











## 10 tips for choosing pregnancy and parenting information on the internet

These tips will help ensure the internet resources you read about pregnancy and parenting are relevant, accurate, reliable and up-to-date:

	<p>What do you want to know</p> <p>Before you start searching the web, take a few minutes to think about exactly what information you want to know. The more specific your search the more likely you are to find the information you're after.</p>
	<p>Scope of information</p> <p>When you've specified your topic and selected a few possible websites, scan them to check they provide comprehensive information.</p>
	<p>Who wrote the article</p> <p>This a key consideration and you should look for authors with relevant professional qualifications and/or parenting experience, depending on the topic. Some websites have editorial boards which check the content and if the author's name is not mentioned, you could check the credentials of the editorial board instead.</p>
	<p>Who published the information</p> <p>This also important when it comes to assessing whether you can trust the information on a website. Look for information published by government departments, professional associations, non-profit organisations and companies with a mission to provide information (rather than to sell their products).</p>
	<p>Who was the information intended for</p> <p>Although it's probably reliable, information targeted at health professionals like doctors or child psychologists will probably be meaningless and easy to misinterpret. Look for something targeted at parents.</p>

	<p>How was the information sourced</p> <p>When it comes to information about health or child development topics, you should check for a bibliography of reputable text books and other references. If the article is about personal experience, check the person writing it is a mum or dad themselves.</p>
	<p>When was the information published and is it up to date</p> <p>Theories, guidelines and regulations change constantly and it's important to read recent information which includes current recommendations and legal information.</p>
	<p>Check for hidden costs and requirements and mandatory memberships</p> <p>You shouldn't need to pay for parenting information from the internet, nor should you have to provide your email address (unless of course you want to get the monthly newsletter).</p>
	<p>Reputable recommendations</p> <p>For example from the government or a professional association are always a good sign that the information is credible.</p>
	<p>Layout and readability</p> <p>This also important to choose a website that presents information in the way you like reading, whether that's in big chunks of text or split into smaller sections with lots of pictures.</p>

Happy online reading!

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