



## LET'S TALK CONSENT

## COERCION

Hazing can happen **REGARDLESS** of an individual's willingness to participate. Merely giving consent doesn't mean it isn't hazing and absolutely doesn't erase the power differential that typically exists. If there is a power differential (as there is in almost all hazing situations) true consent cannot be given.

*The power of peer pressure coupled with a student's strong desire to belong to a group can create a coercive environment – and coercion limits free consent. Thus, while it may seem as though a person went along with an activity “willingly,” appearances can be deceiving when students perceive the activity as a “tradition” or “bonding” event connected to their ability to gain membership or maintain social standing in the group.* from “We Don't Haze” Allan, Payne, and Kerschner

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## MYTH VS. REALITY

**Myth:** If someone agrees to participate in the activity, it can't be considered hazing.

**Reality:** A common misconception about hazing is consent. As with all crimes, consent is not a valid defense. Hazing is about intention. Consent typically comes through peer pressure, threats, or intentional omission of details of the proposed event.

**Myth:** Everyone participated voluntarily, so it can't be considered hazing.

**Reality:** The willingness to participate has nothing to do with whether or not hazing took place. It is the creation of an unhealthy environment or climate that is void of dignity and respect for everyone that is the determining factor. Peer pressure can coerce participation.