

Facebook/Instagram Antivax SuperSpreaders Reaching 3 Million

Special Report for the World Health Organisation
February 2, 2021



Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

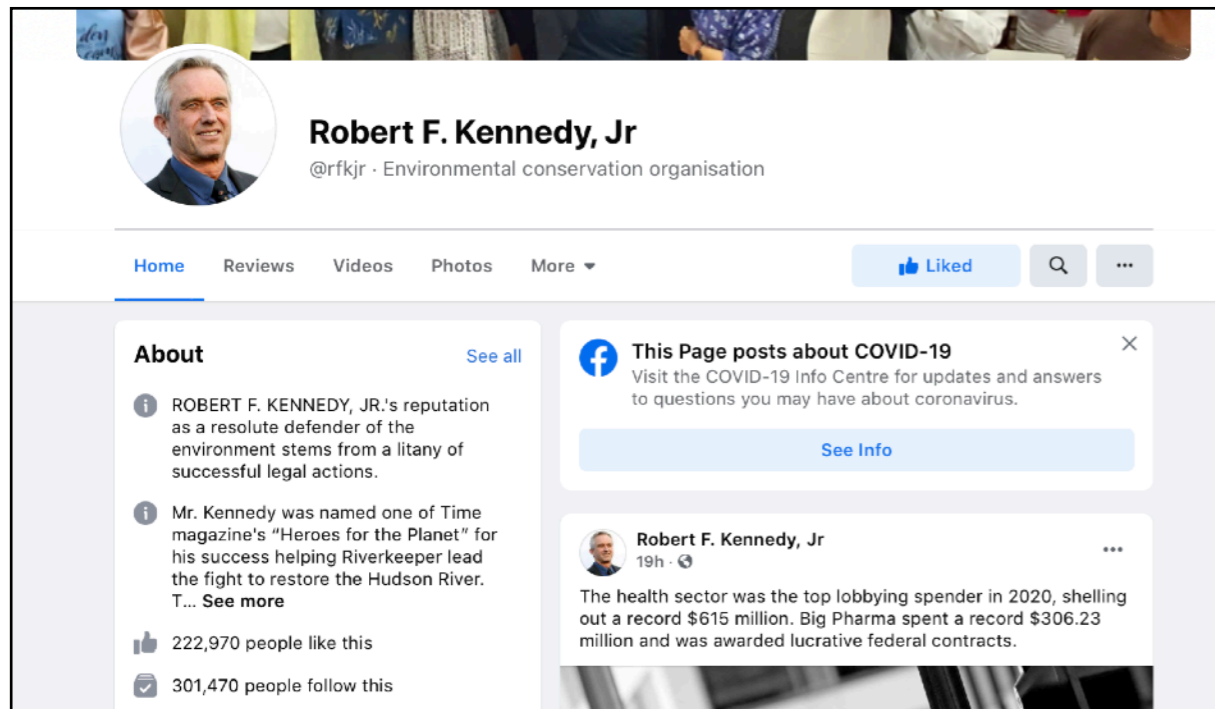
Robert Kennedy Jr. posts generally link to articles published on childrenshealthdefense.org, the website of an anti-vaccine nonprofit he chairs. The website has published false and unproven scientific and health information, including about the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccines. The site solicits donations from visitors and offers a “lifetime membership” for \$10, that includes access to anti-vaccine presentations and materials from Kennedy.

ChildrensHealthDefense.org primarily publishes articles expressing skepticism about vaccination, vaccine safety, and related policies. Children’s Health Defense has published false information that contradicts broad scientific consensus and research on the safety of vaccines. For example, the site has repeatedly made the false claim that thimerosal, a mercury-based preservative used in vaccines, can cause autism. A page titled “Mercury/Thimerosal/Autism” asserted that “The science continues to accumulate that mercury and thimerosal are potent drivers of the autism epidemic.” On a page titled “Autism,” the site falsely stated that “Since 2000, the medical literature has been flush with cumulative research supporting a causal role for mercury in the etiology of autism spectrum disorders.”

Facebook page

@rfkjr
300,000+
followers

Instagram account (verified)
@robertfkennedyjr
796,000+ followers



Children's Health Defense

childrenshealthdefense Message ✓ ▼ ⋮

407 posts 164k followers 100 following

Children's Health Defense
Mission: End childhood health epidemics by exposing causes, eliminating harmful exposures; seeking justice for injured and establishing safeguards.
campsite.bio/childrenshd

Instagram account
@childrenshealthdefense
164,000+ followers

Children's Health Defense
@ChildrensHealthDefense · Non-profit organisation

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1227 N Peachtree Pkwy
Peachtree City, GA, US
30269

End childhood health epidemics by exposing causes, eliminating harmful exposures; seeking justice for the

This Page posts about vaccines

When it comes to health, everyone wants reliable, up-to-date information. Visit the National Health Service's website. The website has information that can help answer questions you may have about vaccines.

Go to Website

Create Post

Photo/Video Check In Tag friends

PINNED POST

Children's Health Defense added an event. 8h · 🌐

Facebook page
@childrenshealthdefense
145,000+ followers

childrenshealthdefense.org

The website of an anti-vaccine nonprofit chaired by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., which has published false and unproven scientific and health information, including about the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ownership and Financing

Children's Health Defense is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based in Peachtree City, Georgia, whose board chairman is Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., an attorney and environmentalist turned anti-vaccine advocate. In 2018, its most recent tax filing with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, the group reported \$1 million in revenue.

The site solicits donations from visitors and offers a "lifetime membership" for \$10, that includes access to anti-vaccine presentations and materials from Kennedy.

Content

ChildrensHealthDefense.org primarily publishes articles expressing skepticism about vaccination, vaccine safety, and related policies. Articles appear in sections with titles such as "Too Many Sick Children," "Countering False Narratives," "Federal Failures," and "Health Freedom."

Some pages on the site include general information about a subject, such as "Vaccines," "Aluminum," or "Lead," while other stories are more specific about a news event, such as "RFK, Jr.'s Moving Speech to Sacramento Health Freedom Advocates," "Vaccination and the Media – Conflicts of Interest in Australia," and "Fluoride Toxicity Trial Update."

The site also includes a Research section, with a database of studies about what the website calls "environmental contaminants that are implicated in the rise of the childhood epidemics we are currently experiencing in the U.S. and other industrialized nations."

Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.

Score: 12.5/100

✗ **Does not repeatedly publish false content** (22 points)

✗ **Gathers and presents information responsibly** (18)

✗ **Regularly corrects or clarifies errors** (12.5)

✗ **Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly** (12.5)

✗ **Avoids deceptive headlines** (10)

✗ **Website discloses ownership and financing** (7.5)

N/A **Clearly labels advertising** (7.5)

✓ **Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest** (5)

The site provides names of content

Del Bigtree

Anti-vaccine activist Del Bigtree has a talk show and website that repeat false claims about the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccines, including the claim that vaccines cause autism.

Del Bigtree is an anti-vaccine activist and the CEO of the Informed Consent Action Network (ICAN), an anti-vaccine nonprofit based in Texas. Bigtree produced the 2016 anti-vaccine documentary “Vaxxed.”

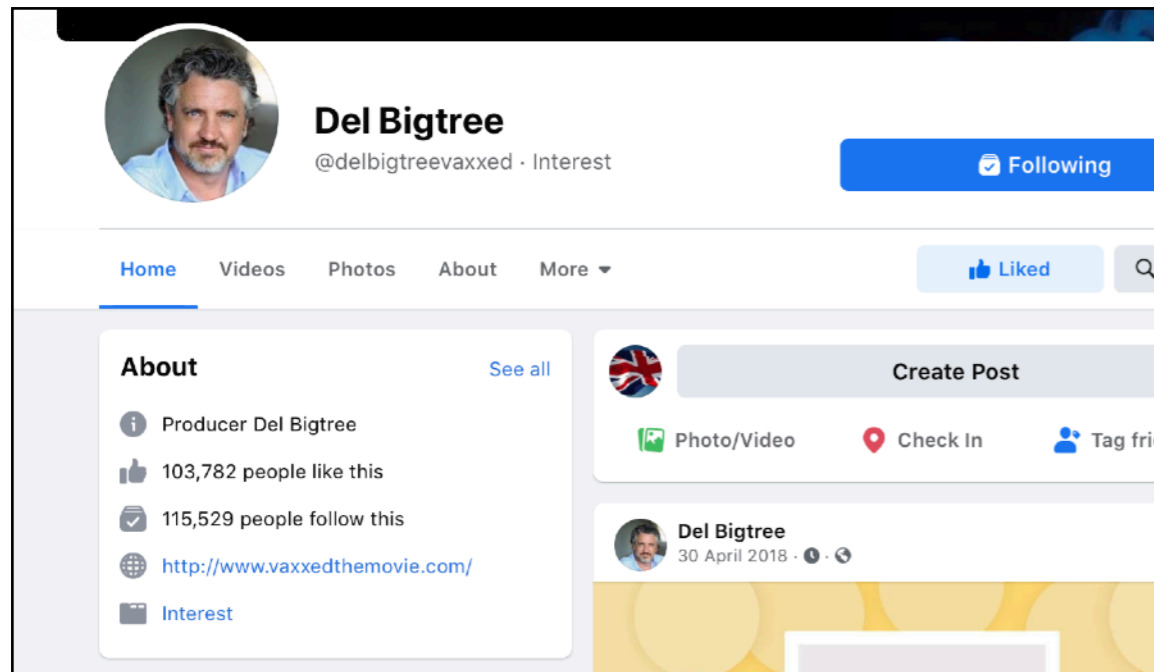
The High Wire episodes include “COVID-19: The Lockdown Calamity,” “The True Cost of Autism,” and “WHO is Lying to You?”



Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.

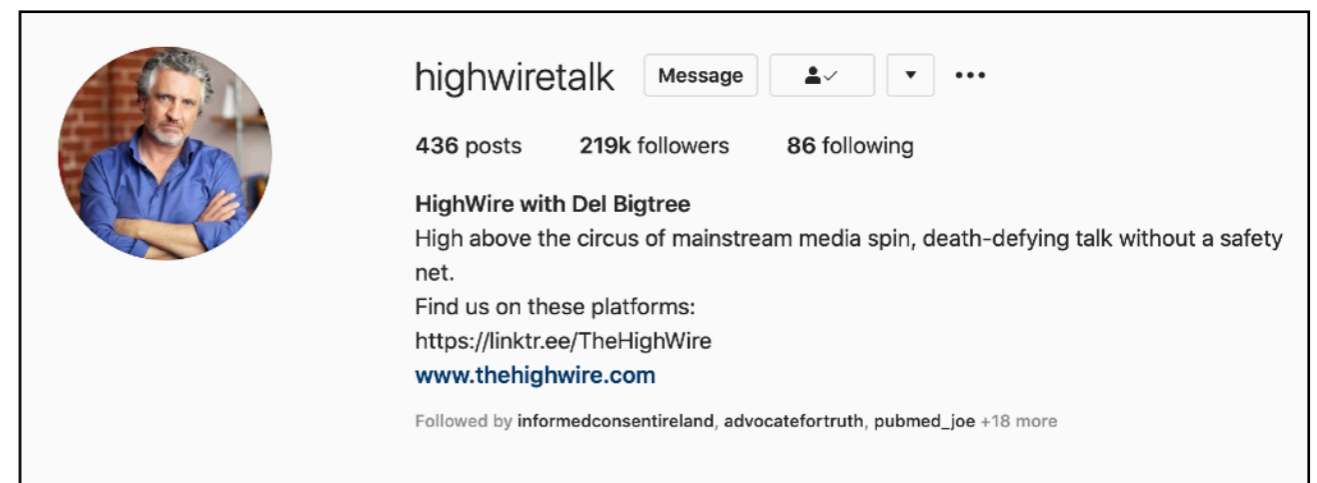
Score: 17.5/100

- ✗ Does not repeatedly publish false content** (22 points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly** (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors** (12.5)
- ✗ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly** (12.5)

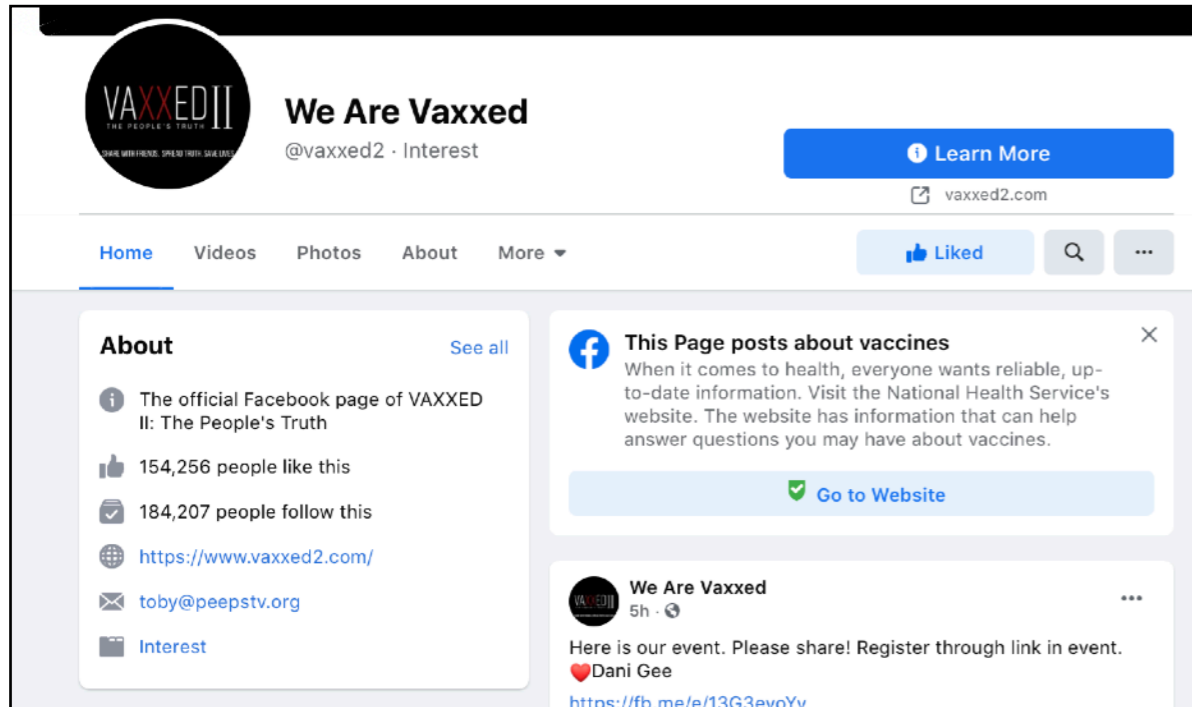


Facebook page
@delbigtreevaxxed
115,000+ followers

Instagram account
@highwiretalk
219,000+ followers

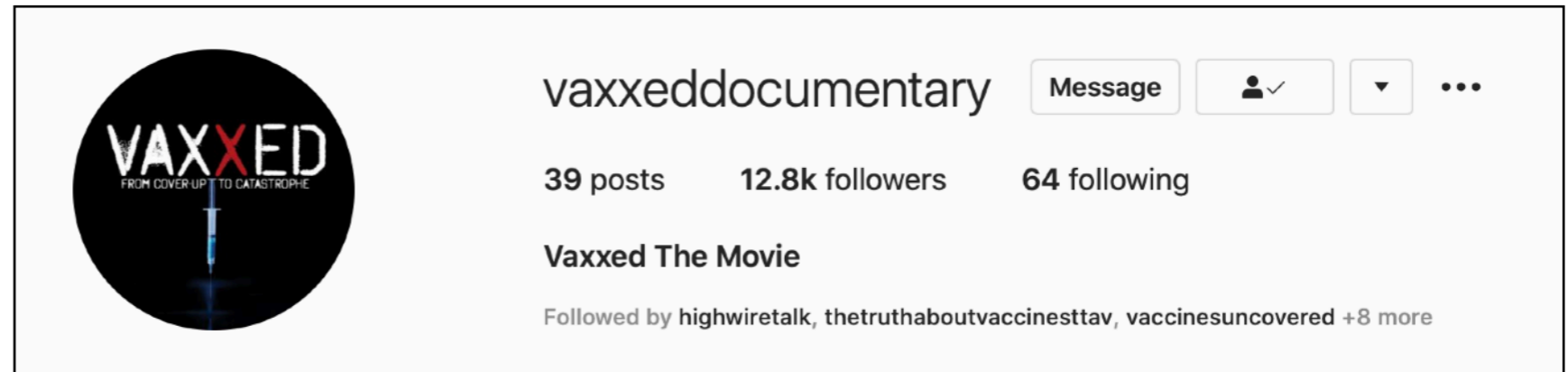


Bigtree's antivax misinfo documentaries

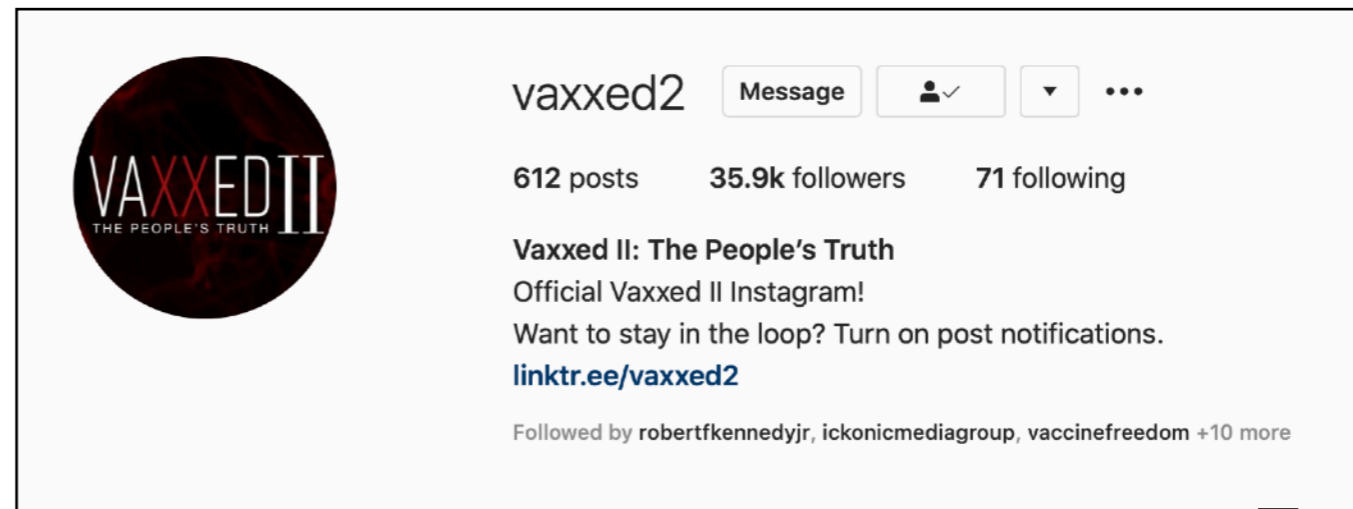


We Are Vaxxed' videos have included the false claim that Bill Gates has patented a microchip through which he will 'punish' people who don't take a vaccine.

**Facebook page
@vaxxed2
184,000+ followers**



**Instagram accounts
@vaxxed2
12,800 followers
@vaxxeddocumentary
35,900+ followers**



Informed Consent Action Network (ICAN)

ICAN's website and social media accounts regularly publish false claims about the safety of vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines.

Informed Consent Action Network (ICAN) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Austin, Texas. ICAN's most recent filing with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service described its mission as "Investigating the safety of medical procedures, pharmaceutical drugs, and vaccines while advocating for people's right to 'informed consent.'" ICAN owns a separate website, TheHighWire.com, which hosts a weekly talk show hosted by ICAN founder Del Bigtree.

Informed Consent Action Network was founded in 2016. According to a June 2019 article in The Washington Post, Del Bigtree founded the organization with a \$100,000 donation from the Selz Foundation after producing the anti-vaccine documentary "Vaxxed," which had also received funding from Bernard and Lisa Selz.



Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.

Score: 12.5/100

- ✗ **Does not repeatedly publish false content** (22 points)
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- ✗ **Regularly corrects or clarifies errors** (12.5)
- ✗ **Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly** (12.5)
- ✗ **Avoids deceptive headlines** (10)
- ✗ **Website discloses ownership and financing** (7.5)

Facebook page

@ICANdecide

45,000 followers

Instagram account

@icandecide

6,000+ followers

National Vaccine Information Center

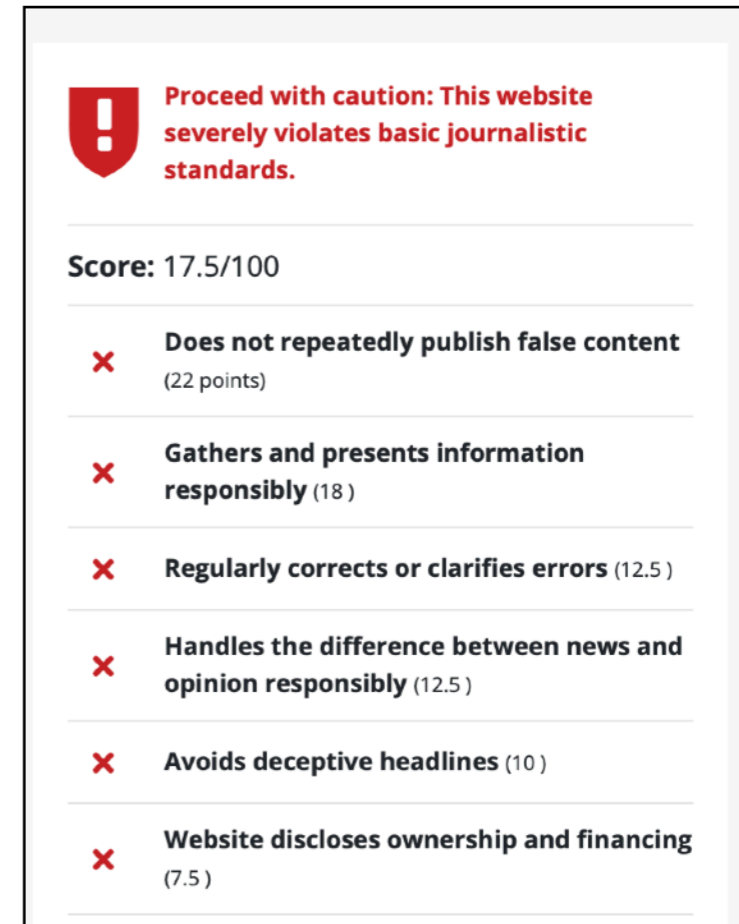
NVIC's website, TheVaccineReaction.org, frequently publishes false and misleading claims about vaccines.



Facebook page

@national.vaccine.information.center

208,000+ followers



Instagram account

@vaccinefreedom

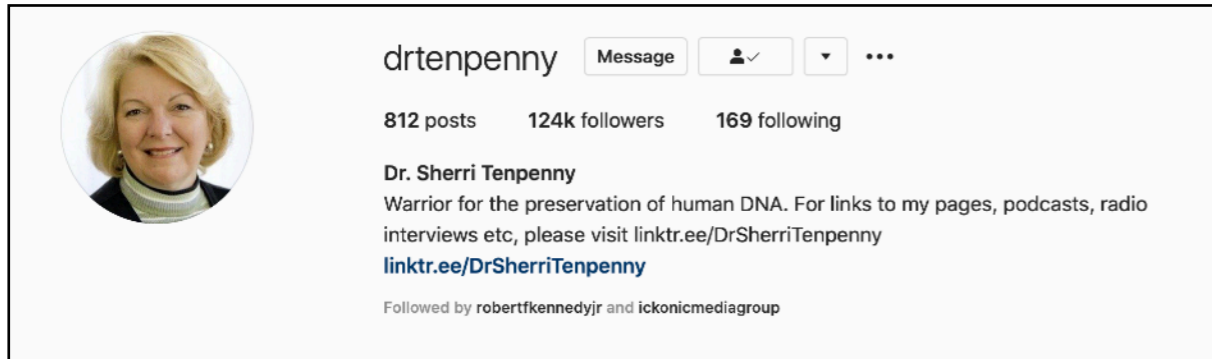
53,000 followers

Dr. Sherri Tenpenny

Instagram account

@drtenpenny

124,000 followers



drtenpenny Message

812 posts 124k followers 169 following

Dr. Sherri Tenpenny
Warrior for the preservation of human DNA. For links to my pages, podcasts, radio interviews etc, please visit linktr.ee/DrSherriTenpenny

Followed by robertfkennedyjr and ickonicmediagroup

Tenpenny's website

vaxxter.com

A website that regularly publishes false information about the safety of vaccines that has also posted false information about COVID-19.

Ownership and Financing	According to Vaxxter's Facebook page, the site is owned by Dr. Sherri J. Tenpenny, an Ohio-based physician, through Choonadi, LLC, although this is not disclosed on the site. Tenpenny is a notable figure in the anti-vaccination movement, having published several books and frequently lecturing on the subject. Vaxxter.com derives revenue from advertisements, affiliate marketing, and reader donations. The site also directs readers to "Dr. Tenpenny's Store," an e-commerce site selling supplements and anti-vaccine books.
Content	Vaxxter.com refers to itself on the homepage as "The ultimate guide to vaccine information, anti-pharma news, and more," and states that it "promotes alternative health news." Content sections include Pharma News, Dr. Tenpenny's Blog, Vaccine Politics, and OpEd - Guests. Articles often focus on national and international vaccine requirements and express concern over the safety of vaccines. Typical articles have run under headlines such as "DNA, Vaccines, and Transhumanism," "Informed Consent - Losing Ground in America," and "Ebola: Ignoring Nutrition and Playing Politics."
Credibility	Vaxxter.com has repeatedly published stories with false and misleading information about the safety of vaccines, and in 2020, the site published multiple articles promoting false and unsubstantiated claims about the COVID-19 virus.


Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.

Score: 22.5/100





- ✗ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22 points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✗ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✓ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✗ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✓ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✗ Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✓ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or

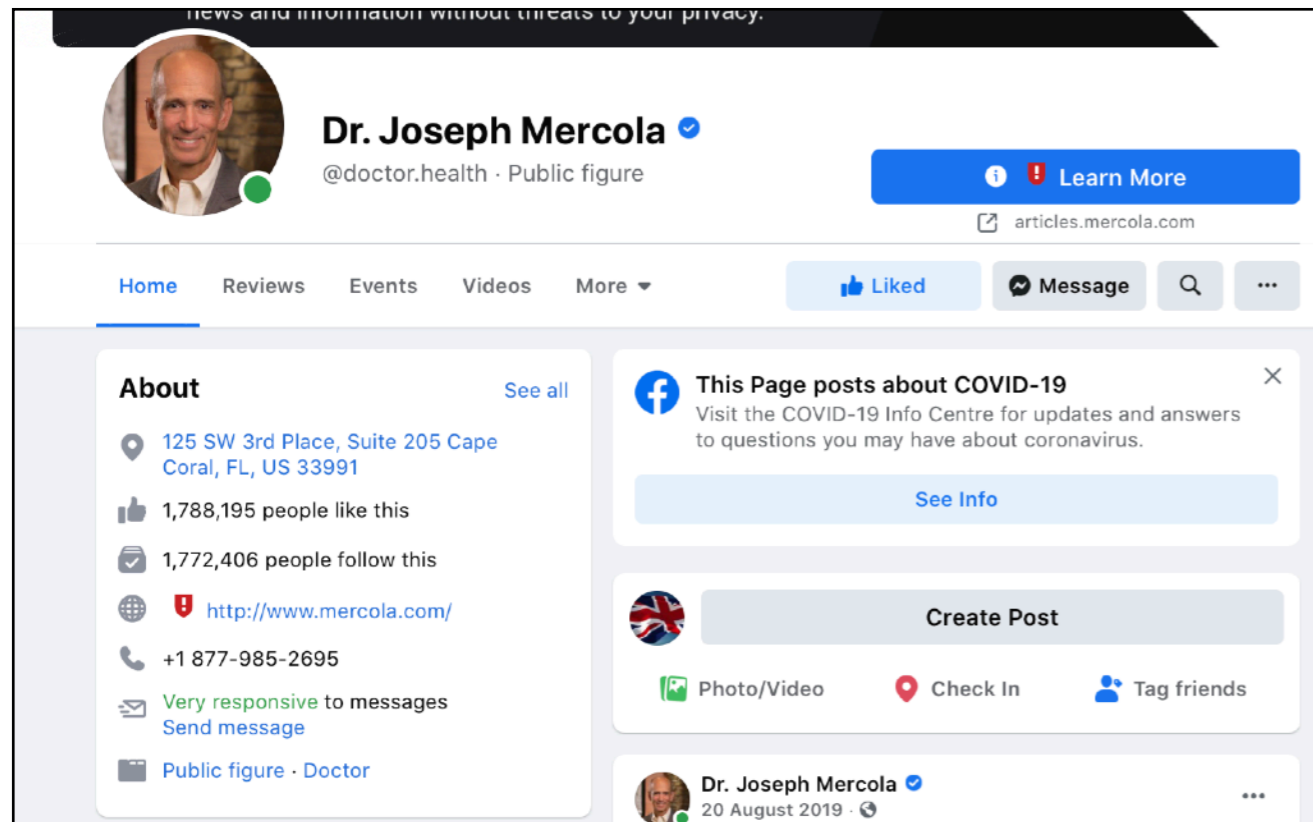
Dr. Joseph Mercola

Mercola's social media accounts and website, mercola.com, regularly publish false information about health topics and vaccines.

 **Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic journalistic standards.**

Score: 35/100

-  **Does not repeatedly publish false content** (22 points)
-  **Gathers and presents information responsibly** (18)
-  **Regularly corrects or clarifies errors** (12.5)
-  **Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly** (12.5)

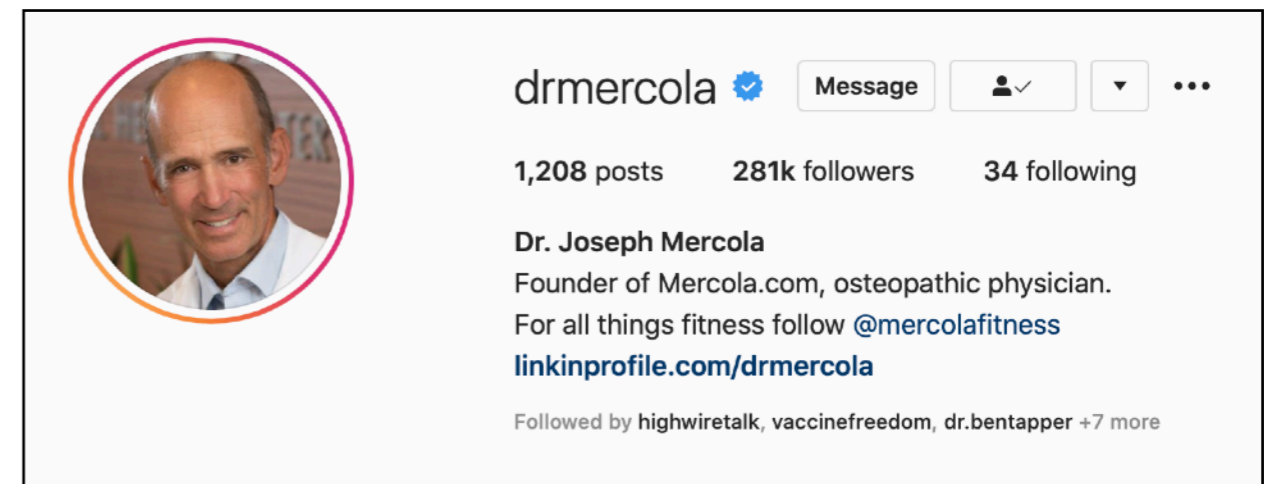


The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of Dr. Joseph Mercola, a verified public figure. The profile includes a profile picture, a cover photo, and a bio. The bio states: "125 SW 3rd Place, Suite 205 Cape Coral, FL, US 33991", "1,788,195 people like this", "1,772,406 people follow this", and "http://www.mercola.com/". The page also features a "This Page posts about COVID-19" notification and a "Create Post" button.

Facebook page (verified)

@doctor.health

1,700,000+ followers



The screenshot shows the Instagram profile of Dr. Joseph Mercola, a verified account. The profile includes a profile picture, a bio, and statistics. The bio states: "Dr. Joseph Mercola", "Founder of Mercola.com, osteopathic physician.", "For all things fitness follow @mercolafitness", and "linkedinprofile.com/drmercola". The statistics show "1,208 posts", "281k followers", and "34 following".

Instagram account (verified)

@drmercola

280,000+ followers