City of Chattanooga
Mayor Andy Berke

Mayoral Directive No. 2016-01

Date: January 5, 2016
To: Chattanooga Department of Youth & Family Development
Subject: Safeguarding Chattanooga Students from Hazing and Bullying

Hazing is a serious threat to the safety and well-being of our young people. We know from national studies that nearly half (47%) of students experience hazing prior to college and 1.5 million high school students are hazed each year. Locally, we know we are not immune to the impact of hazing. From the horrific incident currently in the news to conversations with multiple members of the Mayor's Youth Council, we understand this is a serious issue and we must reassure both victims and offenders that hazing is unacceptable in our community.

Hazing (defined as any intentional or reckless act by one student, acting alone or with others, which is directed against any other student, that endangers the mental or physical health or safety of that student) is abuse and will not be tolerated at any building or facility managed by the City of Chattanooga nor any program facilitated by the City.

As the City's key provider of resources and initiatives directed at young people, **I direct leadership at the Department of Youth & Family Development (YFD) to proactively address the potential for such abuse within City facilities and safeguard YFD students against hazing and bullying.**

This shall include a review of all YFD procedures and policies with an eye toward prohibiting hazing and bullying of any kind. Training should be provided for all YFD Staff, particularly those working with students at YFD centers throughout Chattanooga, to ensure employees can recognize and quickly address hazing.

101 East 11th Street • Chattanooga, Tennessee 37402
(423) 643-7800 • FAX: (423) 643-7817 • E-MAIL: mayor@chattanooga.gov

The safety and wellbeing of children in Chattanooga does not rest with one agency, organization or individual. Therefore, the City will established avenues for students to anonymously report abuse even if it does not occur on City-owned property. These reports can then be shared with the appropriate agency - whether that's the Hamilton County School System, Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, or Chattanooga Police Department - so swift action can be taken.

This Mayoral Directive will take effect immediately with implementation by YFD leadership forthcoming.

Andy Berke
Mayor