



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnFTsl-6--U>

This SARTAC Presentation was adapted from

Fact vs. Fiction

Training the Public to Identify

Mis and Disinformation by



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What IS mis and disinformation?

Misinformation is false or wrong information that is shared by mistake. The person sharing it thinks it's true or doesn't know it's wrong.

Examples: When your uncle tells you he saw on facebook that vaccines put computer chips in your body. Your uncle believes this false information.

Disinformation is false information made up on purpose to trick or mislead people. Someone creates it to cause harm, control people, or spread lies.

Examples: The false story about Haitian Immigrants eating dogs.

The Big Difference - Misinformation is a mistake. Disinformation is done on purpose



**What fake
news concerns
you the MOST
and makes you
want to speak
up and get the
truth out?**

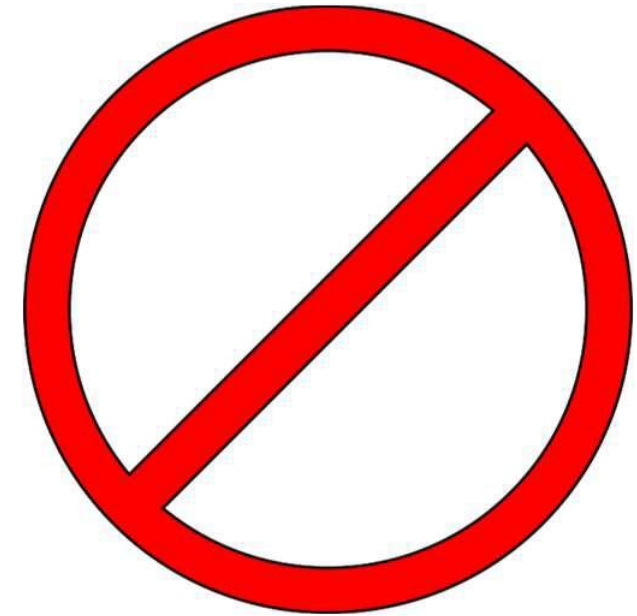
**There is no silver bullet.
This means there is no easy fix.
This problem is hard and will
require many different solutions.**



Strategies for communicating with someone spreading fake news

When in doubt:
DO NOT ENGAGE

When you're not sure:
DO NOT GET INVOLVED



Don't argue

When you argue, it can make the other person feel stuck in their opinion, and it's harder to talk to them.





Don't SPREAD IT

**Commenting, sharing, or
hitting dislike online JUST
helps more people see the
wrong information**

Don't repeat the lie

Words are powerful. Using the same words as the people spreading false information gives them more power.





Don't embarrass

Don't make fun of someone.

Making fun of someone, especially using mean words, won't make them listen or respond in a good way.

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Don't try to make your point with **ONLY** a fact-check

Don't just argue with a fact-check. Fact-checks are helpful, but if you share them without explaining or talking more about them, people might lose trust in where the information comes from.





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyUrV8BELG4&t=2s>

When SHOULD you consider engaging?

TIPPING POINT

When a false story spreads too far and needs a response, it's called reaching a tipping point. Deciding when to respond depends on your community and audience, so you need to use good judgment.

MISSING FACTS

Often people believe false information because they don't have the right facts. You can fix this by sharing good, clear information so they aren't tricked by the false story.

REMOVE BARRIERS or HELP PEOPLE GET UNSTUCK

This means talking with people when false information is causing real problems and stopping them from making progress

Counter Messaging

1. Figure out what information people need.
2. Choose your examples carefully
3. Wrap it in truth.
4. Explain how you know what you know
5. Keep it simple



Counter Messaging

FACT	Lead with the fact if it's clear, pithy, and sticky—make it simple, concrete, and plausible. It must “fit” with the story.
WARN ABOUT THE MYTH	Warn beforehand that a myth is coming... mention it once only.
EXPLAIN FALLACY	Explain how the myth misleads.
FACT	Finish by reinforcing the fact—multiple times if possible. Make sure it provides an alternative causal explanation.

Having Conversations

Ask Questions

Ask what the other person believes, why it matters to them, and how it connects to their worries or concerns.

Show Empathy

Find values you both share to work together and show respect for their beliefs and worries.

Explore Motives

Talk about why the people spreading false messages are doing it and what their goals might be.

Share Perspective

Tell your own story and explain how you reached your beliefs or ideas.

Resources

- League of Women Voters: [Misinformation Guide](#)
- Office of the US Surgeon General: [Misinformation Toolkit](#)
- Union of Concerned Scientists: [Countering Disinformation in Your Community](#)
- George Mason University: [Debunking Handbook 2020](#)
- [News Literacy Project](#)
- Cambridge University / Jigsaw: [Prebunking Training Videos](#)