

APRIL 2025

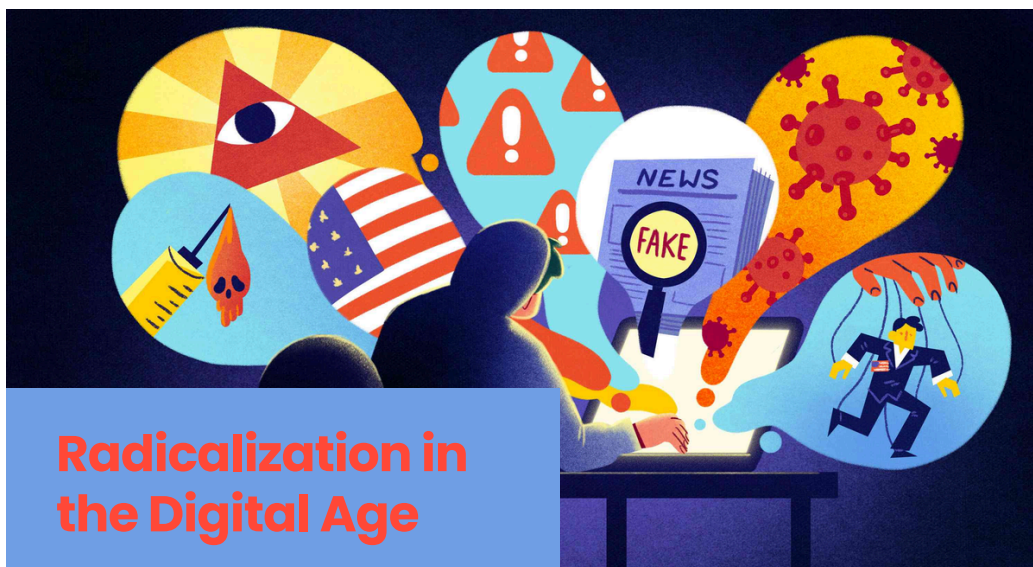
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## Recognizing Online Radicalization in Under 10 minutes

A guide to Ai and Online Propaganda for Parents and Caregivers



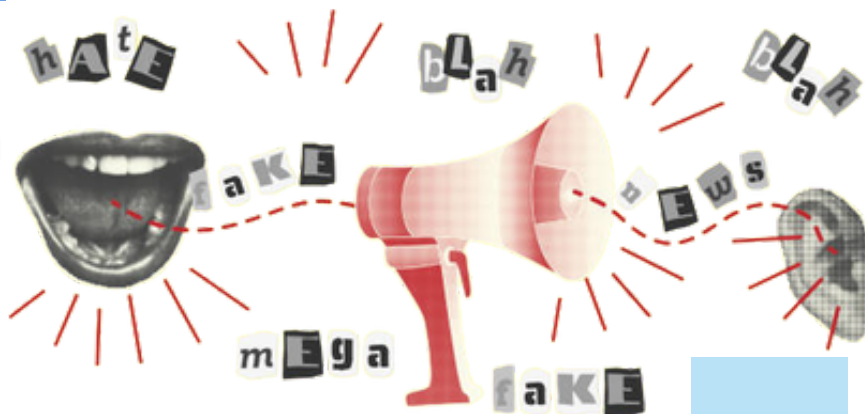
### Radicalization in the Digital Age

Radicalization is not a new phenomenon, however, the emergence of the internet and technology has made it a more serious threat. With access to the internet being so widespread, extremists are able to reach a much wider audience with their message.

Instead of personal communication and connections, extremists from all over the world can communicate through social media posts, podcasts, and blogs, making extremism more accessible than ever.

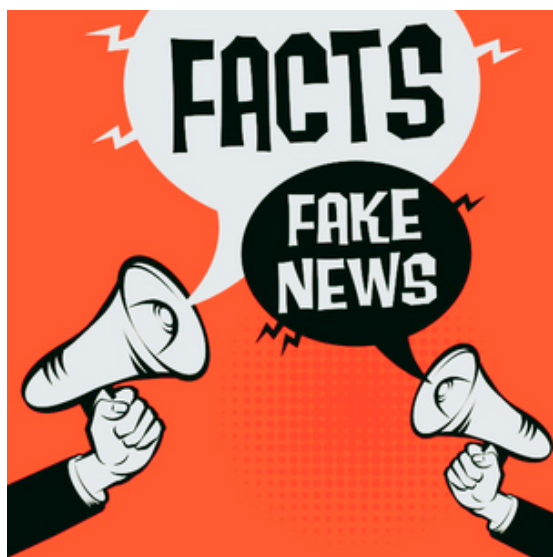
Radicalization has taken many forms over many years and the use of social media and online propaganda has recently become one of the most prominent ways for extremism to find its way into the lives of children and young adults. Being able to recognize when media consumed by children is artificial intelligence or intentional propaganda is a valuable and vital skill for any parent or caregiver to have. In the following guide, you'll learn what is considered propaganda and could pose a danger to a young person, and how to spot Ai images, text, and videos.

As children gain more unbridled access to the internet, the ability of their parent or guardian to filter and monitor what they see is vital. Radicalization happens gradually with exposure of a period of time. The sooner an adult can intervene, the lower the risk.



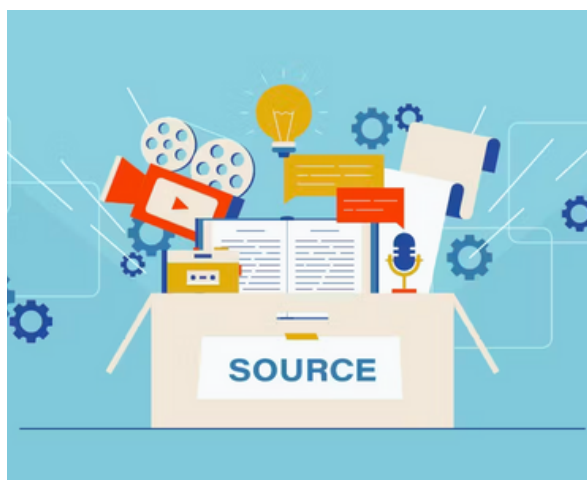
## Propaganda and How To Spot It

Propaganda refers to information that is used to promote a specific cause or political point of view. The information can come in the form of text, images, or videos and is often biased or intentionally misleading. This information is intended to inflict harm and can lead to isolation and eventually radicalization. Extremists will use propaganda to appeal to a wide range of audiences and promote their cause. Younger people are especially susceptible to propaganda because they are less likely to be able to discern fact from misinformation and less likely to fact check information.



**“Propaganda is the systemic dissemination of biased or misleading information to influence public opinion”**

Equal Justice USA



The biggest thing to pay attention to when discerning if something is propaganda is the source. The source and author of the webpage, blog, or any information is the biggest sign as to whether or not the information is factual. Reputable news sources are unlikely to publish propaganda, however, sites dedicated to a more extreme side of the political spectrum might. Double checking the information against other sources is another good way to fact check. If a headline seems eye-catching it's a good idea to do some further research and see if other sources are sharing the same information. Propaganda often uses more extreme language to push a certain narrative because their aim is to spread fear and influence readers as much as possible.

## Recognizing Ai

Artificial intelligence has taken the world by storm and fulfilled many purposes since it became widely accessible. One of the more dangerous ways that people can use it is to spread misinformation and propaganda. Ai provides the ability to alter images, text, videos, and even audio. It can be difficult to recognize when something has been generated or altered by Ai so below we'll discuss a few ways to spot it.

### Deepfakes

A deepfake is an image or video of a person that has been altered, for example, they can have a different face or being saying something different in a video. They have the intention of spreading misinformation and are difficult to catch while becoming more common. Specific things to look for are changes in lighting or a lack of glare in a video. Real pictures and videos will have shadows and likely have some lighting patterns that altered media might not. The speed that the subject is talking or the shape their mouth makes can also give away a deepfake because these things are difficult to line up.

### Ai Images

Still images are one of the more popular forms of Ai generated media. There are thousands of generators easily accessible online for anyone to use. When looking at an image details are going to be the most obvious thing giving away Ai. Small features on people or animals such as fingers and teeth are often mis represented. Images generated entirely by Ai usually have a smooth look which comes off as unnatural. Images that have simply been altered are more realistic. Details in the background are also more likely to give away mistakes because they are harder to generate accurately.

**"Ai provides the ability to alter images, text, videos, and even audio."**



Ai images and videos are used in the radicalization process to spread false information in an effort to promote a specific agenda or ideology. Images have the ability to evoke stronger reactions making them more useful in radicalization. Understanding and recognizing artificially generated media can be the thing that stops a child or teen from being radicalized and put in a dangerous position.



## Sources and Further Reading

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