

# Kids are falling victim to disinformation and conspiracy theories. What's the best way to fix that? | Nieman Journalism Lab

By Melinda Wenner Moyer

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When Amanda Gardner, an educator with two decades of experience, helped to start a new charter elementary and middle school outside of Seattle last year, she did not anticipate teaching students who denied that the Holocaust happened, argued that Covid is a hoax and told their teacher that the 2020 presidential election was rigged. Yet some children insisted that these conspiracy theories were true. Both misinformation, which includes honest mistakes, and disinformation, which involves an intention to mislead, have had “a growing impact on students over the past 10 to 20 years,” Gardner says, yet many schools do not focus on the issue. “Most high schools probably do some teaching to prevent plagiarism, but I think that’s about it.”

Children, it turns out, are ripe targets for fake news.

[...]

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