



## **Business and politics are driving the digital transformation of society at a high rate of speed. In schools this is happening under the slogan "digital education."**

The technology of today consists of smartphones, tablets and WiFi. Increasingly, lessons, school and learning are defined in terms of technology. The signatories to this petition are working across Europe towards a "human education", which respects the stages and laws of physical, intellectual and spiritual development. Of course, the undersigned see teaching comprehensive digital competence as an essential task of the schools. A basic understanding of how digital technology works also makes possible the capacity to be creative, responsible and critical towards it. However, all in good time!

### **Our demand:**

Teachers, administrators, and parents must be able to decide for themselves up to which age educational institutions are screen-free. Teachers must be able to choose for themselves with which media they work and teach, and if and when they use digital media as a teaching aid. For this, we need the right to have screen-free day-care centres and elementary schools. Educational policymakers are urged to move away from the fixation on widespread digital screen technology and to allow creative alternative educational ideas, which ensure that the children's learning and formative experiences take place in the real world.

### **Human Education: Age-Appropriate Interaction of Head, Heart and Hand**

Children have a right to develop over time and to master their real world environment using all their senses, and through movement and imaginative play, thereby achieving sensory-motor integration. Only through this interaction of sensory and motor experiences are they able to be well-grounded in space and time in a physically and mentally age-appropriate way. Digital media, used too early, inhibits development and reduces the real world experiences to wiping a screen. Due to the lack of physical movement, the fixed vision and resistance-less domination by the head, a malfunction of neuronal stimulation prevents the healthy development of the brain. This endangers the children's development through a series of negative effects: overstimulation, tendency to addiction, alienation from nature, as well as damage to impulse control and to the ability to reflect. Developmental Psychology and Neurobiology has presented convincing research results.<sup>1)</sup>

The aim of school and teaching is to educate students to become independent, self-directed adults. The digital transformation of society needs people who can think for themselves, make decisions and act independently. These are skills children learn especially through social interactions in the classroom, through dialogue and direct cooperation. Learning takes place through the harmonious interplay between head, heart and hand. The brain is a relational organ that needs physical movement and direct experience of the environment in order to develop.<sup>2)</sup> IT pioneers like Steve Jobs, Bill Gates and Jeff Bezos have recognized this and have acted accordingly: they do not give their own children smartphones and they regulate their use of IT.<sup>3)</sup>

1) Cf. Teuchert-Noodt, Gertraud (2015): "For Risks and Opportunities, Ask the Brain", in: Lembke, Gerald / Leipner, Ingo: "The Lie of Digital Education", 3rd edition, Redline, Munich.

2) Cf. Thomas Fuchs (2017): „Präsentation“, Tagung 'A healthy digital ecosystem', in:

[https://eliant.eu/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Conference2017/Development\\_in\\_the\\_age\\_of\\_digital\\_media\\_01.pdf](https://eliant.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Conference2017/Development_in_the_age_of_digital_media_01.pdf) Brüssel 3) Bilton, Nick (2014): „Steve Jobs Was a Low-Tech Parent“, in: <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/11/fashion/steve-jobs-apple-was-a-low-techparent.html> vom 06.02.2018