

## Steve Gross

Founder and Chief Playmaker, Life is Good Playmakers

An expert on the transformative power of optimism, Steve Gross, M.S.W. is the founder and chief playmaker of the Life is Good Playmakers – a non-profit whose mission is to harness the power of optimism to help kids heal from the traumas of poverty, violence, and illness. Life is Good Playmakers now positively impacts over 1 million kids annually, partnering with leading childcare organizations to strengthen their capacity to build healing, life-changing relationships with children in their care.

In his inspiring, engaging, and thought-provoking keynotes, Gross explains why optimism is the single most important trait a person can have, especially in navigating challenging and change-filled times like these. By incorporating research and personal stories from the field, he explores the optimism-based strategies that have helped some of the most vulnerable communities thrive, and explains how audiences can apply them in a personal and professional capacity to focus on the good and overcome life's most difficult challenges.

Fresh out of college in the 80s, Gross created a program to help Greater Boston's most vulnerable children experience the joys of childhood. His work was centered around cultivating environments of play, joy, relationships, and environment that fostered healing through optimism where it was needed most. Quickly, his philosophy caught the attention of the nation's leading trauma experts and by the early 90's, Gross was called upon to lead widespread healing efforts to bring optimism, joy, and resilience to communities impacted by war, natural disaster, gun violence, poverty, addiction, and illness across the world.

Today, Gross is a sought-after speaker and has spoken to a wide variety of audiences including Harvard University, IBM, The NCAA Coaches Association, Raytheon, The International Society of Traumatic Stress Studies, Save the Children, FOX Broadcasting, Newtown Public Schools, Cigna Healthcare, and many more.

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