavior to initiate new members, with posters placed in residence halls, on computer screens, in cafeteria table settings, and on*

bookstore bookmarks, and complementary discussions and/or workshops run jointly by staff and student leaders about positive group norms.

Bystander Intervention: Education, training programs and social norms messaging supporting students, staff, parents, and others to develop skills to intervene as bystanders to prevent hazing.

Example: *As part of student organization and athletic team orientation activities, student leaders are trained to facilitate discussion on the **five stages of bystander intervention**—*

- 1) Notice behavior;*
- 2) Interpret behavior as a problem;*
- 3) Recognize one's responsibility to intervene;*
- 4) Develop skills needed to intervene safely; and*
- 5) Take action – and engage group members in role-play exercises and follow-up discussions about their roles as bystanders (Berkowitz, 2009).*

For a more in-depth discussion of bystander intervention applied to hazing, please see Allan, Payne, and Kerschner's (2016) *Hazing Prevention Brief for General Audiences:*

<http://www.stophazing.org/we-dont-haze/>

Communication to broader campus community: Development and dissemination of information on hazing and hazing prevention efforts to stakeholders outside of immediate institution, including online resources, newsletters, trainings and other programs targeted to alumni, family and parents, and other people and organizations in local community.

Example: *Drawing upon available campus resources and data, student affairs staff and senior administrators host and circulate a bi-monthly online newsletter to parents regarding hazing and hazing prevention activities, including the definition of hazing, explanation of hazing policies and reporting procedures, information on how to be a parent bystander, and ways to be involved in campus prevention efforts.*

What is needed to propel hazing prevention forward?

Over the course of three years, we have worked with members of the Hazing Prevention Consortium (HPC) to implement and evaluate these and other strategies for hazing prevention. In doing so, we have begun to identify promising practices in each of the domains referred to earlier (assessment, capacity, planning, implementation, evaluation, cultural competence, and sustainability). Although the HPC design was informed by evidence about prevention in other fields, we launched this process with a goal to begin building an evidence base for hazing prevention. For while many have worked diligently to develop hazing prevention activities, resources are needed to provide enhanced focus on rigorous evaluation of those activities. Carefully designed and methodically implemented evaluation is critical to measure whether and how hazing prevention strategies are actually working. Without evaluation, we have no way of knowing whether certain strategies have an impact in changing social norms related to hazing and the beliefs, values and actual behaviors of youth. Just as it is essential that the emergent field of hazing prevention be informed by a solid base of research and assessment to inform our understanding of the problem of hazing, in our efforts to advance new and innovative strategies for hazing prevention, it is incumbent on us to carry out scientifically grounded evaluation of those strategies so that we know what is working and what isn't working.

These principles and goals have been the cornerstones of our work on the HPC and have guided us to place particular emphasis on supporting our collaborators to integrate evaluation into the development of new strategies for hazing prevention. As our initial three year project draws to a close, we have collected a considerable amount of data regarding promising practices to inform a comprehensive and effective approach to hazing prevention. In the coming year, we will be mining this research to formulate and put forth a preliminary framework for hazing prevention. While we began with hunches from prevention science about what might work best for hazing, we are now in a much better position to assist educational institutions with implementing comprehensive hazing prevention. Having said that, one of the biggest lessons

we've learned through the HPC is that comprehensive hazing prevention, and especially its evaluation, is a long term process. So we speak of "promising" approaches to prevention because we know that our work to build an evidence base is an emergent process that will continue to evolve as we collaborate with a growing cadre of colleges and universities, other organizations, fellow researchers, and committed stakeholders, legislators, advocates, parents, and others who are all part of the solution.

In other words, while we've made considerable strides to propel hazing prevention forward, there is a tremendous amount of work that remains to be done. As we consider hazing prevention in light of campus safety and in relation to sexual assault, bullying, cyberbullying, and other forms of interpersonal violence, I will close by pointing to several areas in which there are needs for governmental support and engagement as we strive to formulate effective approaches to hazing prevention as one among many areas of interpersonal violence prevention.

- **Research.** New and continued research to inform prevention, with the following being but a few sample topics:
 - A follow-up national study of hazing in postsecondary settings to compare with 2008 (Allan & Madden, 2012; 2008) data and measure change over time as well as other variables
 - Extent and type of hazing occurring in middle and high school settings
 - Variations in extent and type of hazing across cultural groups
 - Intersections of hazing and sexual violence on campus
 - Hazing social norms, with focus on misperceived norms relative to actual beliefs and behaviors
 - Efficacy of bystander intervention for hazing
 - Ethical leadership approaches to hazing prevention
 - Social and psychological motivations for hazing
 - Desirable and proven alternatives to hazing for promoting group cohesion

- Social, academic, and personal costs of hazing for students, families, and schools
- Effective strategies for working with victims and perpetrators of hazing, with focus on ways to implement effective support/healing and sanctions (respectively).
- Costs and benefits of transparent institutional approaches to hazing (e.g., inclusion of information on hazing incidents, investigations, sanctions, etc. in annual reports, institutional websites, and websites associated with involved students organizations)
- **Evaluation.** Continued testing and evaluation of hazing prevention strategies at both secondary and higher education institutions, including broad dissemination of findings.
- **Funding.** Provision of state and federal financial resources targeted to support the research and practice of hazing prevention in educational settings. Note that while there is interest in hazing at the federal level under the umbrella of school safety, in the Department of Education and to some extent in the CDC, at this time there is little dedicated funding for hazing prevention at the state or federal level (one exception being Florida which is the first state to mandate use of an online hazing prevention curriculum for first year students in state universities).
- **Policy.** Engagement by state and federal agencies to collaborate with hazing prevention specialists to establish policies and procedures for protecting students from hazing and addressing incidents of hazing when they occur.
- **Transparency.** Mandates for colleges and universities to make hazing reports public by posting on a website and including the consequences for organizations found responsible for hazing. Cornell University has been on the cutting edge of this practice and numerous other universities are following their lead (Cornell University:

<https://hazing.cornell.edu>, Lehigh University: <http://studentaffairs.lehigh.edu/hazing-prevention>, University of Arizona: <https://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/safecats/hazing>)

- **Laws.** Increased state and federal attention to the legal and criminal issue of hazing on its own and in relation to sexual assault/bullying, including continued work to promote anti-hazing laws in all states and investigation of the legal and criminal dimensions relative to hazing incidents and investigations.
- **Spectrum of Interpersonal Violence.** Support from state and federal agencies to develop prevention frameworks that address distinctions and intersections among varied campus safety issues so that resources can be shared and to avoid siloed approach to behaviors that are typically interrelated.
- **Training.** State and federal promotion of education and training on hazing and hazing prevention. Campus focus on trainings that build skills for bystander intervention to prevent hazing as well as ethical leadership development appear to be promising approaches.
- **Coordination.** Financial support and networking structures to help coordinate hazing prevention activities within regional and national professional associations related to higher education and student affairs.
- **Dissemination.** Financial support for outreach within campus and broader community to educate about hazing, the warning signs of hazing, and where to report it. Regional and national conferences and meetings to bring together scholars, practitioners, educators, families, legislators, and other stakeholders to advance the cause of hazing prevention.

Summary

While the previous bullet points are not an exhaustive list by any means, I believe they provide a platform for continuing to move forward in achieving the vision of eliminating hazing

from our educational institutions and promoting greater campus safety. This vision requires a cultural shift that moves beyond intervention and toward shaping communities where healthy group bonding and traditions are the norm and where civility, honor, respect, and nonviolence are cornerstones of student decision-making, participation, and leadership as members of teams, clubs, organizations, and other groups.

In closing, we must work together to ensure that hazing is no longer overlooked, minimized, or “swept under the rug.” The time is now to ensure hazing is foregrounded as a threat to campus safety and a threat to positive leadership development in our youth. The time is now to prevent further senseless tragedies and loss of human potential that can result from hazing; the time is now to recognize that our educational institutions will be stronger and safer without hazing. We all have an opportunity and responsibility to make a difference by committing to hazing prevention and promoting safe schools and campuses for the youth of this nation. Thank you.

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