



youth service bureau

Tips and Tricks for Finding the Best Parenting Information Online

There are hundreds of parenting websites, blogs, and articles online that offer tons of parenting information. **But how do you know that what you're reading is accurate and credible?**

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One of our goals at YSB is to provide you with research-based, accurate parenting information from trusted sources. We'll translate those confusing, wordy articles into something actually readable, and we'll let you know when we find a great website, article, or book that will help you along your parenting journey.

If you're hoping to get started right away, you can check out our online Resources page [here](#). As you do your own web searching, here are some questions you can ask yourself to determine if the websites you find are a good source of information:

- **What is the site's domain?**
 - Start with .edu, .org, or .gov websites, which are usually sites affiliated with higher education institutions, non-profit organizations, and the federal government
 - .com sites are business and commercial sites that may not provide the best information

- **How did I find this website?**
 - Was it linked from another reliable site or suggested by a trusted professional?
Generally those sites are more credible than one found through a typical search engine
 - If possible, always find the original source

- **Who is the author of the page or article?**
 - Is the author's name visible? Are the author's credentials listed (for example, are they a doctor or licensed therapist), and are they qualified to write on the topic? Is contact information for the site or individual listed?
 - If yes, then the information is more likely to be credible

- **Who is the sponsoring organization?**
 - If an author is not listed, the website may be sponsored by an organization

- Credible sponsors may be government-related, national academies (ex: American Academy of Pediatrics), or universities, as examples
 - **What is the purpose of the site?**
 - Is the purpose to educate? To persuade the reader? To sell something?
 - Use your judgment, as credible websites are usually aimed at educating and teaching
 - **Is the information bias-free?**
 - Unless the website is obviously aimed towards a particular viewpoint, the information presented should be objective and bias-free
 - **Are there advertisements on the site?**
 - Advertisements may impact the content of the site. Check to see if the content of the ads are linked to the content on the page, or if the ads are just providing financial support for the site.
 - **Is the website current?**
 - This is both an indicator of the timeliness of the information and whether or not the page has been maintained over time
 - It may take some digging, but you should be able to find when the page was created and last updated
 - Broken links may be a sign that the page is no longer accurate or up to date.
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For more information and details on evaluating Internet sources, check out the following sites:

- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign:
<http://www.library.illinois.edu/ugl/howdoi/webeval.html>
- Georgetown University: <http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/evaluating-internet-content>