

# Top tips for talking with your child about the news



## What is news?

When we see, hear or read new information about a range of topics – from celebrities and music to politics and sport – this is news. It can be local, national or global.

We get our news from TV, radio, newspapers, websites, magazines and social media. The rise of social media also means we can share the news easily with our friends and family, and even create it ourselves.

## What is fake news?

Fake news is news that isn't true because it's either completely made up or the facts of the story have been changed. Some fake news stories are created for fun and others want to change people's opinions. Sometimes, fake news can be adverts or photos that have been changed to trick people.

## Why is it important to talk about the news with your child?

Fake news can affect children's well-being and anxiety levels, and cause confusion and mistrust.

1 in 5 children and young people believe everything they read online is true (Ofcom, 2016) and only 2% were able to identify all news stories correctly as either real or fake in a survey (National Literacy Trust, 2018).

By talking to your child about the news, you will help them learn to question it and work out for themselves if they trust it.

Children are most likely to talk about the news with their family, than with anyone else. Here are some simple steps to help you with these conversations:

**STOP**



**Heard a news story you're not sure about? Before you decide to believe it, or share it with anyone, take a minute to stop and think about it.**

**QUESTION**



**How does the story make you feel? Why? What do you think the journalist wants you to believe?**

**CHECK**



**Who wrote the news story? Do you recognise the news company who published it? Is the story reported by any other news companies? Does it quote experts or use official sources of information? If you're not sure about if the facts in a news story are true, you can use websites such as [fullfact.org](http://fullfact.org) to check.**

**DECIDE**



**If you've checked and you think it looks like a true story, decide whether you want to share it. If you do, how will you share it and with who?**

## Useful websites

You can find some great child-friendly information about fake news, and how to spot it, on the BBC Newsround website ([bbc.co.uk/newsround](http://bbc.co.uk/newsround)).

First News ([live.firstnews.co.uk](http://live.firstnews.co.uk)), The Day ([theday.co.uk](http://theday.co.uk)) and The Week Junior ([theweekjunior.co.uk](http://theweekjunior.co.uk)) create news for children and young people.

Childnet has some helpful advice on talking to your child about difficult issues in the news ([childnet.com/parents-and-carers](http://childnet.com/parents-and-carers)).