

Our Children @ Risk

“Children have a basic right to live in environments that promote their social, emotional and intellectual well-being. They have the right to grow up, and parents have the right to raise them, without being undermined by greed.”

*Susan Linn**

Echoing the 1983 “Nation at Risk” report, Parents Across America today declares, “If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the takeover of public education by digital technology that threatens our children's health and well-being, captures their private data, and undermines the best elements of their education, we might well view it as an act of war.”

PAA is speaking out for balanced, healthy classrooms for our children. While we do not oppose appropriate use of technology, we reject the misuse and overuse being forced on our nation's schools by corporate interests and misguided politicians. We strongly oppose the push to increase student screen time, replace teachers with packaged lessons delivered by digital devices, and continuously test students, data-mining the results. We are very concerned that the massive and growing use of EdTech** is displacing valuable elements of schooling without providing clear benefits, and threatening our children's right to a healthy and educationally-appropriate school environment.

We have prepared a set of informational materials for parents covering PAA's specific concerns about EdTech's:

- harmful effects on children's mental and emotional development,
- negative impact on student intellectual and academic growth,
- damaging physical effects,
- depersonalization and other ways of undermining the educational process,
- questionable value and effectiveness,
- continuous testing of students, often without obtaining consent from or even informing students or parents,
- threats to student data privacy, and
- hugely lucrative benefits for private companies.

Based on these and other concerns, we call on legislators and education policy makers to consider our list of recommendations found at <http://parentsacrossamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/EdTechRecsdraft8-20-16.pdf>.

* “The commercialization of childhood, etc.” *Paediatr Child Health* Vol. 15 No 4 April 2010 (196-197)

** We use the term EdTech to cover the many terms and buzz words associated with digital learning.

Please see our documentation paper (<http://tinyurl.com/edtechdocu>) and reports (<http://tinyurl.com/PAAEdTechreports>) for more detailed information, references and background.