

## **Episode 6**

### **"Media Literacy 101: Protecting Yourself from Disinformation Online"**

#### ***Opening music***

**HOST:** Welcome back to "Media Literacy 101," the radio series that aims to educate and empower listeners to navigate the media landscape in a critical and informed way.

**HOST:** In today's episode, we will focus on protecting yourself from disinformation online.

#### ***Soundbite 1: Definition of Disinformation***

**HOST:** We have explained in a previous episode what disinformation is, but to recap it is false or misleading information that is spread deliberately to deceive. It can take many forms, such as hoaxes, conspiracy theories, and propaganda.

#### ***Soundbite 2: Types of Disinformation***

**HOST:** There are many different types of disinformation.

- **A hoax**, which we have also mentioned in a previous episode, is false information that is spread with the intent of tricking people.
- **Conspiracy theories** are false or unproven claims about secret, often sinister, plots.
- **Propaganda** is information that is spread with the intent of influencing people's opinions and actions.

#### ***Soundbite 3: How to Protect Yourself from Disinformation***

**HOST:** The online world can seem like a scary environment especially as we get older and less familiar with new technologies. It is tempting to give up on it or to become paranoid about every post but there are so many positive aspects to engaging with online communities that it is much better to be informed about the risks and learn how to identify when we are being misled and deceived. In the last episode we outlined ways to stay secure online and protect yourself from abuse. Here are some tips for spotting and protecting yourself from disinformation:

- Keep your social media accounts private and only accept friend requests from people you know in the real world. If in doubt, check the person's profile and if they have very few followers/friends and few photos of themselves in normal situations then they are probably not authentic. No, that handsome navy officer with the private yacht who has just privately messaged you and told you that you are his soulmate is not real!
- Before sharing posts, check the source of the post and read the full content, not just the headline.
- After reading a post, check how you feel. Many fake news posts try to create panic or fear

in the reader. Others who want to manipulate or scam you might try to charm you or play on your emotions to get you to commit to something.

- Be skeptical of information that confirms your pre-existing beliefs or opinions
- Look for sources that have a good reputation for accuracy and impartiality such as .org, .gov or .edu websites.
- Check the author's credentials and expertise in the subject matter
- Be wary of clicking on sources that use sensational or biased language
- Be wary of information that is being spread by a large number of accounts, especially if those accounts have no followers or have been created recently.
- Don't feed the Trolls. **Trolls** or people who make false or unfounded comments to harass, incite anger, hurt and arguments. They are found in comments, chatrooms, forums and posts purely to disrupt and get a reaction. Replying to their comments just fuels their activity and can make you a target.
- If in any doubt about a post's source or agenda, don't share or like. Care what you share. Think about the stress, anxiety or fear that you might be spreading about something that you cannot confirm is true.
- Ask an expert. If in doubt about information, ask someone like your local librarian or someone who you know has the knowledge to research and investigate the information that you are concerned about.

### ***Soundbite 5: Guest speaker***

Let me introduce ..... to talk about their online experience

### ***Soundbite 6: Conclusion***

**HOST:** Our next episode will focus on media literacy and civic engagement.

**HOST:** Be sure to tune in next week for the fifth episode of "Media Literacy 101." In the meantime, don't forget to check out our website for more information and resources on media literacy.

### ***Closing music***

**HOST:** Thank you for tuning in to "Media Literacy 101." Until next time, stay informed, stay curious, and stay media literate.

### ***Outro music***