



PLAYING

FOR KEEPS

The Upside of Downtime



A KPJR FILMS PRODUCTION "PLAYING FOR KEEPS"

MUSIC BY KATHRYN BOSTIC SOUND DESIGNER BOB EDWARDS

LINE PRODUCER SUZANNE DEBRUNNER POST PRODUCER CASSANDRA JABOLA

EDITOR JEFF BOYETTE DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN BEHRENS AND DANIEL MARRACINO

PRODUCED BY KAREN PRITZKER DIRECTED BY JAMES REDFORD

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ENLIGHTEN

PLAYING FOR KEEPS examines the importance of play and downtime for all of us – children, adults, seniors, and animals. It is a tapestry of interwoven characters that takes a look at the health benefits of the play state as well as its recent decline in our lives.

A documentary film by KPJR Films.

SYNOPSIS

Consider the official definition of play: *engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose*. And yet hard science and deep wisdom tell us that play is neither silly nor impractical. The desire to engage in enjoyable experiences for their own sake is hard-wired into the brains of all mammals, and humans are no exception. Children deprived of independent play often pay the price in decreased social and emotional well-being. Conversely, adults who remain playful throughout life have better longevity. This is particularly true for people who have experienced chronic stress and/or acute trauma.

Despite its value, time spent playing has dropped precipitously. We bring our work home on tablets and smartphones. We pursue self-improvement with militaristic zeal. Entertainment passively floods our senses in a never-ending cycle of clicks, likes and swipes. As animals, we have evolved to thrive in a three-dimensional environment that engages our senses and emotions, yet our ever-increasing online activity (ironically called social media) can isolate us from deeper and more rewarding experiences.

PLAYING FOR KEEPS examines the value of play through a health lens. We feature high-performing individuals who prioritize play as essential to a happier life. We witness how play is a particularly powerful antidote to those subjected to stress and danger on the job, while highlighting the power of a playful approach to our daily lives, regardless of our circumstance.

As with all of our films, *PLAYING FOR KEEPS* aims to serve as a valuable tool for those working against vexing social challenges, by drawing from KPJR's deep experience with successful impact campaigns and strategic outreach partners.

"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

- James Howell's proverbs

IMPACT TOOLKIT

Engage

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James Redford

IMBD

"The child is the father of the man."

- William Wordsworth

Director's Statement

"The primary goal of *PLAYING FOR KEEPS*, as with all of our films, is to aid in the health and repair of our social fabric. At first glance, a film about the physical, emotional and social benefits of play might seem a little lightweight, but a deep look at the power of play reveals a uniquely effective way to reduce stress, improve health and bolster community connections.

As it turns out, adults who engage in enjoyable pastimes, hobbies, and various forms of play are effectively inoculating themselves against the dark side of the modern era. The people we met while making this film were a diverse lot, spanning careers from oncology nursing to primetime newscasting. Their play practices – from hula hooping to playing in a rock band, were equally diverse. Nonetheless, all the subjects in *PLAYING FOR KEEPS* all shared a joie de vivre that was infectious and no doubt good for their overall well-being.

For many of us, however, the pace and complexity of our daily existence has reduced our physical activities as well as community connections, adding fuel to the fire of such problems as depression, suicide, and drug abuse as well as heart disease, obesity and diabetes. Spending time doing something fun that's self-generated and doesn't offer external reward can seem frivolous in today's outcome-driven society. However, it is the very process of engaging fun activities in which the reward is internal that the biggest benefits of wellness can occur.

Our goal in making *PLAYING FOR KEEPS* is to remind us all of the enjoyable and healthy benefits of having more fun. Rather than embarking on a sharp diatribe about the ways in which the modern world inflicts insidious harm on all of us, the film aims to provide us with helpful tools and inspiring examples of how having more fun can be a powerful weapon in our quest to a better sense of wellness – and well-being."



Karen Pritzker is an editor, film producer and co-founder of KPJR Films. She has executive produced three documentary films: *The Big Picture: Rethinking Dyslexia*, *Paper Tigers*, and *Resilience: The Biology of Stress and The Science of Hope*.

Pritzker also serves as President of the Seedlings Foundation, which supports programs that nourish the physical and mental health of children and families.

“We made this film for the people whose job it is to put others first. The film will benefit anyone, but it is the teachers, doctors, police officers, and social workers we had in mind. Those who take their responsibilities so much to heart that they don’t make space for themselves.

But all work and no play takes a toll.

Studies show that adults who regularly engage in activities of play are less likely to develop serious health issues and more likely to live longer. It turns out that when we make space for fun, we are not only happier, we are healthier.

The benefits of play are clear. The hurdle we must leap over now is giving ourselves—and each other—the permission to prioritize fun. To view play as a necessity...and a critical component of health and well-being.” — Karen Pritzker



Karen Pritzker

Producer

IMBD



CHARACTER
SPOTLIGHTS



Caroline has been hula hooping (hoopdancing) for over 13 years. She believes that the experience of joy and the practice of play is our birthright. She speaks passionately about the power of body and movement play for self-care and the importance and necessity of team-play among healthcare professionals towards creating and fostering more trusting and healthier work environments for improved patient outcomes and enhanced work-life balance.

Recently, Caroline completed her Doctorate of Philosophy in Psychology at Meridian University, where she wrote her dissertation on “Play and its Effects on Burnout and Compassion Fatigue Among Healthcare Professionals.” She serves as an educator, clinical psychologist, and public speaker. As well, she produces body and movement play retreats to guide women, breast cancer survivors, healthcare professionals, educators, nursing and medical students, and mothers all over the world to discover, explore, practice, protect, and share their unique creative expression through the sacred practice of play, with the focus and hope, to reawaken and foster purpose, meaning, and authentic connection through shared joy.



Caroline Cárdenas

Oncology Nurse MSN, MA, RN, CBCN



David Miles, Jr.

Founder of Church of 8 Wheels

“The Godfather of Skating”, the “Pied Piper of Skating”, the “Mayor of Golden Gate Park”, these are some of the accolades bestowed on David Miles. He is founder and president of the California Outdoor Rollerskating Association, the Golden Gate Park Skate Patrol, the Midnight Rollers Friday Night Skate, The Skate Against Violence Campaign and DMJ Inline Sports Marketing. He is also producer/director of *Skatin’ Place*, one of San Francisco’s highest rated public access television shows now streaming on the web.

Originally from Kansas City, MO, David moved to San Francisco in the spring of 1979. His third day in the city, he ventured out to Golden Gate Park to see the sites. While walking through the Conservatory of Flowers, David was startled by four roller skaters that whizzed by. While this was unheard of in Kansas City, it fascinated David. The next day he went out and bought his first pair of skates. For David, skating is a lifelong passion. He has committed himself to the development of this sport. He has developed a very vibrant and successful skate community producing over 2,000 skate events, competitions, races and parades. Events like the Napa to Calistoga Roadskate, the Bridge to Boardwalk Roll from San Francisco to Santa Cruz, the San Francisco to Los Angeles Skate Against Violence, and the Bauer Point to Point have been featured in national magazines including *Sports Illustrated* and on the front page of newspapers throughout the country.

David is most notably known as the leader of the San Francisco’s Friday Night Skate. This group of skaters have been rollin’ through the streets of San Francisco every Friday night since 1989. The group has been featured on countless television shows around the world. The event is now a worldwide skating movement that has spread to cities like Amsterdam, Berlin, and Paris, where they have over 30,000 skaters skating the streets on Friday nights.

Isabella Miller is a native of Marin County, California and lives and works in the Bay Area. Her life-long passion for film has led to her current position as Program Director at the Berkeley FILM Foundation - a 501(c)(3) that gives financial support to local, independent filmmakers located in the East Bay.

Prior to joining the Berkeley FILM Foundation, Isabella served in various roles at organizations with a social justice focus, most recently as the Executive Assistant to Jennifer Siebel Newsom, Founder and CEO of The Representation Project.

Isabella attended American University in Washington, D.C. and obtained her bachelor's degree in political science. She remained in Washington for a number of years to continue a career in the political arena.

When work is done, Isabella enjoys several hobbies, including classic film, writing, historic preservation and of course - swing dancing.



Isabella Miller

Program Director, Berkeley FILM Foundation



Jodi Smith LCSW, RPT-S, CAAPT-S and her canine co-therapists—Daltrey and Daenerys—provide play therapy services to people of all ages. Jodi is a licensed Clinical Social Worker, Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor and Certified Animal Assisted Play Therapist. Jodi has been working with troubled and at-risk children, teenagers and their families, in various capacities, for over 15 years. She has worked extensively with children in a wide variety of settings including residential treatment centers, hospitals, and schools.

She is currently the director of Norton-Fisher Child & Family Programs for West End Family Counseling. Additionally, she maintains a private practice in Claremont and is a part-time lecturer for USC School of Social Work. She received her bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of California, Santa Barbara and her master's degree in social work from the University of Southern California.

She is actively involved with the California Association for Play Therapy and has held various leadership roles with the organization in the past. Additionally, in 2005 Jodi had the privilege of participating in a joint relief effort between the Association for Play Therapy and Operation USA in providing direct intervention and training to Tsunami survivors and care providers in Sri Lanka.

Jodi Smith

LCSW, RPT-S, CAAPT-I Canine Therapist



Kara Masciangelo

**Information Services Manager,
Federal Reserve Bank of New York**

Kara was born and raised in New York City and is an Information Services Manager (aka librarian) at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. She discovered paddleboarding at Manhattan Kayak and SUP in 2014, and was hooked. Since then, she has made it a point to find a place to paddle everywhere she goes. When not paddling, Kara can be found singing with her twin sister in a karaoke or cabaret haunt, or sitting on a park bench with her husband and her ukulele.



Lester Holt is an award-winning journalist and anchor of *NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt*, the network's flagship broadcast and the #1 newscast in America. He also anchors *Dateline NBC*, now in its 28th season, and leads *NBC News*' special reports, breaking news and primetime political coverage.

Coined the "most-trusted television news personality in America" by a *Hollywood Reporter*/Morning Consult poll, Holt was named anchor of *NBC Nightly News* in June 2015 after anchoring the weekend editions of *NBC Nightly News* for eight years and co-anchoring *Weekend TODAY* for 12 years. Holt has served as principal anchor of *Dateline NBC* since September 2011 and joined *NBC News* in 2000.

Holt has been recognized with numerous honors, including multiple Emmy Awards and a Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award. In 2019, he was honored with the prestigious Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism. Two years prior in 2017, he was honored with Quinnipiac University's Fred Friendly First Amendment Award. In April 2016, Holt received several notable designations: he was featured on *TIME*'s "100 Most Influential People" list, *The Hollywood Reporter*'s "Most Powerful People in New York" list, and was named "Journalist of the Year" by the National Association of Black Journalists.



Lester Holt

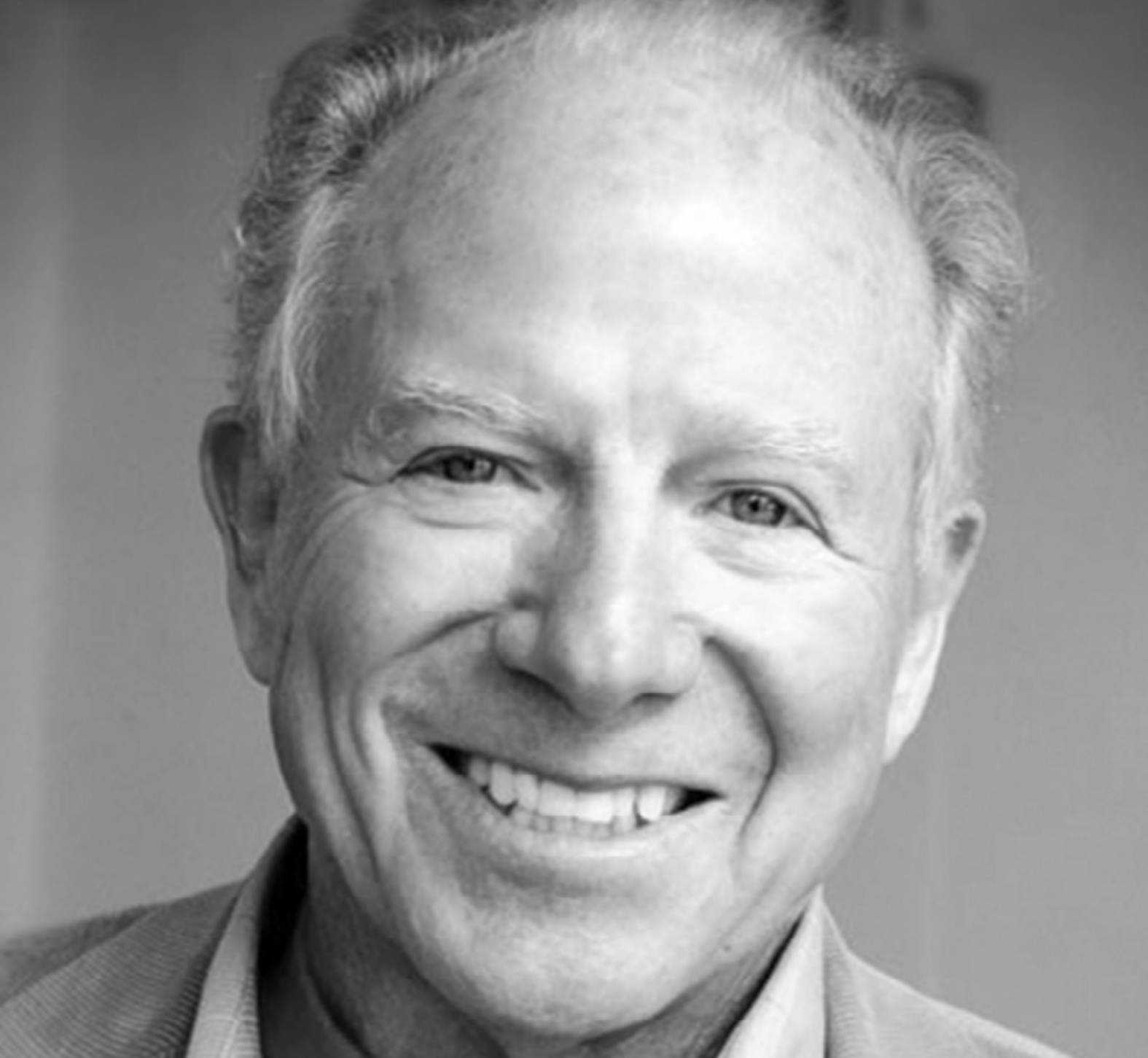
***Anchor, NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt;
Anchor, Dateline NBC***



Peter Gray, Ph.D.

Professor of Psychology at Boston College

Dr. Peter Gray is a research professor of psychology at Boston College and a specialist in developmental and evolutionary psychology. He is the author of an introductory textbook, *Psychology*, and *Free to Learn*, a book about children's natural ways of educating themselves, and how adults can help (Basic Books, 2013).



Dr. Stuart Brown

Founder of The National Institute for Play

Our species, he says, “is built for play, and built by play.”

Trained in general and internal medicine, psychiatry and clinical research, Dr. Stuart Brown first recognized the importance of play by discovering its absence in the life stories of murderers and felony drunken drivers. His years of clinical practice and review of over 6,000 personal play histories affirmed the importance and need for healthy play throughout the human life cycle. His independent scholarship and exploration of the evolution and neuroscience of human and animal play have led to the establishment of the National Institute for Play (NIFP).

NIFP’s mission is to bring the unrealized knowledge, practices and benefits of play into public life. Dr. Brown was the instigator and executive producer of the three-part PBS series, *The Promise of Play*, and co-produced the BBC-PBS series, *Soul of the Universe*. His experience as a medical administrator, producer, scientific consultant or creator of numerous other productions on Joseph Campbell, cosmology, animal play, and stress, plus his scientific and popular writings have identified him as the foremost “practical champion of the knowledge of play.”

Dr. Brown’s book, *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*, has been translated into twelve languages. He co-teaches From Play to Innovation at the Hasso Plattner School of Design at Stanford University, and is the “Key Strategist” for the Nevada Medical Center’s Global Play Science Institute. In addition to regular creative scholarly contributions for the PlayCore company, he enjoys other international corporate and academic consulting on play and its many contributions through their engagement with it, as it enhances overall human well-being. As the information base about play grows, it is evident that play is a public health necessity.

Film Credits

Country USA

Running Time 63 minutes

Directed by James Redford

Produced by Karen Pritzker

Editor Jeff Boyette

Directors of Photography John Behrens and Daniel Marracino

Line Producer Suzanne Debrunner

Post Producer Cassandra Jabola

Sound Designer Bob Edwards

Music by Kathryn Bostic

Post-Production Sound Services by

Skywalker Sound, a Lucasfilm Ltd. Company, Marin County, California

HD Finishing by

ZAP Zoetrope Aubry Productions, San Francisco

QUOTES / TESTIMONIALS

“ ”

Playing for Keeps is really well done. It sends a good message paralleling the goal of lifetime activity that is inherent in good physical education programs.
- *Coordinator for Health & Physical Education*

I particularly enjoyed, Playing for Keeps. It made me think about the role of play in our adult lives. I realized how quickly society has changed and makes me wonder about the impact these changes will have on our society as a whole. I certainly think it is time to realize the value of play in our student's lives and our own lives.

- *Head Teacher/Technology Director*

Play is a public health survival necessity!

- *Stuart Brown, MD & Founder of the National Institute for Play*

Play fosters the imagination and the imagination is essential for us to be able to engage in the world and bring out our uniqueness. Play is a portal to engage with our imagination and actually feel a sense of aliveness.

- *Caroline Cardenas, PhD*

UCLA Health Equity Seminar Series Kick-Off

<https://healthy.ucla.edu/health-equity-seminars/ucplaywell/>

Why talk about Play right now? Play can have an impact on health equity in the way that we think about empathy, in the way that we think about what play means - who has access to it - and how we give access to folks who need to play who may be in very difficult circumstances; who need outlets; who need a relief from stress and who need to be able to relate to each other -both children and adults - and older adults that need to be able to relate to each other especially in this moment of COVID that will help to create more health, hopefully, longer term.

- *Dr. Nicole Green, Executive Director Counseling & Psychological Services UCLA*

There are definitely many barriers that inhibit students from reaching their full health potential. In order to play, we as students first need to give ourselves the permission to do so. To do something just for the simple joy of doing it not because it has a pragmatic purpose or because it is admired by somebody else but something that we intrinsically enjoy and value.

- *Miranda, UCLA undergraduate Student*





PLAYING FOR KEEPS



Festivals 2020

Bozeman international Film Festival
AmDocs Film Festival
BendFilm Festival
Mill Valley Film Festival
Louisville Film Festival
Ojai Film Festival



Festivals 2021:

San Francisco Independent Film Festival
**The Impact DOCS Award - Award of
Excellence: Documentary Feature**
Sun Valley Film Festival
Kansas City Film Festival
Illuminate Film Festival
Sedona international sFilm Festival
Spirit Film Festival
New Haven International Film Festival
DOCUTAH International Film Festiva

ABOUT KPJR

Stories That Help

We confront society's hidden challenges.

And we honor those that fight them. One story at a time.

We like stories that affect mindsets. A good story can move people to think in a different way. It can change lives in ways no one ever expected.

Every film we make has a potential ripple effect.

KPJRFilms.co

KPJR FILM GALLERY



Paper Tigers

One high school's unlikely success story

Captures the pain, the danger and the hopes of struggling teens—and the teachers armed with new science who are changing their lives for the better.

[Paper Tigers](#)



RESILIENCE:

The biology of stress and the science of hope

Examining the emerging science around Toxic Stress and how it negatively alters the brains and bodies of children if left untreated.

[Resilience](#)



THE BIG PICTURE:

Rethinking Dyslexia

The myths, the stigmas, the truths, revealed

The accounts of children, experts and iconic leaders help clear up the misconceptions about dyslexia and give hope to those who have it.

[The Big Picture](#)



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