How do I identify misinformation?

What are misinformation and disinformation?

Misinformation is information that is false or misleading according to the best available evidence. People often share misinformation without knowing it is wrong.

Disinformation is misinformation people spread on purpose to do harm.

Misinformation and disinformation can cause people to make decisions that put their health at risk. That’s why it is important to watch out for misinformation and only share reliable information.

How do I identify misinformation?

Check trusted sources, such as local, state and national public health department websites, to see if the information is true, or talk to your healthcare provider.

Look closely at the source of the information. Does the claim appear on graphic with no source or link to information? Is the information old or recent? Does it come from an organization or news source you’ve never heard of? Or does it come directly from a source you trust, such as a university or hospital?

Trusted public health sources:
- Kitsap Public Health District: kitsappublichealth.org
- WA State Department of Health: doh.wa.gov
- CDC: cdc.gov

Addressing misinformation

Misinformation affects us all and everyone has a part to play in addressing misinformation online and in our community.

We compiled a toolkit of resources to help people and organizations plan for, identify, and effectively address misinformation. To access the toolkit, scan the code above or go to kitsappublichealth.org/news

Talking about misinformation

Talking to people about misinformation they might be hearing or sharing can help prevent harm. Remember to:

- Listen
- Empathize
- Point to trusted information sources

April 2024

Have questions? Call us at 360-728-2235 or visit kitsappublichealth.org.