Best Practices for Hazing Prevention
A Framework for Building your Plan and Implementing Strategies

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Your Presenter

POSITIONS:
➢ CEO & Executive Director
   HazingPrevention.Org (2013-present)

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PUBLICATIONS:
➢ Managing Editor: Coach’s Guide to Hazing Prevention
   ©Sept 2019 HazingPrevention.Org

➢ Contributor: Hazing Prevention: It’s Everyone’s
   Responsibility: College 101, High School 101, Athletics
   Module/Bundle suite of online courses
   ©2014-2019 Prevent.Zone

➢ Consultant: Detecting Team Potential for Athlete Hazing
   ©2016, Exact Sports (NCAA funded grant)
The Framework

- Defining Hazing
- Understanding Harm of Hazing and Why Groups and Teams Haze
- Building your Plan
  - Student Ownership
  - Education
  - Implementation and Timeline
  - Measurement of Effectiveness
  - Delivery Model to Internal and External Constituents
- Implementing Your Hazing Prevention Strategies
  - Leadership & Culture Change
  - Policy
  - Positive Team-Building
  - Education
  - Reporting Options
  - Enforcement
  - Support for Those Who Are Hazed
  - Transparency Regarding Violations
- Resources You Can Use
Defining Hazing

- Why do we need to define hazing?
- What impacts your definition?
- What are your school or district policies?
- What are your local & state (and/or federal) laws?
Aspects of a Strong Definition

- Hazing is non-accidental
- Teams or groups can haze current members as well as potential or new members
- There is an induction/Initiation aspect- conditions of membership can be explicit or implicit depending on the situation
- Hazing can be physical, psychological or both
- Psychological hazing can involve humiliation, which sometimes can be subtle.
Aspects of a Strong Definition (2)

- Requiring alcohol consumption as a condition of joining a team or maintaining membership is hazing because it can cause mental distress, it’s illegal to provide alcohol to minors and illegal for them to consume, and can cause emotional and physical harm.

- Normal athletic conditioning reasonably imposed and supervised by a coach during a team’s practice is not hazing.

- Activities that are relevant but excessive can be considered hazing.

- An activity can be hazing regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.

- It is not a valid defense for a perpetrator of hazing to say, “No one was forced to do it.”
DEFINITION

Hazing is any action taken or any situation created intentionally that causes embarrassment, harassment or ridicule and risks emotional and/or physical harm to members of a group or team, whether new or not, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.
HazingPrevention.Org Sports-Specific Definition

Hazing is an activity expected as a condition of joining or maintaining membership in a team, that is likely to risk or cause:

1. mental distress or harm (e.g., humiliation or intimidation)
2. physical distress or harm (e.g., pain, injury, or illness)

that does not contribute to the athlete’s positive development, is not relevant to athletic training, performance, or evaluation, or is relevant but excessive, regardless of the person’s willingness to participate.
Understanding Harm of Hazing: Why Groups and Teams Haze

It's important to understand WHY people haze, and to break down some of the excuses people use to justify it.

**Individual**

- Lack of understanding of the dangers
- Motivations to haze (e.g., desire to do to others what was done to them, fun having power over others)

**Team**

- Hierarchical team culture with a power differential between new and veteran members coupled with perceptions that new members may pose threats (e.g., playing time, starting positions)
- Unmet needs for bonding and team cohesion
- Poor leadership (e.g., captains implicitly or explicitly support hazing) coupled with conformity and obedience to authority
- Cycle of abuse (i.e., those who are hazed become the next hazers)
Why Groups and Teams Haze

- **Institution** (including department and school)
  - Lack of an anti-hazing policy
  - Failure to conduct hazing prevention education
  - Inadequate systems for detecting/reporting hazing
  - Insufficient consequences for hazing resulting in low deterrence
  - Lack of training and education on hazing for students, administrators, and coaches
  - Limited support for positive team-building
Why Groups and Teams Haze

- **Community** (including parents, alumni, and boosters)
  - Reluctance to report suspected hazing for fear their child won’t plan
  - Alumni who support or participate in hazing

- **Society**
  - Tolerance for hazing in other settings (e.g., professional sports)
  - Laws that do not consider mental forms of hazing to be crimes
Building Your Plan

Elements of a Good Plan Include:

- Student Ownership
- Education
- Implementation and Timeline
- Measurement of Effectiveness
- Delivery Model to Internal and External Constituents
Student Ownership

- The plan must have student input and ownership.
- Students must know that their input was a priority in shaping the program
Education

- Education should be the center piece of the plan.
- Keeping all members of the school community apprised and educated about hazing is critical.
- The plan must have the necessary components to ensure a sense of responsibility and accountability.
Implementation and Timeline

- The plan compels a disciplined approach to developing and implementing each recommendation.
- Incorporate a realistic timeline. Change takes time.
Measurement of Effectiveness

- Documenting the outcomes of each area is essential in measuring the success and effectiveness of the plan.
Implementing Your Hazing Prevention Strategies

- Leadership and Culture Change
- Policy
- Positive Team Building
- Education
- Reporting Options
- Enforcement
- Support for Those Who are Hazed
- Transparency Regarding Violations
Leadership and Culture Change

- Set high expectations
- Speak openly and proactively about hazing
- Cultivate anti-hazing leaders
- Review your team’s division of labor
- Engage your colleagues
Policy

- Review your school’s policy statement for consistency
- Document receipt of your anti-hazing policies
- Establish team rules for home and away games

SAMPLE Athletic Code of Conduct
“All [SCHOOL] student-athletes shall demonstrate respect for their teammates, other student-athletes and the [SCHOOL] student community in general. Hazing or harassment of any kind will be grounds for possible dismissal from your team and may lead to more serious charges from your school. Our ethical standards include respect for another’s personal health; an acknowledgement of their particular strengths and weaknesses; an appreciation of their value in terms of personal integrity; a respect for their possible differing points-of-view; and, the overall goal for all concerned to reach the highest degree of personal, academic, and athletic excellence.”
Positive Team-Building

- Review all current team activities and traditions for potential hazing
- Ask team leaders to generate their own lists of informal traditions or activities
- Review and revise as appropriate
- Ask the group to come up with new traditions they can own and pass down
Education

Educate everyone involved, early and often!

- Captains
- Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) members
- All student-athletes
- Coaches
- Administrators & support staff
- Athletic trainers
- Sports medicine staff
- Facilities staff
- Academic/faculty team advisors
- Parents
- Alumni
- Donors and Boosters
- Bus Drivers!
Education

Topics to include:

- Definition of hazing
- Power dynamics
- Potential sanctions
- Range of risks
- Risks to mental health
- Alcohol-related risks
- Hazing and sexual abuse
- Gender dynamics
- Bystander action
- Misperceived norms
Reporting Options

- Communicate an OPEN DOOR policy
- Provide each team member and their parents/guardians with information on how they can report hazing
- Be clear that retaliation of any kind will not be tolerated if someone reports.
- Post your reporting policies in public places and in team handbooks
Enforcement

- A policy is only as effective as it is enforced.
- Apply firm and consistent sanctions - the star quarterback should be subject to the same rules as ultimate frisbee members.
- Be transparent with your procedures and your outcomes
Support for Those Who are Hazed

- Why is this important?
  - Victim support
  - Cycle of abuse

- Offer resources
- Protect the person who reported from retaliation
Transparency Regarding Violations

- Check with school policy to determine how to communicate the facts of the incident
- Disseminate the reports released by the school
- Communicate with parents
Resources You Can Use

Visit: HazingPrevention.org/store
Questions?

Keep in touch!

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