

Neuroscience in Education: Anniversary edition sparked inspiring dialogue between technology and the human brain



On Wednesday, March 26, Prague's DUO Hotel became the center of dialogue between neurology and pedagogy. The tenth anniversary edition of the Neuroscience in Education conference attracted hundreds of interested educators, HR professionals, and education experts who came to draw inspiration from leading Czech and foreign experts.

Warning against the digital threat

Right at the start of the conference, a lecture by neurologist Martin Jan Stránský, MD, caught the audience's attention as he presented alarming data on the impact of digital technologies on the human brain. Based on the results of magnetic resonance imaging of 3,000 children, he demonstrated how excessive use of screens disrupts the connection between the frontal lobe and the memory center.

"The earlier a child gets a phone, the higher their risk of depression and anxiety," warned Stránský during his presentation. According to him, the human brain has changed more in the last 25 years than in the previous 250,000 years—and this is precisely because of digital technologies.

He also made a surprising point that leading global technology creators such as Bill Gates and Steve Jobs significantly restricted their own children's use of digital devices. The lecture sparked a lively discussion among participants about how to set reasonable limits on the use of digital devices in the school environment.

Technology as an opportunity, not a problem

A refreshing perspective on the role of technology was presented by Markéta Fibigerová, co-founder of IT Gymnasium. "The world is full of technology and we all work with it. Technology is present in all professions and we simply cannot pretend that we can turn it off," said Fibigerová.

In her presentation, she focused on the characteristics of the current generation of students, which she said excels in empathy, language skills, and interest in global issues. At the same time, however, she pointed out the tendency of young people to experience anxiety and dependence on immediate feedback.

Fibigerová presented several practical approaches from the IT high school, including an emphasis on physical activity, the use of the Discord communication platform, and informal relationships between teachers and students. "The ultimate goal is to send students out into the world knowing what they are good at, with their own vision and self-confidence," she emphasized.

Two generations of neurosurgeons on one stage

A special moment was the joint appearance of two generations of leading Czech neurosurgeons – Doc. MUDr. Vladimír Beneš, Ph.D., and his father, Prof. MUDr. Vladimír Beneš, DrSc. Their dialogue on the development of neurosurgery and the implications of the latest findings for education was one of the most watched items on the program.

Practical workshops captivated participants

The afternoon block offered participants the opportunity to get involved in practical activities. Mgr. Dana Hrbáčová led a workshop focused on stress management techniques, which was particularly appreciated by teachers with practical experience.

A foreign perspective on education was provided by Austrian expert Mag. Alexander Degenhart, who presented modern approaches to lifelong learning using gamification in his workshop. Participants tried out how they can teach managerial decisions through games, in which the economic status of a virtual company changes based on the decisions made.

Taking stock of the anniversary year

The conference confirmed that combining the latest findings on how the brain works with practical applications in education is a topic that resonates in the Czech environment. Participants left not only with new knowledge, but also with practical tools for their teaching practice, and some lucky ones even with prizes from the raffle, which traditionally concluded the entire program.