

Deep Green Bush-School

Statement on Modern Technology

The priority and purpose of the Deep Green Bush-School (DGBS) is to increase the health, happiness and well-being of our children, future generations and all life on the planet.

The aim of the DGBS is to raise youth who:

- are socially and emotionally healthy
- physically healthy
- able to think critically and fearlessly
- empowered and pro-active
- have a deep connection with the natural world
- have a thorough understanding of this world
- have literacy and numeracy skills to function well in life
- have a sense of ecological and social justice
- are not afraid to take a stand for what is right

In order to accomplish this, the DGBS does not use modern technology – especially screen technologies such as computers, mobile phones, tablets and TVs.

Yet the DGBS cannot accomplish its aim without the support of parents, especially regarding the home environment. Without such support, what is accomplished at school may be lost at home.

Therefore, the Deep Green Bush School asks parents to:

- not allow children and teenagers to play video games
- not allow youth to use social media
- not allow children and teenagers to have or use a cell phone
- not allow children under the age of 12 to watch any TV or movies
- to restrict all TV watching and filter for content and the values reinforced
- to allow no more than one hour of internet a day for teenagers
- remove Wi-Fi from your home and use wired connections only
- not to use Smartphones, iPhones or tablets

Please provide your children with:

- plenty of access to the outdoors, including for:
 - foraging, hunting and fishing
 - camping and hiking
 - play and exploration
- access to books and libraries
- the opportunities to play and socialise face-to-face with friends and family
- adults who role model the above
- being able to explain to youth the harms of modern technology and the benefits in avoiding their use

A Few Questions and Answers

Don't youth need to know how to use modern technology for their future jobs?

It may be true that the current world makes us all dependent on many modern technologies, but the fact is that humans do not really need them, that youth especially do not need to use them, that their use is extremely damaging and a form of child abuse (as this document will make clear), and that modern technologies are intentionally made to be “user friendly”- which means it doesn't take much intelligence to learn and to use. When our children are older they will have no trouble learning to use the modern technologies they need to use in order to survive. Start them young, though, and we cripple them socially, emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually.

But I, as a parent, need to use modern technology for my job. Are you trying to make me feel guilty?

This is not a criticism of those who are currently dependent on technology for their employment, as the modern techno-industrial world has made everyone dependent on modern technology in some way or another. The key is to understand the analysis and then take steps to do the best we can for young people and future generations.

Is the DGBS just against all technology?

Make no mistake, the Deep Green Bush-School is not *anti-technology*; we are, however, only in favour of *democratic* technologies. This is a very important distinction, especially when our society generally claims to promote a democratic society.

Democratic technologies:

- can be made by anyone
- can be made completely from locally available materials
- promote ecological literacy
- do not cause ecological destruction – that is, they do not weaken the ability of the land and water to sustain life
- such technologies reinforce healthy social relations and an egalitarian social structure
- Examples: the tipi, the marae, raranga harakeke (flax weaving), natural medicine, bow and arrow, snare and canoe, just to name a few.

Given this definition, no modern technology is democratic. No modern technology with a battery, motor or that requires electricity can ever be democratic. These are all *authoritarian* technologies – technologies of the One Percent. They are only possible with a mindset of control and domination, the destruction of the land, and highly centralised hierarchies (governments, banks, corporations) that can manage and control it all.

Rationale for the DGBS Approach to Modern Technology

If we analyse modern technologies in the context of the aims of the Deep Green Bush-School and its curriculum, then it becomes obvious how modern technologies undermine or contradict all our aims:

The DGBS educates for social and emotional intelligence and physical health.

→ However, modern technology weakens us physically and weakens our humanity:

- Many negative effects stem from the fact that when we stare at a screen or use other modern technology, we are not engaging in live, face-to-face interactions. Yet it is precisely face-to-face interactions that form the basis for all healthy relationships. Use of screen technologies:
 - Weaken relationships between child and parents
 - Weaken a person's ability to form any healthy relationship
 - Reduces connections to nature
 - Reduces connections to people
 - Reduces empathy and compassion
 - Numbs youth to violence
 - increases general insensitivity
 - increases anti-social behaviour
 - reinforces sexism and racism
 - increases consumerism
 - Increases depression and loneliness, which increases the chances of suicide

- There are also many negative physical effects:
 - Weaker overall health
 - Weaker eyesight
 - Lack of desire to be active
 - Poorer quality of sleep
 - less sleep:
 - weakens immunity
 - increases health problems
 - Increased irritability, aggression and being prone to outbursts
 - exposure to toxic chemicals, increasing long-term risk of cancers and other diseases
 - most of the world's 80,000 synthetic chemicals have never been tested for safety
 - Many mothers' breast milk have levels of toxic chemicals beyond that allowed by food safety standards.
 - Be clear, those that force these technologies upon us ***do not care*** that children are being poisoned. Their priority is **profit and control**.

- The poisons inside schools:
 - Wireless radiation from cell phones and Wi-Fi is a Class 2b Probable Carcinogen according to the World Health Organization
 - There are thousands of studies indicating harm from wireless radiation
 - Wireless radiation has NEVER BEEN PROVEN SAFE for long-term use

- The current background level of wireless radiation in school and our communities is millions of times more than the background levels of radiation that humans evolved to cope with
- Students are bombarded with wireless radiation from Wi-Fi routers all day long, every day, from multiple routers
- The DGBS has no Wi-Fi and is free from cell phone tower signals

The DGBS educates for critical thinking, strong minds, and courageous young adults who will understand the world and won't be afraid to do what's right.

→ However, modern technology makes us passive, distracted, confused and less intelligent

- There are several negative effects of using modern technologies, regardless of what we are watching or doing with such technologies:
 - Crippled ability to concentrate or focus
 - Shortened attention span
 - Less desire to read and therefore weaker literacy skills
 - Weakened memory
 - Less ability to think
 - Weaker ability to understand and perform mathematics necessary to function in this world
 - Crippled social and emotional intelligence
 - Prolonged immaturity
 - Diminished self-esteem
 - This is all exactly what the One Percent, including corporations and governments, want.
- No matter what we're watching, as long as we're staring at a screen we're learning to be passive. We're learning to sit and stare. We need youth who are able to act.
- Everything we watch is created by corporations aiming at making sure we're ignorant consumers who just shop and dream of being rich, and have no idea what a healthy way of life should look like.
- Since corporations spend hundreds of millions of dollars in order to confuse everyone, no one is sure of what to believe anymore.
- A confused public is easy to exploit and easy to send to war

The DGBS educates for positive, life-affirming values and a mindset which contributes to healthy communities. Such values include cooperation, simplicity and living within ecological limits.

→ However, modern technology is NOT value-neutral: It's not “how you use it that matters”

Every technology reflects the values of the culture which creates it, and reflects a certain way of thinking and interacting with the world. A car is not neutral when to make it requires destroying the Earth (through mining, oil wars and paving over the living Earth, for example) and destroying lives

(one million deaths each year, tens of millions injured or crippled). A gun, like a missile, is also not neutral: it is not a technology that promotes diplomacy. It emphasises force and the threat of violence and death. All modern technologies reflect a culture (Western culture) which values control, domination, violence, patriarchy, quantification, profit and efficiency over everything else.

Thus, it is entirely nonsensical to argue that “it's how you use it that matters”. No modern technology is value-neutral.

The DGBS educates for ecological literacy and knowing how to live in a way which sustains biodiversity and ecological communities.

→ However, modern technology requires the destruction of the Earth:

Every piece of modern technology is made from **mining**, which means **deforestation, habitat destruction and pollution** with toxic chemicals. The fossil fuels required to power the mining machines require **oil wars** in order to control oil, and wars destroy the Earth, in addition to killing and injuring millions of people. The burning of fossil fuels required to power modern technologies is the cause of **Anthropogenic Climate Change**, which is undermining the ability of the planet to support life.

- Most of all global deforestation over the last 10,000 years has occurred in just the last 200 years – the years of industry and modern technology
- In just the last 40 years, a half of all wildlife has been wiped out
- Each and every day, between 100 and 200 species go extinct

The DGBS educates for solidarity with all humans across the planet, and concern for social justice.

→ However, modern technology requires destroying human lives:

No one would willingly work in the mines or factories where modern technologies are made. Communities must be destroyed, traditional ways of living must be destroyed, populations must be traumatised, the Western economic system must be forced upon them and people must be impoverished in order to have no other choice but to work in mines or factories. Furthermore, the fossil fuels required to power the extraction, production, distribution and use of modern technologies are only controlled through war and the killing of millions of people. For example, more than three million people were killed in Iraq, just so the U.S. could have oil. During the last twenty years, several million Congolese have been killed in a civil war perpetuated by Western nations who want easy access to the Congo's resources (such as rare earth metals) used in making modern technologies. This is the cost of computers, cars, TVs and cell phones.

One may argue that there are numerous countries, such as New Zealand, which do not explicitly invade other countries to control resources. Yet these smaller countries rely on the “stronger” nations, which act on behalf of corporations and the One Percent, to control access to resources from other lands, whether it's through “trade agreements”, economic sanctions, Western-led coups or assassinations, or outright invasion.

The DGBS educates for freedom and the responsibilities required for freedom.

→ However, modern technology makes everyone a slave:

Modern technology and the industrial economy have reinforced **wage slavery** – not all that much different from chattel slavery, which is the form we usually picture (such as black slaves of the American South). Capitalism, along with the spread of modern technology, have made wage slaves of *everyone*. Sure, you can quit – but without finding a new job (ie, selling your time and energy so you can be exploited by the rich) then you starve. After all, every piece of land on the planet has been declared private property and claimed, with police and armies used to prevent people from being able to live off the land as we did for the past two million years, thus forcing everyone to rent themselves out to be exploited. It is only with modern technologies that this wage slavery has been able to be globalised.

The DGBS educates for living in a way which sustains and nurtures all life on the planet.

→ However, modern technology is poisoning the entire planet:

In the last one hundred years, 80,000 synthetic chemicals have been invented, and these chemicals now poison the entire planet. Every laptop, tablet and cell phone contains countless toxic chemicals and toxic metals. The oceans are full of chemicals, plastic and radioactive waste. Rivers are choked and fouled with industrial and agricultural pollution. The majority of all food on the planet is drenched in carcinogenic pesticides such as Monsanto's Roundup (glyphosate). The current cancer epidemic is a direct result of the poisoning of the planet and our bodies.

The DGBS curriculum promotes peaceful social relations and a healthy culture.

→ However, modern technology exists for control, surveillance and war:

- All modern technologies are, above all, used by militaries to expand their control and their killing power to generate greater control, power and profit. Inventions such as the car, airplane, computer, internet and wireless technologies have allowed militaries, acting on behalf of the One Percent, to expand their killing potential to the point where they can now wipe out life on Earth at the press of a button.
- Computers and the internet are tools of control and communication – which above all allows the state and military to control their population and make war
- The same way of thinking that created the computer or cell phone also created nuclear bombs and missiles – we cannot have one without the other
- Everyone is watched and everything is recorded – a watched population is fearful and unwilling to challenge the status quo to make things better.

The DGBS respects and fully supports the rights of indigenous and non-Western cultures to maintain their cultural integrity and their traditional ways of living.

→ However, modern technology destroys all indigenous and non-Western cultures:

- Modern technology, like Western economics, is forced on all cultures
- Since modern technology represents a Western way of thinking, with Western values, the use of modern technology by indigenous people undermines their sustainable and long-lasting traditions, cultures and ways of living
- All that is left is a hollow shell of indigenous culture – songs, dances and costumes to be exploited by tourists

The DGBS educates for social and ecological justice and an end to all forms of oppression.

→ However, modern technology is a tool of corporations and the rich to further exploit and destroy the Earth and everyone on it for the sake of profit:

We may have our own personal uses of modern technology, but:

- *Modern technologies are not invented for the public good* – they are invented to exploit, to destroy and to make a profit – that is the only reason they exist
- Corporations and governments will destroy the entire planet in search of more money and resources to control
- Modern technology is essentially **the technology of the One Percent** - that is, ordinary people on their own would never dream of creating technologies that are so dangerous and destructive. But the One Percent – ie, the elite, the super-rich – are a pathological group that care only about their own wealth and power and maintaining it. What we call modern technologies are technologies they paid their servants (scientists, inventors, programmers, etc.) to create for their own use, in their quest for ever more power and control.

The DGBS promotes democratic decision-making and an egalitarian way of life.

→ However, modern technology is fundamentally *anti*-democratic:

- no one votes on whether to adopt modern technologies – they are forced upon us
- individuals are not able to fashion modern technologies, on their own, out of raw materials readily available in the environment
- modern technologies (including solar panels and wind turbines) are only possible by having centralised bureaucracies and an elite that, with their armies and police, can manage the exploitation of people and the plunder and destruction of the Earth
- modern technologies concentrate power into the hands of a few – which, of course, is the opposite of democracy

The DGBS promotes the well-being of youth, all people on the planet, future generations, and all forms of life.

→ However, modern technology does NOT bring well-being:

- As modern technology use rises, so does mental illness, suicide, depression, alcoholism and drug use
- The more modern technology we have, the more miserable we are
- Thousands of nuclear warheads now lay waiting to be launched
- This is the most violent and destructive culture to ever exist – it is destroying life across the entire planet

The priority and purpose of the DGBS is to increase the health, happiness and well-being of our children, future generations and all life on the planet. Given this priority, there is absolutely no sane or rational way to defend modern technology.

**Please assist us in raising a new generation who will be
fearless thinkers,
physically strong,
socially and emotionally healthy,
knowledgeable
and who will have the courage to live in a way
that supports all life on the planet.**

Now is the time to be strong and stand for what is right.

**For further reading and more information, go to:
www.deepgreenbushschool.org**