

Improving the Psychological Well-Being of Children in the Jalazone Refugee Camp Through Awareness and Counseling Sessions.

YWCA Palestine

Success story of Child (A):

In the kindergarten class, there was a student (A) who was very active, spoke very little, and had a problem with discipline.

At the beginning of the sessions, there was a challenge in how to integrate the child. He would get upset, and the adults had trouble de-escalating his actions. For this reason, the psychologist did not impose rules at the beginning of the sessions so that the children could consume their emotions and thoughts and begin their psychological organization and self-discipline. Then the psychologist learned of his story. He was left by his parents as a baby, and his grandmother raised him. Unfortunately, he became delayed in speech in comparison to other children his age. During the sessions, the child would move recklessly throughout the nursery. The psychologist was working with him through various techniques and games. For example, the use of a pretending technique in which the psychologist pretended to "forget" the child's name and call him by another name. Every time the child responded by saying: "My name is (A). I want to win today and play a lot." In the storytelling session and using imagination, he told us fluently about his uncle who will be released from prison and that he is very happy. He started to listen more and speak confidently.

In the final session with the grandparents, his uncle's wife talked about the development in (A)'s personality. He has become calmer, listens more, and speaks with others. He also participates in program activities and stories now.

Success story of siblings (K, T):

During a psychotherapy program, there was a brother and a sister from the same father. They both lived with their father and his wife, who was the daughter's mother but not the son's mother. In one of the sessions, the emotional distance and lack of communication between the siblings was evident. The sister dominated over her brother. In one of the sessions, the sister (K) was told about the importance of siblings caring for each other and sharing with each other.

The psychologist noticed she was dealing with him coldly -- with violence and with a little force, because her mother was with her. Gradually, after the fifth session, they were able to build a good relationship between them where the sister showed interest in her brother. She began sharing games and activities with him and holding his hand. When the teachers tried to create rules to complete activities, they adhered to them and reminded each other of the importance of the rules. With time, the brother became more open with his sister and his classmates as well as with the rules that were put in place.

Each of them now looks forward to the sessions to tell the teacher what they are doing together and how they are cooperating. (K) once said, "I always play with (T) now, and I stopped complaining to Mom about him and stopped bothering him." The brother (T) now helps (K) with playing, arranging the drawers, and eating together when the activities begin.

The YWCA considers this a success story because the child (T) was greatly marginalized. His father's wife did not treat him fairly, and the reason was her favoritism toward her daughter.