

Online news sources give youth new insights



By KWAN JIN YAO

I REFER to the report, "Traditional media is top news source for youth" (*my paper*, Dec 2), which highlighted a Panasonic survey showing that young people preferred to read newspapers and watch TV programmes to **keep abreast of** current affairs.

However, youngsters should not dismiss online sources of information like blogs, simply because they have a reputation for containing inaccuracies or lacking in **objectivity**.

The key – for parents and educators – is to expose students to a variety of perspectives, while teaching them to discern fiction from fact.

Online news sources, in conjunction with other sources of news, can provide a reader with new insights on a particular topic.

While traditional media serves to provide accurate and timely news reports, the Internet provides individuals with a range of viewpoints in response to those reports.

As a result, readers will have a better understanding of the depth of particular issues.

Even though youngsters may come across **biased** comments on the Web, the range of different views available there allows them to see the bigger picture.

In addition, the interactive nature of online sites can create a conducive environment for discussion.

Generally, the Internet is a great source of news that students can leverage on. It is accessible, provides the latest news and gives students the chance to analyse opinion pieces critically.

Ultimately, regardless of news sources, students must develop the requisite skills to distinguish truths from **falsehoods**.

◆ *The writer is a full-time national serviceman who blogs about current affairs at <http://guanyinmiao.wordpress.com>*

HELPDESK 我的字典

Keep abreast of:

齐头并进 qí tóu bing jin

Objectivity: 客观性 kè guān xìng

Biased: 有偏见的 yǒu piān jiàn de

Falsehoods: 谎言 huǎng yán

WRITE TO US AT MY PAPER.
E-mail your opinions to myp@sph.com.sg
Please include your full name, address and a telephone contact number. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and length.

NDC fees reflect some of its costs

I REFER to Mr David Kwok Ng Kan's letter, "Why does dental centre charge for reports" (*my paper*, Nov 30), in which he asked why the National Dental Centre (NDC) charged fees for medical reports and copies of dental X-rays.

Our staff review a patient's clinical management at the centre before preparing a formal report. The fee for the report reflects some of our costs.

Our electronic system allows for speedy access to X-ray images, without the need for patients to store their films. It also helps us to control our costs, which have generally ris-

en over the years.

However, there are costs associated with producing hard copies of the images. We levy a fee only on patients who wish to have a copy of the films.

The financial-counselling consent form referred to in the letter is a tool to help us communicate charges associated with a patient's paying status.

It does not exclude a patient from requesting a reclassification of paying status, if his financial circumstances change and he can no longer afford treatment. Financial assistance is available to all our patients if they need it.

The NDC provides timely dental care to all who seek our services, regardless of one's financial situation.

DR KWA CHONG TECK
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATIONAL DENTAL CENTRE
SINGAPORE

Fitness corner will be improved

I REFER to Mr Chin Kee Thou's letter, "Rain affects fitness-corner users" (*my paper*, Dec 1), and thank him for his feedback.

As Mr Chin suggested, we will be improving the fitness

corner at MacRitchie Reservoir Park so that puddles will not form easily.

MS ANG CHIEAN HONG
ASST DIRECTOR
(RIVERINE PARKS)
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