

Cracking the code on media literacy

As parents, we care a lot about what happens at school and what our children are exposed to, both in and out of the classroom. That's why it's so important for us to learn how to carefully consider the information we consume and in turn, teach our kids to do the same. This art of thinking is called "media literacy."

In this guide, you'll learn how to ask the right questions and how to use media literacy in real-world situations. You'll also find some helpful resources to help you and your family navigate raising kids in the digital age.

What is media literacy?

We're bombarded with "media"—TV, apps, websites, news, videos, magazines, billboards, and more—everyday. Media literacy is a set of skills that helps us analyze the content of information that we receive.

The 4 steps of cracking the code of media literacy

Media literacy is all about asking questions. It not only helps us assess the information we're seeing online and in real life, it also helps us model these practices for our children. Here are four steps we can take to be more mindful of the information we read online.

How do we use what we've learned in real life?

Once you've started asking more questions and improved your media literacy, this doesn't mean that conflict disappears. Here is some guidance about how to apply these tactics in real-life conversations.

Additional resources

- [National Association of Media Literacy Education](#)
- [Media Power Youth](#)
- [News Literacy Project](#)
- [Media Literacy Now](#)

Media literacy helps us:

- Ask better questions
- Make sound judgments rooted in facts
- Better decipher bias from reality



1. Think about the source.

Who created this message? What credentials does the author have? Consider the source's bias.

2. Evaluate the information.

Is it accurate? Is the information supported by evidence? When was it created?

3. Consider the methods and goals.

What techniques are used to attract my attention? Why was it made?

4. Think about the full picture and interpretations.

Is this the full picture? Ask how others might interpret the information.

A guide to productive conversations:

- Consider your own biases
- Listen with empathy
- Use positive words of acknowledgement and ask open-ended questions
- Don't lump people together into a monolithic group
- Remember that we all want our children to be safe, healthy, and successful