

Misinformation: Can you STOP it?

BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner

Session handouts

Is it misinformation, disinformation or malinformation?

	Definition	Examples you have noticed or shared on social media
Misinformation	False or misleading information that is shared by people who believe it to be true.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Disinformation	Misinformation that is knowingly shared. It manipulates understandings of issues to achieve specific goals. These goals may include causing harm, benefitting personally or politically and/or creating conflict or division.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Malinformation	Misinformation that starts with something that is true but presents this information an incomplete or exaggerated way in order to cause harm. Misleads by omitting the context, focussing on one issue and/or omitting content.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Disinformation strategies

Strategy	Examples you have noticed or shared on social media
<p data-bbox="201 394 884 430">Modifying or creating content that looks real</p> <p data-bbox="201 440 699 472">Creating AI-generated video or images</p> <p data-bbox="201 492 951 808">Artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to develop computer-generated images and videos and to modify existing images or videos to change their content and message. Recently, AI has become more effective at generating content that looks real. This has made it increasingly difficult to distinguish real content from AI-generated content. More accessible public access to AI has led to an increase of AI generated misinformation on social media.</p> <p data-bbox="201 878 569 911">Misrepresenting the context</p> <p data-bbox="201 930 936 1040">Modifying or omitting the context to create a message that supports the views of the person posting the misinformation and make these views appear to be valid.</p> <p data-bbox="201 1068 936 1219">Achieved by selecting one or several, disconnected clips from a video or a quote and excluding and/or replacing the context and other clarifying information that contradicts the message the misinformation intends to convey.</p> <p data-bbox="201 1247 936 1357">A related strategy involves portraying the point of view of a member of a specific identity group as being an opinion that the everyone with this identity holds.</p>	<p data-bbox="972 394 1360 427">Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Strategy	Examples you have noticed or shared on social media
<p data-bbox="201 266 724 297">Misidentifying the source of the problem</p> <p data-bbox="201 318 934 469">This involves drawing false connections between an issue and an unrelated event that occurs at the same time in order to make the unrelated event appear to be the source of the problem.</p> <p data-bbox="201 496 942 568">This strategy relies on the disproven logic that because two events occur at the same time, they must be related.</p>	
<p data-bbox="201 618 806 649">Benefitting from social media processes</p> <p data-bbox="201 680 942 914">Social media platforms use rules and calculations – called algorithms - to prioritize content that appears in users’ social media feeds. Creators of misinformation benefit from algorithms by ensuring that their content appears in streams of users who are interested in a related topic, then by shifting the focus of that topic to meet their goals.</p> <p data-bbox="201 941 873 1094">Misinformation also benefits from the removal of processes that were initially in place to protect users, including independent factchecking and hate speech regulations.</p>	<p data-bbox="972 618 1360 646">Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p data-bbox="201 1148 905 1179">Building on shared values and associated fears</p> <p data-bbox="201 1209 938 1401">Misinformation posts reaching social media feeds of people with shared values often include content that captures our attention by building on shared values and/or fears. We tend to accept something as true if it appears to echo our own values and appears real.</p>	<p data-bbox="972 1148 1360 1175">Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Strategy	Examples you have noticed or shared on social media
<p data-bbox="201 266 869 350">Provoking strong emotions that make it feel urgent to share</p> <p data-bbox="201 378 942 654">Creators of misinformation may use content and images to provoke strong emotions, such as anger, outrage and fear. These emotions make it feel urgent to act immediately by letting others know about the perceived threat, danger or concern. The success of this strategy depends on our emotions being so strong that we don't take the time to investigate whether the information is actually true.</p>	<p data-bbox="972 266 1362 297">Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p data-bbox="201 712 468 748">Overwhelming us</p> <p data-bbox="201 776 947 1011">When we are overwhelmed with an abundance of social media posts with conflicting messages, it can be difficult to find the time to investigate which of these posts are true. In addition, manipulating our emotions by targeting people with shared values and posting messages that provoke anger or fear can lead to feelings of emotional overwhelm.</p> <p data-bbox="201 1039 917 1109">Both of these types of overwhelm can lead us to mistrust all types of information, both true and false.</p>	<p data-bbox="972 712 1362 743">Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Why is misinformation a human rights issue?

Human rights impact	Examples you have noticed or shared on social media
<p>Promotes divisiveness and polarization</p> <p>Misinformation deepens divisions by targeting groups on one side of a given issue with misinformation that amplifies their values and beliefs and discredits the values and beliefs of other groups.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Strengthens prejudices, biases and stereotypes</p> <p>We unconsciously develop prejudices, biases and stereotypes as mechanisms to feel safe. Prejudices, biases and stereotypes against a given group may be based on our experience with one member of that group as well as on what other sources have told us about them.</p> <p>Disinformation builds on existing prejudices, biases and stereotypes. It may lead us to believe that specific groups are a threat to us and lead us to automatically respond to unfamiliar people and things with distrust and even fear.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Leads to the development and spread of conspiracy theories</p> <p>When we experience serious challenges or threats to our safety, it is a natural response for many of us to identify the cause of that problem so that we can feel in control and develop strategies to address it. When the source of a problem is complex, or if we haven't identified a source, we</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

may look for someone to blame. This is especially true in times of crisis.

Creators of disinformation often benefit from this common response to a crisis or safety threat by developing disinformation that places the blame for an issue on a specific group. This leads to the development and spread of conspiracy theories, which blame specific groups or events for often unrelated crises.

Limits our ability to make informed choices

We rely on information to make informed decisions in all aspects of our lives. Some of these decisions impact our ability to have our basic human rights met. Examples include decisions about health care, housing and political representation.

To make informed decisions, we need access to information that is true. By undermining our shared sense of truth, misinformation makes it increasingly difficult to ensure that the information we are basing our decisions on is indeed true.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Harms democracy

Misinformation can reduce our trust in government and the organizations that hold them accountable.

It can also impact the results of elections.

Disinformation also limits the transparency and accountability of democratic societies when reporting on policies and laws.

Click or tap here to enter text.

STOP tool

Action	Examples of misinformation this action could apply to
<p>Share only when you're sure</p> <p>This is a general guideline for interacting with all information we encounter. Take the time to make sure the information is true before deciding whether to share it or not.</p> <p>Take a minute to pause and ask yourself, "Is this really true?" before sharing.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Track down the truth</p> <p>Take the time to determine whether content is true.</p> <p>Ask yourself, "Do other reliable sources have the same information?"</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Outsmart the outrage</p> <p>Pause to recognize feelings that misinformation provokes to avoid automatically sharing misinformation that provokes these feelings.</p> <p>Ask yourself, "Do I have strong feelings about this and are those feelings based on facts?"</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Action	Examples of misinformation this action could apply to
<p data-bbox="201 266 583 305">Poke at the point of view</p> <p data-bbox="201 331 951 402">Identify the source of a post and consider whether the point of view of the source may have influenced the content.</p> <p data-bbox="201 428 919 500">Ask the questions, “What’s it trying to say? Who is saying it? And who benefits from it being said?”</p>	<p data-bbox="972 266 1360 298">Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Resources

The following resources are available on BCOHRC's [Misinformation: Can you STOP it webpage](#). Some of the resources are in development, but all will be available by June 2026.

Misinformation: Can you STOP it webpage

This webpage included basic information introducing the topic of misinformation, including what it is, why it is a human rights issue and why it is difficult to identify. Additional resources on this webpage are listed below.

STOP tool

This tool was developed to provide a simple set of steps that can help us identify and stop the spread of misinformation. The four steps include:

- Stop before you share
- Track down the truth
- Outsmart the outrage
- Poke at the point of view

Misinformation quiz

This quiz shares four posts and asks you to identify whether each of these posts is true. After you respond, the quiz indicates whether the post was true or not and introduces a strategy from the STOP tool that is helpful to identify whether the post is an example of misinformation.

Misinformation minibites

The minibites consist of 5 recorded learning modules, downloadable presentations and handouts packages to support individual and group learning on the topic of misinformation.

The minibites include:

- Minibite 1: What is misinformation and why does it matter?
- Minibite 2: How does misinformation work?
- Minibite 3: Why is misinformation a human rights issue?
- Minibite 4: We can all STOP the spread of misinformation
- Minibite 5: Examples of actions to stop the spread of misinformation

Community amplifiers projects

BCOHRC invited classrooms, youth groups and community organizations around the province to develop projects that raise awareness about misinformation and stop its spread. Fifty projects were selected for funding. Examples of these projects will be posted on the Misinformation: Can you STOP it webpage in June 2026. Some will also be featured in minibite 5.

Where can I get support?

We've provided a list of resources for those experiencing distress. This list is not exhaustive and may not include the most appropriate resource to meet your needs. If you require assistance and don't see a program here that's right for you, please feel free to contact our Office by emailing info@bchumanrights.ca.

Crisis Intervention & Suicide Prevention Centre of BC

Immediate access to barrier-free, non-judgmental, confidential support and follow-up through 24/7 phone lines and online services.

Call: 1-800-784-2433 (1-800-SUICIDE)

Chat: www.crisiscentrechat.ca

VictimLinkBC

Toll-free, confidential, multilingual service available across B.C. and the Yukon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call or text: 1-800-563-0808

Email: VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca

KUU-US Crisis Line Society

24-hour crisis line for Indigenous adults, elders and youth: First Nations and Aboriginal Peoples helping First Nations and Aboriginal Peoples.

Call toll-free: 1-800-588-8717

Adults and Elders call: 250-723-4050

Children and Youth call: 250-723-2040

310 Mental Health Support

Toll-free province-wide access to emotional support, information and resources specific to mental health, available 24/7.

Call: 310-310-6789 – no need to dial an area code

Alcohol & Drug Information and Referral Service

Free, confidential information and referral services to British Columbians in need of support with any kind of substance use issue (alcohol or other drugs). Free, multilingual telephone assistance is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Call: 1-800-663-1441

Indian Residential Schools Survivors Society

Crisis support for Survivors, families and communities, offering emotional, mental, and spiritual support, available 24/7.

Call: 1-800-721-0066

Black Youth Helpline

Professional, culturally relevant youth and family assessments and intervention

Call: 1-833 294 8650

Native Youth Crisis Hotline

Answered by staff 24/7. Available throughout Canada and US.

Call: 1-877-209-1266

Kids Help Phone

Canada-wide 24-hour bilingual counselling and information services for children and youth between 5 to 20 years old. Services can be accessed via telephone, mobile app, and online.

Call: 1-800-668-6868

Islamophobia Hotline

Free confidential legal advice if you feel that you have been discriminated against, harassed, or faced violence because you are Muslim or are perceived to be Muslim.

Call: 604-343-3828

S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Chinese Help Lines

Serves callers in the province of British Columbia who speak Mandarin or Cantonese.

For Cantonese, call: 604-270-8233

For Mandarin, call: 604-270-8222

Prideline (Gay and Lesbian Helpline)

Peer support, information and referrals for anyone in BC, available weeknights (Monday to Friday) from 7 pm to 10 pm

Call: 1-800-566-1170

Trans Lifeline

Grassroots hotline offering direct emotional and financial support to trans people in crisis: for the trans community, by the trans community.

Call: 1-877-330-6366

Battered Women's Support Services (BWSS) Crisis Line

Provides emotional support to women experiencing gender-based domestic violence and/or uncertainty during these difficult times. Takes calls from Monday to Sunday, 24 hours a day.

Call: 1-855-687-1868

Text: 604-652-1867

Email: intake@bwss.org

Seniors Distress Line

Free and confidential telephone support service for seniors, their caregivers or anyone concerned about a senior. Calls are answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by highly trained, non-judgmental and caring volunteers.

Call: 604-872-1234

Scan the below QR code to download today's presentation and handout.

