

Detect Fake News

Misinformation undermines justice and endangers peace. Scouts can learn to recognise fake news.

Section: All
Time: 1 hour
Where: Home

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



PLAN

This activity is not about training scouts to spot every instance of fake news, but simply to start the conversation and get them thinking. There are three activities here, so younger scouts might just focus on the image challenge, while others could do more.

As this activity involves using the internet and specifically looking at potential misinformation, it would be good to explain to parents what is being asked of the scouts and why. They may choose to supervise the activity for younger scouts. Choose from the challenges below and make sure the scouts understand what is being asked of them.

DO

Is that real? Start to question if an image is real or faked. Scouts go online and search for images which are clearly modified (often described as "photoshopped") such as a cow piloting an airplane. Next, find some pictures which are clearly real - like a cow in a field or a bowl of fruit. Finally, search for pictures which could be either. Try searching for something like "weird animals" or "strange trees". Many of these will be real photos but they will be so unusual and unfamiliar that it would be easy to mistake them for fakes.

Find the answer to a lie! The scouts are given a question, such as "Find out who was the first woman on the moon". Use this example, or choose another, but asking for an answer which does not exist. The scouts do their research and come back with their responses.

Do you trust them? Scouts choose a piece of news which has popped up to them on their internet browsing or social media activity, preferably one that looks suspect. They question whether it is likely to be true or fake by asking:-

- Who made it?
- Who is it targeted at?
- Who gets paid if you click on it?
- Who might benefit from, or be harmed by, the message?
- Is it worded in such a way to make you respond emotionally?
- How believable is it?

REVIEW

Bring the scouts together to discuss their findings. Regardless of which activity was done, the aim is the same in reviewing each one. What did the scouts think about what they saw? Did they find it difficult? Were they aware of misinformation before this activity?

The peer-to-peer discussion by the scouts will help them all to improve their understanding, with some of the more careful and skeptical scouts highlighting some of the pitfalls out there.



In a nutshell...

Scouts do one or more of the following tasks:-

1. Look online for doctored images, real images and pictures which could be either.
2. Try to find "information" online which backs up a lie.
3. Review a purported news item analytically.



Follow-on

Build on this activity by getting older scouts to be sure to do all three of these. They could also focus on the third challenge and try to dig deeper. They could identify a few markers which are common across the fake news which they identify, and share these pointers with others.



SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Intentions

SDG 16 aims to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements. Fake news acts against this aim, so by learning to detect misinformation scouts can support this foundation of peace and justice.



Find out more!

Visit - www.betterworld.ie

Contact us - sustainability@scouts.ie

Produced by the Scouting Ireland Sustainable Scouting Team