COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MĀNOA
COLLEGE OF TROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

COVID-19

Data and Information Literacy

What is the difference between fake and real news? What is the best way to locate reliable resources? What is the process for accurately interpreting information and data? Learn how to locate and better understand information or data available on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data and information literacy is the ability to locate, accurately interpret, and use information presented in text or numbers.

Find a balance in the sources of information. Look for other perspectives. Only viewing materials from one source can create bias and weaken the ability to objectively make decisions.

Share the good by only passing on facts that have been examined and determined to be credible. Include details that allow others to evaluate the credibility for themselves.

Check sources by limiting the sources of online information to more trustworthy sites such as educational institutions (.edu) and government (.gov) for high credibility. Try to locate original sources rather than media stories.

The Quick Check

W **hat** is the supporting evidence? Are there research studies? What is the time or size of the study? Is there more than one study?

W **ho** wrote or said it? Does the author have qualifications that would make them an expert in this topic? Who do they work for?

W **hen** did it happen? Is the information old or outdated? Is it relevant now to the situation?

W **hy** was it shared? Why was research done? Is this to sell something or convince you of something? Does it seem to be pushing only one perspective?

H **ow** does the data and/or information align with other ideas previously read or heard? Are there similar patterns of information?

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Data Snapshot

How widespread is COVID-19?

How many cases are a lot for the state of Hawai'i?

Source: State of Hawai'i DOH – DOCD (2021, January 15).

1. Start by asking yourself **The Quick Check** questions about the example data: *what, who, when, why, how*?

2. Delve a bit deeper to better understand the numbers:
   Key measure: *Period prevalence* is the percentage of the population that has been reported having the virus at any time during a specified time period (CDC, 2012).
   Calculation: cumulative total COVID-19 cases ÷ total state population = 24,058 ÷ 1,415,872 = 0.017 = *1.7%*

3. Review and interpret the result:
   The ***period prevalence*** of COVID-19 cases in the state of Hawai'i between February 28, 2020 and January 15, 2021 is ***1.7%***.

Locating reliable sources of information and then taking the time to interpret this information will lead to better understanding of a topic, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

References

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U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division (2020, March). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in Hawaii: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019 (CO-EST2019-ANNRES-15). https://census.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/co-est2019-annres-15.pdf

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