

PR Council-News Literacy Project Campaign: "It's a Matter of Fact"

Why We Need News Literacy

- In today's fraught information landscape, misinformation, rumor and spin can obfuscate real news. Ferreting out misguided or intentionally misleading information is tough. Many people struggle to distinguish information gathered in a dispassionate search for truth from that which is intended to persuade, sell, mislead or exploit.
- For example: [a study demonstrated](#) that most middle school, high school and college students – despite their aptitude for digital media – were unable to determine the credibility of information flooding their phones, tablets and computers.
- That's why it's critically important to practice and teach news literacy – building the ability to sort fact from fiction in the digital age and an appreciation of how important credible journalism is to democracy.

The News Literacy Project (NLP)

- The News Literacy Project (NLP) is a nonpartisan nonprofit that works with educators and journalists to give students the skills to be smart, active consumers of information and engaged, informed citizens. NLP was founded by Alan Miller, a Pulitzer Prize-winning former investigative reporter with the Los Angeles Times. His goal was to help the next generation answer this vital question: how to know what to believe?
- Drawing on his experience as a reporter and his profound respect for journalism, Miller created NLP in 2008. The project launched a classroom program the following year and its cutting-edge **checkology®** virtual classroom in May 2016. To date, more than 11,000 educators across all 50 states and the District of Columbia and 82 countries have registered to use the e-learning platform with hundreds of thousands of students.
- Through its mission, NLP gives young Americans an appreciation of the role of an independent news media in a democracy and an enduring respect for the First Amendment.

NLP + The PR Council = "Partners in Fact"

- The work of NLP has strong relevance to all citizens. Its insights, tools and teaching approaches can help members of the general public as well as students decipher, create and share reliable information versus opinion, rumor and misinformation.
- Among the clients and partners of our agencies, we can also help facilitate more intentional leadership discussions around news literacy – and ultimately more responsible communications and bolder support for the vital importance of journalism to our democracy.
- That's why The PR Council is joining forces with NLP. As "Partners in Fact," we are enlisting our member agencies from across the U.S. to help spread the word to their employees, clients and the public at large.
- Together, we are rallying member firms to act, educate and advocate for news literacy.

It's a Matter of Fact; Check It Out!

- Our tagline and call to action for this effort is: "It's a Matter of Fact: Check it Out!"
- This underscores the importance of being able to separate facts from falsehoods. It also sends a strong call to action for individuals to take responsibility for "checking it out" – that is, checking sources of information to ensure they are trustworthy and credible.
- This applies not only to oneself. Our goal is to empower every individual to spread this learning – and this message – to family and friends who may be wittingly or unwittingly sharing false or fraudulent items as "news."

How (and Why) to Help

- Harold Burson defines public relations as "doing good and getting credit for it." We must not forget the first element of this, doing good. Part of this is recognizing that it's our professional job and our civic duty to champion honesty, integrity and transparency. We invite you to join us.
- As a member firm, you can support this work in various ways:
 - Pitch stories to help NLP increase awareness for its essential work;
 - Host events to fundraise and highlight NLP's mission;
 - Donate to advance this important cause;
 - Share resources with colleagues (and, through them, their networks) on how to be a literate consumer of news and information;
 - Participate in a day of action during which we will collectively join forces to share this vital message (more to come on this)!

For more information, please visit: <http://prcouncil.net/news-literacy-project/>.