

DLCL Group 1 - Executive Summary

Topic: How do libraries position themselves as key providers in information literacy in the new media age?

Teens, despite how much time they spend on the internet and on various media platforms, have a shocking inability to tell the difference between information that is true and information that is biased, warped, or completely false. Even though teens lack media literacy skills, their thoughts and opinions are very much shaped by social media and fake news. Libraries are a trusted source of information for a community and should be thought of as a place to gain critical life skills, including media literacy skills.

Our challenge is to “Position the library as an expert and trusted provider of credible information resources (specifically, media literacy) for teens ages 14-19,” and the intended outcomes will include teens 14-19 becoming more responsible and informed users of social media by developing the skills and confidence to know how and where to find credible information and increasing awareness of library resources. Library staff will be trained to provide media literacy programs/resources to the public and be given standardized guidelines.

We have created a tiered approach to our recommendations. Each recommendation is encompassed within one of three tiers. The tiers are separated by the amount of resources, including funding and staff time, that need to be put in as well as the amount of effort that would be required to accomplish them.

There is danger in doing nothing about the spread of false information. Educated adults and tech savvy teens do not have the skills or tools to determine what is misleading and why. The individuals and groups responsible for creating and spreading lies, conspiracies, and hateful messages are not going away. In fact, we should expect them to continue to develop new methods to confuse, dupe, and purposely sew misinformation. Libraries are perfectly positioned as respected sources of information with dedicated staff to be the organization to draw a line and take a stand against what is a significant attack on our ability to connect 14-19 year-old emerging leaders to reliable information.