

Managing the Risks Hazing and Bullying Prevention

Ysleta Independent School District
Athletics

Hazing Prevention

OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Become familiar with the definition of hazing
- ▶ Understand the implications of hazing as they relate to Ysleta ISD policies and Texas state law
- ▶ Understand some of the psychological and social factors that create and perpetuate hazing
- ▶ Expose common myths about hazing
- ▶ Gain tools to create change in your organization

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FACTS

- ▶ 74% of varsity athletes reported being hazed.
- ▶ 73% of fraternity/sorority members reported being hazed.
- ▶ 64% of club sports members reported being hazed.
- ▶ 56% of performing arts members reported being hazed.
- ▶ 28% of academic organization members reported being hazed.
- ▶ 20% of honor society members reported being hazed.
- ▶ 25% of students believed an advisor or coach knew of hazing
- ▶ 47% of students arrive at college having experienced at least one hazing incident

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POLICY

- ▶ Ysleta ISD has a ZERO TOLERANCE Policy on Hazing.
- ▶ The District neither tolerates excuses nor does it acknowledge different levels of hazing, i.e. “it was just a little hazing.”
- ▶ In an effort to encourage the reporting of hazing incidents, the law grants immunity from civil or criminal liability to any person who reports a specific hazing event and immunizes that person from participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from that report.

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- ▶ Texas State law & District Policy & Rules and Regulations
- ▶ Texas Education Code, Section 51.936 and Section 37.151 et seq.

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PENALTY

- ▶ Criminal penalties for failure to report include a fine of up to \$2,000, up to 180 days in jail, or both.
- ▶ Penalties for other hazing offenses vary according to the severity of the injury, and range from \$500 to \$10,000 in fines and up to two years confinement.

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PENALTY

- ▶ Criminal charges and District sanctions may be applied to both the individual and the student organization for hazing offenses.

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SECTION 1:

- ▶ What is hazing?

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HAZING DEFINED

- ▶ **Hazing** is defined as any intentional, knowing, or reckless act occurring **on or off campus** of an educational institution, by one person alone or acting with others, directed against a student, that **endangers the mental or physical health or safety** of a student for the purpose of pledging, being **initiated into**, **affiliating with**, **holding office in**, or **maintaining membership** in any organization whose members are or include students at an educational institution.

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SECTION 2:

► EXAMPLES OF HAZING BEHAVIOR

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“SUBTLE HAZING”

- ▶ Requiring new members to perform duties not assigned to other members
- ▶ Calisthenics such as sit-ups or push-ups, or any form of physical exercise
- ▶ Sleep deprivation
- ▶ Confinement in a small space

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“HARASSMENT HAZING”

- ▶ Any form of interrogation
- ▶ Yelling or screaming
- ▶ Personal servitude or chores
- ▶ Lineups for the purpose of interrogating, demeaning, or intimidating
- ▶ Wearing of embarrassing or uncomfortable clothing
- ▶ Assigning pranks such as stealing, painting objects, or harassing other organizations

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“VIOLENT HAZING”

- ▶ Capturing or kidnapping
- ▶ Pushing, shoving, tackling, or any other physical contact
- ▶ Forced consumption of any liquid or food
- ▶ Paddling or whipping swats

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SECTION 3:

WHAT ARE THE STATE LAWS AND DISTRICT POLICIES THAT ADDRESS HAZING?

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BUT WHAT ABOUT CONSENT?

Texas Law

- ▶ Sec. 37.154 states that Consent is Not a Defense: “It is not a defense to prosecution for the offense under this subchapter that the person against whom the hazing was directed consented to or acquiesced in the hazing activity.”

District Policy

- ▶ “The fact that a person consented to or acquiesced in a hazing activity is not a defense to prosecution for hazing under the law.”

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SECTION 5:

WHY DO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS HAZE?

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WHY DOES HAZING HAPPEN?

(THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE)

Psychological Factors:

- ▶ Shared Coping
- ▶ Misperceived Norms
- ▶ Sociopathy

Social Factors:

- ▶ Groupthink
- ▶ Rites of Passage
- ▶ Cycles of Abuse

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PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

- ▶ Shared Coping
- ▶ Misperceived Norms
- ▶ Sociopathy

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SOCIAL FACTORS

- ▶ Groupthink
- ▶ Rites of Passage
- ▶ Cycles of Abuse

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SECTION 6:

COMMON MYTHS

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DEBUNKING THE MYTHS

Myth: “If someone agrees to participate in the activity, it is not considered hazing.”

Fact: In the state of Texas, hazing, even with consent, is against the law!

Myth: “Eliminating hazing makes an organization just like any other social club. It will be too easy to become a member.”

Fact: Any group can haze new members - that’s the easy way out. It takes vision and commitment to run a good, non-hazing program.

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DEBUNKING THE MYTHS

Myth: “A little hazing should be okay, as long as there’s no mean-spirited or injurious intent.”

Fact: Regardless of intent, some group bonding activities designed to be “all in good fun” still may raise some serious safety concerns.

Myth: “If it doesn’t kill you, it only makes you stronger.”

Fact: If this statement was true, then child abuse and torture would be prescriptions for personal growth.

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SECTION 7:

WHAT YOU AND YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN DO

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CHALLENGING THE CULTURE OF HAZING

What can YOU do?

- ▶ Recognize the existence of hazing
- ▶ Interpret the practices as a problem
- ▶ Believe that you have a responsibility to do something
- ▶ Know what to do
- ▶ Acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to act
- ▶ Overcome fear of potential negative consequences
- ▶ Take action

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1. RECOGNIZE THE EXISTENCE OF HAZING

- ▶ You must be able to name the problem to begin to change it.
- ▶ Educate yourself on the common indications of hazing.
 - Excessive fatigue
 - Appearing disheveled
 - Wearing odd clothing
 - Avoidance of questions about initiation

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DETERMINE IF ANY ACTIVITY MIGHT BE HAZING

Ask yourself the following questions:

- ▶ Is this activity an educational experience?
- ▶ Does this activity promote and conform to the ideals and values of the organization?
- ▶ Will this activity increase feelings of friendship between new and initiated members of the organization?
- ▶ Is it an activity that new and initiated members participate in together?
- ▶ Would you be willing to allow parents to witness this activity in a court of law?
- ▶ Does the activity meet both the spirit and letter of the standards prohibiting hazing?

If you answer “no” to any of these questions, it is probably hazing!

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2. INTERPRET THE PRACTICES AS A PROBLEM

- ▶ Something that may seem silly or stupid to you, may actually be harmful and illegal as it relates to the Hazing policies of the District and Texas state law.
- ▶ Remember, if you are aware of hazing practices and do not report, you can be held accountable under the law.

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INTERPRET THE PRACTICES AS A PROBLEM

If you find yourself thinking . . .

- ▶ “But we don’t intend to hurt anybody”
- ▶ “But we don’t force them to drink”
- ▶ “But it’s all in good fun”
- ▶ We’ve been doing this for years”
- ▶ “But they wanted to do it”
- ▶ “We make sure that nobody gets hurt”
- ▶ “It’s just bonding”
- ▶ “Everybody does it”

Then you may be disguising a hazing incident in your organization

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3. BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO DO SOMETHING

- ▶ Empower yourself and your organization members to tell someone if they believe hazing is occurring.
- ▶ Educate about the consequences that surround any involvement in hazing activities. Is it worth it for your organization's reputation to continue hazing?

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REPORTING OBLIGATION

Must report:

- ▶ If you believe you have been subjected to hazing
- ▶ If you have knowledge of hazing activities

NOTE: No person is required to report hazing to the alleged offender.

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4. KNOW WHAT TO DO

If you are being hazed:

- ▶ Stay connected with friends outside of the group.
- ▶ Talk with others about what you are going through.
- ▶ Seek guidance from your parents/guardian or other family member.
- ▶ Refuse to participate.
- ▶ Leave the group.
- ▶ Report hazing to campus authorities.

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KNOW WHAT TO DO

If a friend is being hazed:

- ▶ Tell the person that you are concerned
- ▶ Ask your friend what he or she has had to do as part of joining the group.
- ▶ If you suspect that your friend is being hazed but he or she won't say so, ask if there are things going on that he or she isn't supposed to talk about. If that is the case, it's very likely that the person is being hazed.
- ▶ Let your friend know that it's okay to withdraw from a organization at any point.
- ▶ Offer your support.
- ▶ Let your friend know what resources are available.

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KNOW WHAT TO DO

If your organization hazes:

- ▶ Raise your concern with other members that you trust.
- ▶ Frame your argument at multiple levels.
- ▶ Offer ideas for alternatives to hazing.
- ▶ Give examples of groups that have developed strong, non-hazing new member programs.

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5. ACQUIRE THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO ACT

Rehearse your plan of action

- ▶ Addressing hazing behavior and taking action may be tough
- ▶ Don't go it alone
 - Remember the resources you learn here so you can be prepared to take action

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6. OVERCOME FEAR OF POTENTIAL NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES

- ▶ Don't let your fears get in the way. You will be supported by many who are unable to speak up themselves.
- ▶ Know that it does take guts to be the one to address the issue of hazing in your organization.

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TAKE ACTION

If you become aware of or were subjected to hazing, please report the incident to the School or District Administration.

- ▶ **Athletic Office: 915-434-0630**
- ▶ **Department of Pupil and Parent Services: 915-434-0743**

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POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

Individual Discipline

The School or District Administration may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of violating the hazing prohibition policy.

Organizational Discipline

The School or District Administration may also initiate disciplinary proceedings against an organization accused of violating the hazing prohibition policy.

Criminal and Civil Liability

Through the criminal process, the District Attorney's office can investigate and press charges against the organization and the individual(s). Through the civil process, individuals can be sued as an organization and as an individual.

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SECTION 8:

CHANGING THE CULTURE

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CHANGING THE CULTURE

- ▶ Foster Unity
- ▶ Develop Problem - Solving Abilities
- ▶ Develop Leadership Skills
- ▶ Instill a Sense of Membership

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CHANGING THE CULTURE

- ▶ Promote Academic Excellence
- ▶ Appreciate Your Organization's History
- ▶ Offer Educational Opportunities
- ▶ Build On-campus and Community Relationships

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PLANNING TO ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES: THINGS TO CONSIDER

- ▶ What are you trying to accomplish with this activity?
- ▶ What kind of organization are you trying to build?
- ▶ Examine why only new members are engaged in an activity.
- ▶ Re-work old “traditions” to accomplish your goals and being line with the values and mission of your organization.

Engage in effective planning for recruitment selection, new member education, and organizational events.

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SECTION 9:

SUMMARY AND RESOURCES

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SUMMARY

- ▶ Hazing can occur both on or off campus, by one or many, and endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student.
- ▶ Hazing is a societal problem; it occurs in all types of organizations.
- ▶ Hazing can be subtle, harassing, or violent in nature.
- ▶ If you suspect hazing, you have a responsibility to report.
- ▶ You can report hazing by contact your School or District Administration.

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SUMMARY

- ▶ Even if a member of your organization wanted to be hazed and gave consent to an activity, it is not a defense under Texas state law.
- ▶ The consequences to hazing can result in individual discipline, organization discipline, civil lawsuits, and criminal charges.
- ▶ There are many ways to address hazing in your organization. We recommend that you look at the following for potential hazing behavior and change any that fall into the hazing category:
 - Evaluate your current practices and activities; and
 - Evaluate your membership.

Resource Page

- ▶ University of Texas at Dallas

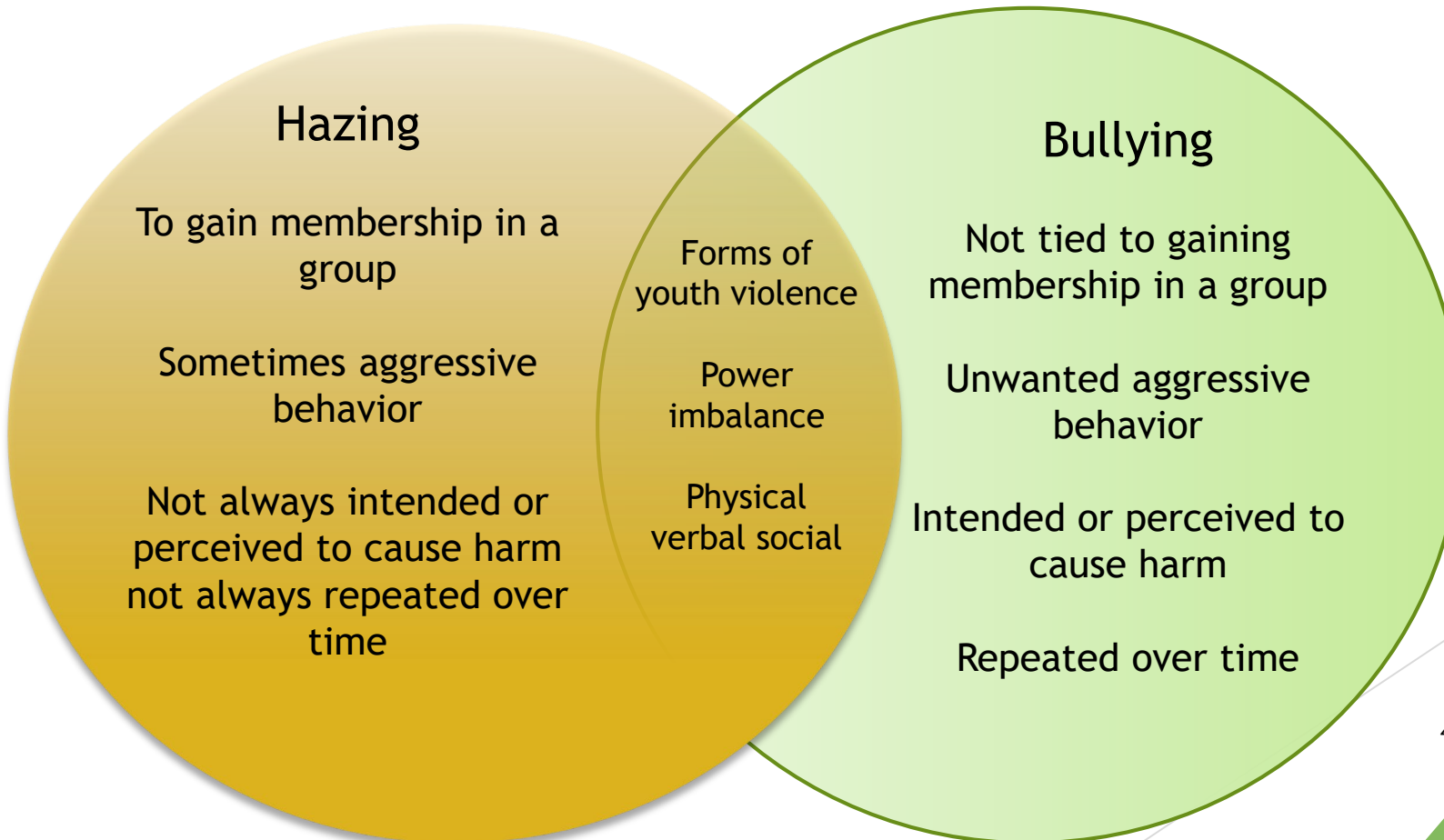
Title IX Protections from Bullying and Harassment in School

- ▶ Title IX is a federal law that prohibits discrimination - including harassment and bullying
- ▶ Harassment can take many forms, like name calling, cat calling, whistling, inappropriate comments, images and graphics, written statements, or other actions that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating
- ▶ Harassment can include the use of cell phones or the internet (cyberbullying)

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HAZING VS BULLYING

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAZING AND BULLYING?



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HAZING VS BULLYING

- ▶ The DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAZING AND BULLYING is subtle, which is why they're often used interchangeably. The same power dynamics are involved. The same intimidation tactics are used. The same second-class citizenship issues arise. The only real difference between hazing and bullying is that bullying usually involves singling out an individual at any time and bullying them as a means to exclude them. Hazing, on the other hand, involves including people by having them “earn” their way into a group or onto a team.
- ▶ Bullying is about *exclusion*. Hazing is about *inclusion*.

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HAZING VS BULLYING

► WHAT IS BULLYING?

Repeated actions or threats of action directed toward a person by one or more people who have (or are perceived to have) more power or status than their target in order to cause fear, distress or harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological or any combination of these three.

► WHAT IS HAZING?

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.

► WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?

Intentional and repetitive mistreatment perpetrated through the use of technology.

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HAZING VS BULLYING

► HOW IS CYBER BULYING DIFFERENT FROM TRADITIONAL BULLYING?

- Anyone can anonymously assume the role of the “bully”
- Causes as much or more distress:
 - *Anonymity intensifies cruelty*
 - *Invisibility lessens empathy*
 - *Victimization is 24/7*
 - *Impact is instant, far-reaching*
- **THE INTERSECTION OF BULLYING AND HAZING - HOW ARE THEY SIMILAR?**
- Motivation for bullying and hazing is often identity-based
- Imbalance of power exists
- Left unchecked each can contribute to an environment where the behavior is acceptable
- Each is a precursor to more destructive, hateful behavior

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HAZING VS BULLYING

► **THE INTERSECTION OF BULLYING AND HAZING - HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?**

- Bullying excludes the target from the group, whereas hazing is a ritual or process imposed on a person who wants to be part of the group
- Bullies often act alone, but hazing usually involves a group, team or organization

► **IS THERE BULLYING ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES OR IS IT A MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL ISSUE?**

- Conventional wisdom previously believed bullying was an elementary or middle school issue
- Campus climate surveys reflect harassment, intimidation or other bullying-related behaviors

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HAZING VS BULLYING

► WHAT IS THE PREVALENCE OF CYBER BULLYING?

- University of New Hampshire study showed between 10-15% of students reported receiving repeated insulting and harassing electronic messages
- Working to Halt Online Abuse-has reported an average of 100 requests a week from people who are 18+
- There are more sites that promote cyber-bullying behavior among college students, such as Yik Yak
- Reports of faculty and staff being cyber bullied are also rising

► WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF BULLYING ON THE TARGET INDIVIDUAL?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Depression | • Health-issues |
| • Isolation and loneliness | • Low self-esteem |
| • Anxiety | • Marginalization |
| • Poor performance in school | • Thoughts of suicide |

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HAZING VS BULLYING

- ▶ **CREATE A CULTURE WITHIN YOUR GROUP THAT DOES NOT TOLERATE BULLYING**
 - Treat everyone with respect
 - Establish a culture of tolerance and acceptance
 - Model good behavior