

IS THIS HEALTH INFO LEGIT?

Teens get messages about drugs and alcohol from the news media and social media, as well as their peers, families, and extended social networks. Health literacy can play a role in how teens interpret messages about alcohol and other substances, and can shape their expectations about what may happen if they consume drugs and alcohol. Below are some questions youth can ask themselves as they research health information for prevention practices.

Do I have a reason to believe this source has credible health information?



How might your relationship with that source cause you to trust or disbelieve what they say?

Does the source make a very surprising claim?

Some people have a flair for dramatic stories or sensational opinions. News headlines and websites sometimes exaggerate health claims to catch readers' attention.



What is the original source of the information?



Where does your source get their information?

Does my source show bias or slant towards a particular viewpoint?

Do they stick to "just the facts" or include personal opinion?



Can I find this information in at least one other location?



Do some digging and see if you can find at least one other source or story to match the one you first found.

When I look at the website address, what is the ending?

Remember that the ending of a URL provides clues about how to evaluate the content of a website. What does this ending possibly tell you about who or what owns the website?



Sources: Moreno MA, Whitehill JM. Influence of Social Media on Alcohol Use in Adolescents and Young Adults. *Alcohol Res.* 2014;36(1):91-100. | Shakya HB, Christakis NA, Fowler JH. Parental influence on substance use in adolescent social networks. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2012;166(12):1152-1159. doi:10.1001/archpediatrics.2012.1572 | Chisolm DJ, Manganello JA, Kelleher KJ, Marshal MP. Health literacy, alcohol expectancies, and alcohol use behaviors in teens. *Patient Educ Couns.* 2014;97(2):291-296. doi:10.1016/j.pec.2014.07.019 | www.nida.nih.gov