Informational Literacy

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“We are drowning in information but starved for knowledge.”

-John Naisbitt, author of Megatrends
History of the News Cycle

- Limited News Outlets
  - Newspapers – Dailies and Weeklies
  - 3 TV Networks
  - Monthly Magazines

- News only networks founded on Cable TV
  - News is now produced 24/7
  - Competition for ratings
History of the News Cycle

• Rise of Social Media
  • News Cycle is almost instantaneous
  • News is being reported by bystanders
    – Not Trained Reporters
    – Reacting to the situation
    – Viewpoint does not tell the whole story.
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Misinformation

• Illusory Truth Effect
• Saturated with bloggers and vloggers
• More Provocative than Accurate
• Rushed Reporting
• Stories never die on the Internet
  – Study behind Autism and Vaccines


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• Confirmation Bias

- We pick and chose the information that affirms what we believe.
- We acquire information not for it’s value and credibility but because it confirms our thesis, our beliefs and our prejudice.
- The broad range of sources, content and version on the internet maximizes this process.
- We can be aware of Confirmation Bias and it still affects us.
- We are resistant to change our viewpoints when confronted with information that doesn’t match our beliefs.

Ebola Conspiracy Theories

“Massive digital misinformation is becoming pervasive in online social media to the extent that it has been listed by the World Economic Forum (WEF) as one of the main threats to our society.”


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How do we become media savvy?

• Stop and think
• Do some research
  – Is the site credible?
    • What are the author’s qualification & credentials?
    • Is the author associated with an organization, institution or company?
  • Are both sides of an issue presented?
  • Is the information current?
  • Does the author cite their sources?
  • Check website carefully for inaccuracies.
Domain Names

.com - Commercial Business
There can be a monetary incentive to this site.
.edu - Educational Institute
.gov - Government - Usually a Credible Source
.mil - Use by the Military Services
.info - Informational sites - not regulated
.org - Traditionally non-profit organization. May have a corporate sponsors that might bias the site.
.net - Network - It is a catch-all.
.us - Country domain

Different countries had different standards for news.

University of South Carolina Library - Evaluating Information - STAAR Method: URL & What it can tell you, Sept 30, 2019

https://uscupstate.libguides.com/c.php?g=257977&p=1721715
Common Sense Tips

• Ask Questions
• Go to the Source
  — Read the transcript of the speech
  — Read the original document
• Go to your local library
  — Librarians have access to all sorts of databases & information.
    • Local & College Libraries

ADVOCATE for Libraries
They are a important source of information in our communities!
Media Savvy Kids

• Ask Questions
• Don’t take everything personally
• Not everything on the internet is true
  – Things are made up
  – Photos are filtered or photoshopped to look better
  – A snapshot of a moment in life
    • Not the whole story
• Go to the Source
  – Talk to each other not via text or social media
  – Go to a trusted adult
• Go to the school librarian for help
School Districts

If you have a question about your School/District; go to the source!

Misinformation often spread through:

- Grapevine (ie. “did you hear?”...)
- Community Moderated Social Media Sites (ie. Community FB group allowing un-moderated comments)
- Texts (ie. from students, who only know what they are seeing or hearing.)
PTAs and Media

Media can be a great tool for PTAs to get their message out to members and their community.

- Keep membership informed
- Be transparent with your membership
- Trusted source of information
- Beware of social media - private and community accts
PTAs and Media

Misinformation can happen to PTAs

- If you have made a mistake, apologize
  - Do not try to hide it.
  - Lay out the steps you are taking to correct the situation
  - Give a forum to hear members concerns
  - Put naysayers to work.
    - Get them on board to give them a taste of the responsibility you hold.
PTAs and Media

Think before you:

Is it... True? Helpful? Inspirational? Necessary? Kind?

The Internet is forever. Don’t develop a bad reputation.
Resolutions and Position Papers

PTAs sometimes need guidance on key issues.

- NYS PTA has resources to help - nyspta.org
- We will be voting on Resolutions this weekend.
  - Each Resolution needs 3 pieces of supportive research
  - Where We Stand explains NYS PTA’s resolution position on key issues
    - Units can use this to support their stance on an issue
- Units can submit Resolutions and be part of the process
- National PTA has Position Papers too
  - Check it out at pta.org
We all are Volunteers

We are all doing our best.
You are not alone!
Reach out to your Region Board or State Counterparts for help!
TIME FOR QUESTIONS

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References


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