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Children Massaging Children / HAUORA lesson ,

The best example of Right Brain Learning process

"We should take care not to make the intellect our god; it has of course powerful muscles, but no personality. It cannot lead; it can only serve."

Albert Einstein *

What did the genius Einstein have in mind when writing this ?

There can of course be only one interpretation. What Einstein calls the "Powerful muscles of the intellect" corresponds to our Left Brain Learning, the Neocortex, where we learn such skills as mathematics.

The "Personality" is our Right Brain Learning capabilities based on the Subcortex/Limbic processes that correspond to our values of compassion, empathy and love.

Both are necessary functions, but it is the Personality that should be at the forefront and lead the way.

Children Massaging Children (CMC) programme is a process supporting Subcortex/limbic/emotional development of the growing brain. The New Zealand Schools Curriculum gives respect to Right Brain Learning by supporting HAUORA lessons in primary schools all over the country.

Children Massaging Children is the best representation of HAUORA and Right Brain Learning education, while typical Left Brain Education is IT virtual technology.

Let's look closer and see the relationship and balance between these 2 types of learning.

What do statistics tell us? Most, if not all schools in the western world are equipped with at least one computer.

- In the USA there is an average of 3 students for 1 computer in the classroom
- NZ has the same statistics in its schools. As well, 75 % of homes have at least one computer.

We have I Pod's, I Pads, internet in the pocket, more and more technological novelties are continually being produced .There is no doubt that schools benefit from technology. There are free resources available for teachers ready to be used in classrooms all over the world – some of the best lessons by the best teachers are

recorded as free online education media, thanks to the outreach of sponsors such as "The Gates Foundation" and "Google".

Within the last decade IT technology – “Left Brain Learning” has conquered education worldwide. This is a fact. Whether we like it or not it has already happened.

If technology seems like the most important thing in a child's education then why do parents who work in Silicon Valley send their children to “old fashion” Waldorf schools? Isn't it interesting that they choose an education based on traditional pen and pencil, art, imagination and sensory stimulation for their children - education perceived by us as old fashion and not effective?

Young parents working for Google and Apple say: “we make technology as brain-dead easy to use as possible. There's no reason why kids can't figure it out when they get older. It's like learning to use toothpaste.”

If virtual reality is introduced while the natural reality experiential senses are still forming in a child's brain, critical experiences in the development and stabilization of their natural reality are displaced and pushed aside.

To have an appropriate relationship with a screen based virtual reality one must first have a well-developed physical, emotional, cognitive foundation in what used to be the only reality – natural experience and relationship based perception - *what Einstein named “personality”*

It is capacity not content that real learning cultivates.

The whole body with all of its senses, feelings, movement and thought, interacting with the natural world, interacting with peers around them – seeing them when they are happy and feeling happiness with them, seeing them when they crying and being ready to help.

That is what empathy is !

Engagement with the world around them, by playing, running, jumping, smelling, touching, laughing, dancing and singing and the quiet, intuitive inner 'knowing' time, sharing meaning with all surrounding habitants – this is what influences the development of a healthy, balanced personality.

Buzzing, flashing, gadget, flat TV screen with animated artificial world and violent games – “*powerful muscles of technology*” as Einstein named it, should not be hailed by us as our leader!

There is a big danger for future generations to have leaders with “reptilian minds” with tools of high technology

Because of the dominance of technology, we have lost equilibrium. We miss the Right Brain Learning aspect,

- Ken Robinson warns: schools kill creativity.
http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_changing_education_paradigms.html)
- Teachers report: there is no empathy in classrooms
- Teachers complain: students have a very short attention span during lessons

Flooded with technology that is easily 'digested' and immediately forgotten, the natural ability of children to be empathic and responsive is lost.

It is easy to see why this happens when we understand where creativity and empathy originate from. Experts **Allan N. Schore, Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Bio-behavioral sciences at UCLA Medical School** discovered that during the first 18 months of life a baby builds self-perception and perception of the universe. Elements of Bonding and Secure Attachment influence growth and development of the Right Hemisphere of the brain which is responsible for intuition, creativity, empathy and social skills.

If a baby is surrounded by friendly, loving environment, and if the primary caregivers give the child love and attention, and they communicate through loving touch and language, the child's self perception and perception of the world around will be positive. The child will develop high self esteem, and a high degree of trust towards people. It will be optimistic, open minded, interested to learn and investigate world around. The child will develop empathy.

If however, the baby is neglected and raised without loving touch (the main element of Bonding & Secure Attachment) it will grow to be shy, display a fearful personality with low self esteem and a negative perception of the universe and themselves. The child will lack the skills of empathy.

The "Hardwire" – or implicit memory in these 2 cases will be totally different. The first will be connected, optimistic ready to learn - the second will be lonely, depressed, violent and disconnected – suffering emotionally, and creating problems for society when growing up.

In 2006 an open letter by the Daily Telegraph to the UK Government entitled "Urgent National Debate" has been signed by 100 authorities including. Allan Schore, Sir Richard Bowlby and Steve Biddulph,(author of *Raising Babies*). The initiators of this debate warned that 40% of toddlers in UK and America will not develop Secure Attachment !

What are the consequences of not developing a Secure Attachment?

- Addiction to sensory stimulation in adulthood (sexual abuse, drug use, crime)
- Depressive and autistic behaviour
- Violent and aggressive behaviour

- Difficulty recognizing feelings in others
- Trouble recognizing own feelings
- Impaired social maturity

The following Data is from the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering, 1981, Fahlberg, London.

Maria Montessori, claimed that “*humankind abandoned in the early formative period*” becomes the worst threat to its own survival.

During the process of Bonding and building Secure Attachment (which is simply tuning into and interacting, playing with primary caregiver) all the senses are involved. The child’s brain produces endorphins – hormones of happiness, which in a growing brain influence the formation of Rewards Pathways.

<http://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/addiction/reward/>

These Reward Pathways are the foundation for proper mental, emotional, spiritual and physical development. If the Rewards Pathway is not properly developed in early childhood then a “bandaid” is often applied later: Antidepressants are one such (highly ineffective and dangerous) management tool. Prozac has been demonstrated to have suicidal effect on children and youth (*Colombine school shooting tragedy was carried out by youths who had been on Prozac for several years*).

Coming back to HAUORA. In NZ School Curriculum an indigenous Maori term:”HAUORA” stands for;

- Taha tinana – physical well-being
- Taha hinengaro – mental and emotional well-being
- Taha whanau – social well-being
- Taha wairua – spiritual well-being

The Children Massaging Children (CMC) program fully fits these objectives.

In 2006 **Jill Morgan** (Dip Tch, ND, RMT) from Eastern Institute of Technology in Hastings researched the effects of the **Children Massaging Children** program on 140 pupils over a 15 week period at the decile 1 Ebbett Park Primary School.

Ref. Morgan, J. (2007). Children massaging children; A research project. *Massage Australia*, 55, 14-19. .

Research showed that the program improved Children’s perception of:

- Relationship with peers
- Ability to do school work
- Relationship with their fathers at home

Children Massaging Children teaches the HAUORA.

Touch is a universal language that knows no cultural barriers. The last finding listed – the improvement of relationship with father or male figure at home has a huge significance in New Zealand. Changing the atmosphere at home, improving the emotional climate within the family can contribute enormously to the child's learning process and should be taken very seriously.

As well the preventative values of the CMC program can not be ignored; Children who practice CMC in the classroom will become better parents for own children.

Children from disadvantaged environments of depression, drug addiction, violent mothers, the neglected children – who have not experienced loving, positive touch, whose nanny is often the TV set have their Hardware – Brain and nervous system poorly set up, and the multiple intelligences can not be accessed so readily.

There is however a chance to change their behavior by providing new, positive experience at school, kindergarten or other educational establishments. Children who practice massage in the classroom will be better able to care for their own children when they grow up.

Technology at school serves everyone, but if it is not balanced with Right Brain Learning processes it can only increase the distance between students. The gap between the students who have their brain properly Hardwired and therefore are doing well at schools, and those who have not experienced Secure Attachment, will grow wider.

Listening to and following the instructions in the "*Massage a Back*" song in a classroom makes children feel closer to each other, empathically and friendly to each other without the need of extra explanation.

According to research by Carolynska Institute – Uppsala University -Sweden: children who practice massage in schools do not fight with another. Supervised by a trained teacher, children enjoy close contact with each other. We have the same positive reaction regardless of whether the program is run in New Zealand or Polish schools or kindergarten.

We strongly believe in the future of "All Brain Education" . It can restore a sense of proportion between both Brain Hemisphere Left and Right and the whole of society will benefit.