

Tips for Parents to Help Their Children Understand Bullying and Hazing

Facts about Hazing

Hazing is a ritualistic test and a task involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a gang, club, military organization or other groups. This can include physical (sometimes violent) or mental (possibly degrading) practices.

It may seem like a rite of passage so you can be accepted into what you think is a cool group at school, but the practices are humiliating and often dangerous. It can even be slandering and if posted on the Internet, it will be there forever.

With recent reports of school hazing, mean girls, and sexual innuendos, it's time to look at what your kids are doing at school and what they think is the cool thing to do.

- 1.5 million high school students are hazed each year.
- 10% of all college students admit to having been hazed in high school.
- 91% of all high school students belong to at least one group; nearly half of them, 48%, report being subjected to hazing activities.
- 43% were subjected to humiliating activities and 30% performed potentially illegal acts as part of their initiation.
- 79% of the National Collegiate Athletics Association athletes report being hazed initially in high school.
- 92% of the high school students will not report a hazing.
- 48% of the students acknowledge participating in activities which are defined as hazing, 29% did potentially illegal things to join a group, however only 14% admit to being hazed.
- 46% believe that the most important thing is to keep the code of silence.

How to Help Your Kids

- Teach your kids that they have every right to feel safe and that no one has the right to hurt them in any manner.
- If you behave in loving, moral and ethical ways, so will your kids.
- Communicate with your children. If they are in any danger or at risk of injustice, talk to them about doing the right thing and the consequences.
- Have age-appropriate discussions with your children regarding the dangers of hazing.

- Discuss legal and ethical consequences to your kids if they are involved in hazing groups.
- Know where your kids are and who they're with. Are they being supervised by an adult? Make sure your kids know where to reach you and you should know where to reach them.
- Let your children know that no matter what trouble they might be in, that they can always call you in a crisis or emergency and that you will not judge them.

Adapted from <https://www.stompoutbullying.org/get-help/parents-page/tip-sheet-help-your-kids-understand-hazing>