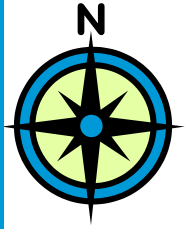


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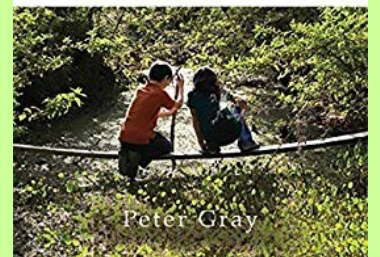
**DR. PETER GRAY**  
**PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF**  
**PSYCHOLOGY, BOSTON COLLEGE**  
**AND AUTHOR OF FREE TO LEARN**

How Free Play Promotes Children's  
 Self-Regulation, Independence, and Emotional Resilience

In the United States and in other Western nations there has been a well-documented, dramatic decline, over the last several decades, in children's freedom to play with other children, in their own chosen ways, without adult direction. Over this same period there has been a dramatic increase in childhood depression and anxiety and decline in young people's sense of being in control of their own lives. In this talk I will present the logic and evidence behind my claim that the decline in free play is *a*, if not *the*, major cause of these deleterious effects on children's psychological wellbeing. I will explain how play provides practice, for children, in the most important skills required for successful adulthood. Finally, I will describe some ways to bring real play back to children's lives in our time.

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**LEARN**

*Why Unleashing the Instinct to Play Will  
 Make Our Children Happier, More Self-Reliant,  
 and Better Students for Life*



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