



MAKING AN IMPACT ON UNDERGRADUATE MEN

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Today's generation of college men is facing real challenges. Fewer men choose to go to college each year – making up a historic low of 41% of the student body, with only 60% of the men who start at four-year universities receiving diplomas. With a further significant decline in enrollment projected over the next few years and women outpacing men significantly in applications, there is “no reversal in sight,” according to experts in the Wall Street Journal. Experts also call loneliness an “epidemic” among college men as they have higher rates of suicide, substance abuse and are less likely to use mental health services.

We know many colleges and universities seek new strategies to enroll more men and support them – inside and outside the classroom – once they arrive on campus.

Insight from recent research shows how involvement in fraternities provides unique benefits to students who identify as men – supporting their mental health and wellness, strengthening their connection to the university and community, and developing them as leaders and citizens.

From the team at Gallup to university faculty members, over the past three years, researchers have conducted nearly 20 studies with results showing how fraternities support college men today.

Fraternities – national organizations, alumni, and students – acknowledge and are working together to confront and address the challenges and risks within the organizations today. This research helps them do that while building on the distinct value these organizations can bring to students and their campus communities.

With universities seeking solutions to expand mental health support, energize student life, engage alumni, and cultivate supporters and donors, this research shows real promise.

With college men committing suicide four to six times more than women and showing increasing rates of depression, anxiety, and loneliness, we know the need for support is immense.

Research shows that the impactful, meaningful connection men find in fraternities can create a strong sense of belonging. It leads members to have more positive mental health, and the greater sense of support men receive in fraternities has been tied to lower depressive levels.¹ Brothers feel comfortable having tough conversations and learning from each other. When they seek help, members are twice as likely to reach out to a fraternity brother than anyone else.² This helps remove the stigma of asking for support.

As a result, research shows fraternity men have a better view of campus-provided support systems and are more likely than non-affiliated students to use counseling resources throughout their lives.³

We also continue to address our challenges. NIC Member Fraternities have adopted health & safety standards that build upon prevention efforts and programs, that includes the adoption of medical Good Samaritan policies, implementation of health and safety educational programming, the adoption of standardized health and safety guidelines across all chapters – and campus interfraternity councils – to standardize and strengthen measures to protect students, and the removal of hard alcohol from chapter facilities and events.

The NIC formed the Anti-Hazing Coalition, an unprecedented partnership with families who lost their sons to hazing, which works at state and federal levels to pursue anti-hazing legislation that delivers greater transparency strengthens criminal penalties and encourages prosecution, calls for university accountability for bad actors provides for amnesty to encourage people to call for help, and calls for student education. This group also actively facilitates programs on campuses and at fraternity educational events. Since its inception, the parents have spoken to tens of thousands of members about their sons' stories, the authentic danger of hazing, and how to prevent it in their campus communities.

¹ According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center's Fall 2021 Term Enrollment Estimates.

² According to the National Center for Education Statistics.

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