# More than half of TikTok’s top mental health advice videos contain risky misinformation, experts warn



More than half of TikTok's trending mental health advice videos are reportedly riddled with misinformation, raising alarm among experts in the field. An investigation revealed that 52 out of the 100 most-viewed TikTok videos tagged with #mentalhealthtips contained potentially harmful claims about managing trauma, anxiety, and depression. This concerning statistic sheds light on the platform's role in disseminating inaccurate mental health information, which could have detrimental effects on its predominantly young audience.

A panel of mental health professionals reviewed these top videos and identified various misleading claims. Among the dubious advice were suggestions such as eating an orange in the shower to counter anxiety and using holy basil as an instant remedy for trauma. Dr. Dan Poulter, a former UK health minister and practicing psychiatrist, expressed concern over the tendency of such videos to blur the distinction between normal emotional responses and serious mental health conditions. He remarked, “Some of the videos pathologize everyday experiences and emotions, suggesting that they equate to a diagnosis of serious mental illness.” This not only misrepresents everyday emotional struggles but may also contribute to unnecessary stigma around mental health issues.

Amber Johnston, a psychologist accredited by the British Psychological Society, echoed these sentiments, particularly regarding the oversimplification of trauma in viral clips. She stated, “Each video is guilty of suggesting that everyone has the same experience of PTSD with similar symptoms that can easily be explained in a 30-second reel.” Such generalisations undermine the nuances of mental health, potentially leading viewers to misunderstand their own experiences and needs.

The prevalence of social media in the lives of adolescents has further complicated this issue. According to a recent study by Pew Research, 34% of teenagers report using social media to seek mental health information, with nearly one in ten doing so regularly. Given this reliance on platforms like TikTok for mental health guidance, ensuring the accuracy of the content is crucial, as incorrect information can have serious repercussions for vulnerable users.

In light of growing criticisms over its role in spreading misleading content, TikTok has faced significant legal scrutiny. In October 2024, over a dozen state attorneys general filed lawsuits alleging that the platform is intentionally designed to be addictive, particularly for young users. These lawsuits highlight the broader concerns about TikTok's impact on mental health and information validity.

In response to these mounting criticisms, TikTok has introduced various features aimed at supporting users' mental health. For instance, the platform launched a guided meditation prompt designed specifically for teenagers, activated during typical sleeping hours to encourage mindful practices before bed. Furthermore, TikTok announced a donation of $2.3 million in ad credits to 31 mental health organisations across 22 countries, including well-known entities like Crisis Text Line and Active Minds. In a statement, a TikTok spokesperson defended the platform's intentions, highlighting that it is a space for people to share their authentic mental health journeys and connecting users with supportive communities.

Nevertheless, experts caution that despite these initiatives, the prevalence of unvetted influencers sharing questionable advice continues to raise concerns. Fast-paced, catchy, and easily digestible content often captures the audience's attention, making it more likely for harmful information to be widely shared—potentially leading to real-life consequences for viewers seeking help or guidance.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://san.com/cc/tiktoks-top-mental-health-videos-are-riddled-with-misinformation/), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jun/02/tiktok-mental-health-videos-misinformation)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jun/02/tiktok-mental-health-videos-misinformation)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2025/05/15/teens-and-social-media-mental-health-information/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://www.motleyrice.com/news/2024/10/14/state-attorneys-general-file-lawsuits-against-tiktok)
* Paragraph 5 – [[5]](https://www.tiktok.com/blog/mental-health-initiatives)
* Paragraph 6 – [[6]](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/psychiatrys-think-tank/202301/how-to-counter-tiktoks-mental-health-misinformation)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://san.com/cc/tiktoks-top-mental-health-videos-are-riddled-with-misinformation/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/jun/02/tiktok-mental-health-videos-misinformation> - An analysis by The Guardian revealed that 52 of the 100 most-viewed TikTok videos featuring mental health advice included unhelpful or potentially dangerous claims about managing trauma, anxiety, and depression. Experts criticised these videos for blurring the line between normal emotions and clinical diagnoses, with some suggesting that everyday experiences equate to serious mental illness. The study highlights the need for accurate mental health information on social media platforms.
3. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2025/05/15/teens-and-social-media-mental-health-information/> - A recent Pew Research study found that 34% of teens sometimes use social media to seek mental health information, with nearly one in ten doing so regularly. This underscores the significant role social media platforms like TikTok play in shaping adolescents' understanding of mental health, highlighting the importance of ensuring the accuracy of such information.
4. <https://www.motleyrice.com/news/2024/10/14/state-attorneys-general-file-lawsuits-against-tiktok> - In October 2024, more than a dozen state attorneys general filed lawsuits against TikTok, alleging that the platform is intentionally designed to be addictive for children. The lawsuits highlight concerns over the platform's impact on young users' mental health and its role in spreading misleading content.
5. <https://www.tiktok.com/blog/mental-health-initiatives> - In response to criticism over mental health misinformation, TikTok introduced new features aimed at supporting users' mental health. These include a guided meditation prompt designed for teenagers, which activates during typical sleeping hours to encourage mindfulness before bed, and a $2.3 million donation in ad credits to 31 mental health organizations across 22 countries.
6. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/psychiatrys-think-tank/202301/how-to-counter-tiktoks-mental-health-misinformation> - This article discusses the prevalence of mental health misinformation on TikTok, noting that 84% of mental health videos on the platform are misleading. It emphasizes the need for mental health professionals to engage with social media to provide accurate information and counteract the spread of harmful content.
7. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/psychiatrys-think-tank/202301/how-to-counter-tiktoks-mental-health-misinformation> - This article discusses the prevalence of mental health misinformation on TikTok, noting that 84% of mental health videos on the platform are misleading. It emphasizes the need for mental health professionals to engage with social media to provide accurate information and counteract the spread of harmful content.