GOETHEANUM COMMUNICATIONS

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**Encouraging activity**

**For the paediatrician Michaela Glöckler it is crucial   
that educational institutions promote healthy development**

**Because children and adolescents spend much of their time in educational settings, the spatial, conceptual and social make-up of these places will affect their health right into adulthood. According to the paediatrician Michaela Glöckler it is therefore crucial that they facilitate healthy development.**

A person‘s weakness is their strength. They respond sensitively to the impressions streaming in from their surroundings. They are exposed to them, but due to their impressionability they are also able to develop the most diverse faculties – unlike animals whose capacities are highly specialized in accordance with their functions.

Michaela Glöckler, an experienced paediatrician, school doctor and international consultant is alarmed by the increase of physical and mental disorders in children and adolescents. She therefore advocates that educational settings must be health-promoting, “because a healthy maturation is the best precondition for a creative life later on.”

Based on her experience in Waldorf Schools and as an anthroposophic paediatrician, Michaela Glöckler says that health goes back to various factors. They range from architectural aspects of educational settings through curricula and teaching methods to administrative structures and the food served in the school kitchen. These are all expressions of the attitudes adults have towards children. Do they promote development rather than demand achievements? “It is important to create an environment that inspires activity and self-efficacy rather than give instructions, to provide real-world experiences before introducing digital teaching, and to meet all the needs children and adolescents have, which, in my view, include science, art and spirituality,” Michaela Glöckler summarizes further aspects of a healthy learning environment.

(1812 characters/SJ; translation by Margot M. Saar)

**Book** Michaela Glöckler: Education for the Future: How to nurture health and human potential? Experiences and perspectives from the global Waldorf School movement for education in the 21st century, 252 pages, InterActions Stroud UK, £ 19.99 **Web** www.wynstonespress.com/Education-for-the-Future.html

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