Media
and
False Information

Misinformation
is inaccurate information that is spread, **regardless of specific intentions to mislead people**.

VS

Disinformation
only occurs **when someone knowingly or deliberately spreads false information** in order to deceive their audience.

In times of uncertainty—during the midst of a global pandemic, for example—false information can be especially influential because many **people may be looking for the quickest, easiest explanation to issues** in the world. This hurried search for answers may result in the abandonment of judgement and care.

In recent years, social media has added a new obstacle to the battle against misinformation. While there are reliable sources sprinkled across various platforms, there is also a presence of **false information that, thanks to sharing and reposting features, can spread** like wildfire.
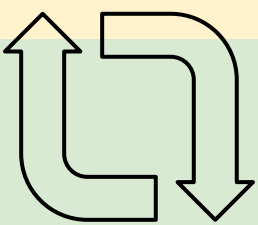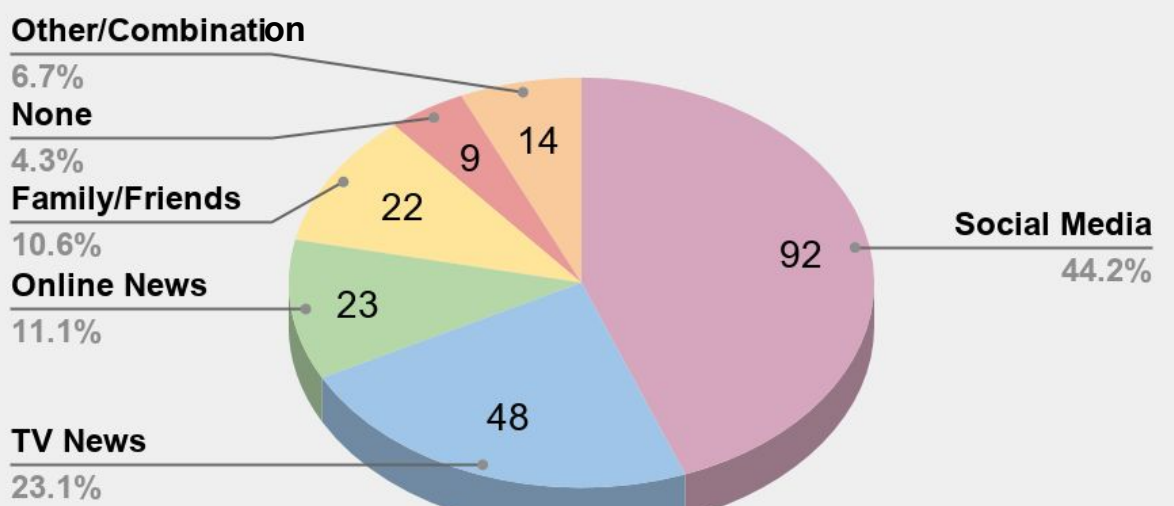
A study published in *Science* led by MIT Professor Sinan Aral and two members of the MIT Media Lab, Deb Roy and Soroush Vosoughi, showed that **false information is 70% more likely to be retweeted on Twitter than truthful information.**

Many **social media outlets have introduced new regulations** to monitor misinformation, specifically surrounding the 2020 general election. Facebook banned new political advertisements from appearing on its platform a week before the election, while political ads on Twitter and TikTok have been banned completely. Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram all label certain posts that may contain some sort of disputed information, though this doesn't prevent people from seeing a post.
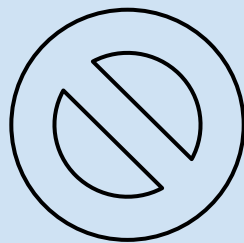
A Survey of 208 Broomfield High School Students Asked About Students' Experiences with News and False Information:

What is the main news source that you use?

Other/Combination 6.7%
None 4.3%
Family/Friends 10.6%
Online News 11.1%
TV News 23.1%
Social Media 44.2%

14
9
22
23
48
92

Do you feel like you have a good understanding of what disinformation and misinformation are?

Somewhat 51.4%
107

Yes 40.9%
85

No 7.7%
16