

# HAZING PREVENTION FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

## A GUIDED APPROACH USING BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

Bystander intervention is recognizing a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could positively influence the outcome.

The Longhorn Wellness Center's BeVOCAL program is a university-wide initiative that promotes harm reduction and enhances individuals' confidence to intervene.

The BeVOCAL model includes three steps::

### STEP 1: RECOGNIZE HARM

In the BeVOCAL model, harm is recognized as anything that creates a negative physical, mental, emotional, or social impact on an individual or group. Being knowledgeable on the prevalence of hazing and recognizing the signs of harm is the first step of intervention.

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. Hazing involves a spectrum of behaviors which can be intimidating, harassing, or violent. The physical and violent hazing behaviors are typically the most recognized, while the least recognized and most common hazing behaviors are in intimidation and harassment. All hazing causes harm.

According to the [StopHazing.org](https://www.stophazing.org), 55% of college students involved in clubs, teams, and organizations experience hazing, while 47% of students experience hazing before coming to college.

#### Signs Someone May Have Or Be Experiencing Hazing (StopHazing.org):

- Chronic fatigue
- Unusual photos posted on social media
- Disrupted patterns of behavior or communication
- Symptoms of depression
- Concerns expressed from others
- Referring to hazing as traditions or initiations

According to the 2022 UT Austin Hazing Prevention Consortium Survey, 18.8% of students surveyed reported experiencing behaviors that meet the definition of hazing.

#### Most Frequently Experienced Hazing Behaviors at UT Austin (2022 survey):

- Associate with specific people and not others
- Act as a personal servant to another member
- Drinking games
- Singing or chanting in public, but not related to an event, game, or practice
- Sleep deprivation

Learn more about what constitutes hazing and support resources available at UT Austin on [hazing.utexas.edu](https://hazing.utexas.edu).

## STEP 2: CHOOSE TO RESPOND

Choosing to respond is a balance between recognizing harm and overcoming barriers we all experience. BeVOCAL encourages reflecting on personal motivations for responding, which empower us all to assume personal and collective responsibility. Being attentive toward your emotional state, communication, and messaging will help how your approach is received.

[StopHazing.org](https://stophazing.org) suggests taking these approaches BEFORE talking with your student about hazing:

- Be honest with how you feel about your student and hazing
- Reflect on anything you might have said to your student about social status and belonging
- Expect your student will listen to you
- Consider what your student needs to feel comfortable in the conversation
- Listen to your student
- Normalize their need to belong
- Know the facts about hazing

## STEP 3: TAKE ACTION

Talking with your student about hazing is taking action. Conversation starters and strategies are included below, but you know your student best. Tailor your conversations to your student.

StopHazing.org encourages thinking and strategizing with your student to equip them with the tools to navigate situations when hazing may be involved. It's important to talk with your student about assessing risks in organizations, following their "gut instincts" when an environment feels negative or harmful, and seeking help and support from you as well as campus resources.

These are helpful conversation starters when your student expresses interest in an organization:

- What is the time commitment expected from this organization?
- How are new members treated versus the active members?
- Does this organization have a history of hazing? Hazing violating for the past three years can be found here: [hazing.utexas.edu/hazing-violations](https://hazing.utexas.edu/hazing-violations)
- Is there a faculty/alumni/chapter advisor and can you contact them if you needed to?
- What type of activities will you be involved in?
- How will this affect your academic and personal commitments?

### OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS

100 W Dean Keeton St, A5800  
Austin, TX 78712  
512.471.5017

## MORE ACTION YOU CAN TAKE:

- Anyone can [report hazing](#), and make sure your student knows how to report as well.
- Call BCAL (Behavior Concerns Advice Line) to have university staff check on or intervene for any UT person you're worried about.
- Encourage your student to talk to available campus resources:

[Counseling and Mental Health Center](#)

[Student Ombuds](#)

[Student Emergency Services](#)

- Hazing is a crime, and you can report it to the UT Austin Police Department:

Emergency: 911

UTPD Non-Emergent Line:  
512.471.4441