

RECOGNIZE IT.

ELEMENTS OF HAZING

1. Hazing is based on power and control

Every incident of hazing has a common foundation and that is the fact that hazing is a product of a positional power relationship. For hazing to occur, one person must perceive themselves to be in a position of power and choose to exert control over another. Even if a person does not recognize it, they could be in a position of power simply due to their position or status within an organization or team. For example, an upper-class member of an organization has power over a new member because the new member perceives them to have power. Power may be in the form of greater knowledge about the organization or a reputation within the organization. Regardless of how the power is attained, the power-control dynamic will exist in every hazing account.

2. Hazing is progressive

Incidents of hazing rarely start off as reported in the headlines. To get a new member or rookie to submit to hazing activities, the events must start as subtle hazing and progress over time to more egregious hazing. Hazing occurs in a continuum from subtle to violent. This is not to say that all hazing organizations will progress to violent hazing. The hazing activity may stop any place along the continuum. The goal is to be able to recognize and report subtle hazing so that it does not progress further.

3. Hazing activities are often covert

In hazing incidents, rarely is the whole team or organization involved in the hazing of the new members. Most often a small group of students will engage in hazing activities without the knowledge of the rest of the group. Hazing events will often be conducted in private apartments or off campus away from public scrutiny.

4. Hazing is cyclical

People who experience hazing often repeat the abuse and haze others. This cycle is consistent with the domestic abuse cycle. Hazers often use the excuse or rationale that, since they were hazed, new members must be hazed to belong also.

If you take the time to learn the signs of hazing, you can play a big role in stopping it before it escalates to a dangerous level. Please review the [Types of Hazing page](#) on this site to learn how to recognize early hazing activities and signs. All types of hazing must be reported to bring an end to this practice in our community.