

Sheila Ohlsson Walker, Ph.D., is a Senior Scientist at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University and a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Johns Hopkins University School of Education. Her research centers on the interplay between biology, psychology and socio-environmental science, or the relationship between nature and nurture. By translating interdisciplinary science into accessible, practical language, she seeks to equip athletic coaches and teachers with the knowledge, tools, and skills to help each and every child thrive.

A former professional tennis player, Dr. Walker has experienced first-hand the power of sport to teach life skills, and foster health and well-being. She knows that coaches and teachers are in a position to support or derail a child's healthy development, depending on what kinds of environments and relationships they build together. For this reason, her writing focuses on pragmatic, research-based approaches to optimizing human potential. Topics have included toxic stress, trauma, resilience, trusting relationships, social and emotional learning, the science of exercise, sleep, and nutrition.

Dr. Walker earned a doctorate in Behavioral Genetics from Kings College, London and a B.S. in Finance from the University of Colorado, Boulder. She serves on the board of the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Foundation, is a trustee of the Kent Denver School, and works closely with Turnaround for Children and LIFT Communities. She lives in Denver with her husband and their three sons.