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Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis

Robert D. Putnam, Ph.D.

Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy, Harvard University

Author, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community and Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis

Friday, April 29, 2016, 7:00 PM

Evanston Township High School Auditorium, 1600 Dodge Ave., Evanston

Free and open to the public. Suitable for ages 12+

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Friday, April 29, 2016, Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis, 7:00 PM, Evanston Township High School Auditorium, 1600 Dodge Ave., Evanston, 60201. It's the American dream: get a good education, work hard, buy a house, and achieve prosperity and success. This is the America we believe in—a nation of opportunity, constrained only by ability and effort. But during the last twenty-five years we have seen a disturbing “opportunity gap” emerge. Americans have always believed in equality of opportunity, the idea that all kids, regardless of their family background, should have a decent chance to improve their lot in life. But now this central tenet of the American dream seems no longer true or at the least, much less true than it was.

In his latest bestselling book *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis*, **Robert D. Putnam, Ph.D.** shows that America has been veering further away from equality of opportunity for several decades, and the recent trends presage a collapse on social mobility rates in the decades ahead. The American Dream is increasingly out of reach for lower income students. Shockingly, smart poor kids (lower third of parental income, top third in test scores) have less chance of graduating from college than not-so-smart rich kids (upper third of parental income, bottom third in test scores).

Prof. Putnam is the **Peter and Isabel Malkin Professor of Public Policy** at the **Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government**. He has received numerous scholarly honors, including the Skytte Prize, the most prestigious global award in political science, and the National Humanities Medal, the nation’s highest honor for contributions to the humanities. He has written fourteen books, including *Bowling Alone* and *Making Democracy Work*, both among the most cited publications in the social sciences in the last half-century. He has consulted for the last three American presidents, the last three British prime ministers, the last French president, prime ministers from Ireland to Singapore, and hundreds of grassroots leaders and activists in many countries. The *Sunday Times of London* has called him “the most influential academic in the world.”

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