

Ragging: Frequently Asked Questions

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Why should ragging be condemned if it is harmless fun?

Most people think ragging is mild involving verbal interaction or having freshers do funny acts for a laugh. A darker side of ragging is widely prevalent in hostels and in outlying colleges. Here the practice of ragging revolves around cases of emotional harassment, sexual and physical abuse. Most of the cases are undocumented, and even if publicized are denied by colleges for fear of reprisals or loss of public image.

Why is the practice so difficult to change or police?

The problem is endemic and very difficult to police. The worst cases occur in hostels, behind closed doors and late at night. Fear of reprisal, mass intimidation and shame or embarrassment at the incident makes freshers reluctant to approach authorities. The authorities anyway turn a blind eye to the issue due to fear of student mobs and loss of reputation. The problem maintains its continuity, when the victim becomes the perpetrator in the very next year.

In which colleges is ragging more prevalent?

Ragging is widespread in colleges where students stay in hostels. In hostels, the fresher is totally at the mercy of the seniors with no support from family and friends. The problem magnifies at engineering and medical colleges, where students believe that they are the cream of the society and it is their right to do socially unacceptable practices on the name of ragging.

Are there any laws against ragging?

The Supreme Court in its verdict, in response to a PIL filed by Vishwa Jagriti Mission in August 2001, had put a ban on ragging. Many states have also passed laws against ragging. But unfortunately, college authorities are not willing to accept their role and responsibility in this.

What is society's role in stopping ragging?

Indian society needs to wake up and realize these events are happening, today, in the 21st century. The biggest role of society today is ACCEPTANCE – that inhuman ragging exists, it must be stopped and alternatives explored for the Indian Educational system. There are better and positive ways to promote interaction with seniors than ridicule, humiliation and abuse.

What is YOUR role in stopping ragging?

As part of campus society, YOU, The Reader, can play an invaluable role in ensuring the continued harmony of campus life in welcoming new students to your institution and trying to build friendships based on mutual trust and confidence, rather than intimidation, fear and humiliation.

CURE REPORT CR2005/07-25

Issue Date: July 28, 2005

Take a stand. Build a bridge with incoming students and act as mentors. Confront your peers that want to make a spectacle out of the practice. Replace immature confrontations with events geared around sports, music or social causes. Intercede and intervene on violent ragging.

Join an anti-ragging group such as **CURE** today, challenge your peers, and wipe out ragging from your college. Change to the system, clearly, is not an option.

Make a change today.