

just  
childhood

جست نئابدلهو

# Annual Report 2024







## INTRODUCTION

The year 2024 was a pivotal period for Just.Childhood, presenting both significant challenges and opportunities for growth. As Lebanon continues to navigate a prolonged economic crisis and the lingering effects of war, the demand for structured education, psychosocial support, and emergency interventions has reached an all-time high. Amidst this volatile landscape, Just.Childhood has remained unwavering in its commitment to serving marginalized and displaced children, ensuring that they receive holistic education, emotional support, and stability despite the adversity they face.

Over the past year, our ability to adapt, expand, and innovate has been put to the test. The economic downturn, coupled with political instability and the aftermath of conflict, has placed immense strain on families and children, making access to education and mental health support more critical than ever. However, these challenges have also reinforced the necessity of our work and inspired us to strengthen our programs, enhance our outreach, and build sustainable solutions for the future.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of Just.Childhood's achievements in 2024, illustrating the resilience of the children and families we serve, the impact of our programs, and our strategic steps toward long-term sustainability. It is a testament to the dedication of our team, partners, and supporters who have worked tirelessly to uphold our mission in the face of uncertainty.



# About Us

Just.Childhood originally emerged from a community initiative of people who primarily wanted to take up educational issues in the Palestinian refugee camps and reform the pedagogical approach, especially in early childhood education, in this context. To this day, the organization understands its work as involving the community, responding to its needs and implementing activities that serve these.

Just.Childhood has been registered as a local, non-profit non-governmental organization (NGO) since 2014. We operate in the education, psycho-social support, and sports for development sectors and are autonomous, as well as politically and religiously independent.

Our main goal is to actively protect the childhood of socially marginalized and traumatized children in Lebanon and to support their right to play, learn and develop in safety. All our programs are based on Waldorf pedagogical methods. Just.Childhood sees education as one of the core issues of its development work: in particular, early childhood education as the foundation of any secondary education. Improving early childhood education not only has an immediate positive impact on further schooling, but also shows positive effects on further education and employment opportunities in the medium and long term. It counteracts possible radicalization at an early stage. For these reasons, access to quality early childhood education is one of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Our organization with all its programs is based on social ideals and the conviction that education, and early childhood education in particular, can make a decisive contribution to building a future society that is less violent, more just and more compassionate.

## MISSION

Childhood's mission is to empower underprivileged children and youth through educational, psycho-social, and sports for development, enabling them to overcome challenges and build brighter futures.

## VISION

We envision a world where every child, regardless of their circumstances, has access to quality education, psychosocial support, and opportunities for personal growth.



**AT JUST.CHILDHOOD WE PROVIDE THREE DIFFERENT PROGRAMS:**



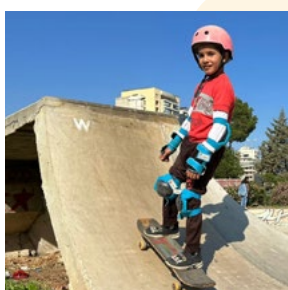
### **1. Early Childhood Program**

At Just.Childhood, we recognize that a strong foundation in early childhood is essential for a child's lifelong development and success. Our Early Childhood Education Program is based on Waldorf pedagogy and designed to provide high-quality, accessible, and holistic education to children aged 3 to 6 in underserved communities and refugee camps.



### **2. Psycho-social Support Program**

Our psycho-social support program aims to address the emotional and psychological needs of children and youth who experienced trauma, displacement, and live under challenging circumstances. We provide counseling, art therapy, and emergency pedagogical activities to help them heal and develop resilience.



### **3. Sport for Development Program**

The Skateboarding Program, originally launched in collaboration with Make Life Skate Life, provides a safe and fun space for underprivileged youth to engage in skateboarding. This initiative promotes physical activity, personal growth, and community integration.

# A Changing Landscape

The Local Context in 2024





Lebanon remains in a state of deep economic and social distress, grappling with the compounded effects of financial collapse, ongoing displacement, and the far-reaching consequences of the 2024 war. The country's economic crisis, which has persisted since 2019, continues to deteriorate, marked by skyrocketing inflation, devaluation of the currency, widespread unemployment, and an erosion of public services. Basic necessities, including food, medical care, and electricity, have become increasingly inaccessible to vulnerable families, exacerbating social inequalities and heightening levels of poverty and distress.

The war that erupted in September 2024 further destabilized the country, forcing thousands of families into displacement. Many fled to already overcrowded urban areas, seeking refuge in makeshift shelters or temporary housing, while others remained trapped in conflict-affected zones with limited access to essential services. Children have been among the hardest hit by these crises, facing disruptions to their education, psychological trauma, and a loss of stability and security.

For **Just.Childhood**, these challenges have underscored the urgent need for accessible, trauma-informed educational and psychosocial support programs. Throughout the year, our centers in Sabra and Karantina have continued to serve as vital spaces for children seeking safety, structure, and emotional healing. Recognizing the growing demand for emergency pedagogy and mental health interventions, we have expanded our outreach to reach a broader segment of affected communities, ensuring that children receive consistent care, structured learning, and a sense of normalcy amidst the turmoil.

To amplify our impact, we have deepened our collaboration with local and international organizations, forming strategic partnerships that allow us to mobilize resources, strengthen our programming, and extend our reach to more children and families in need. These partnerships have been instrumental in reinforcing the sustainability of our interventions, enabling us to provide long-term, systemic support in addition to immediate emergency responses.

As Lebanon continues to face economic instability, social unrest, and post-conflict recovery challenges, Just.Childhood remains committed to adapting its programs, responding to the evolving needs of communities, and advocating for sustainable solutions that empower children to heal, grow, and thrive. Our focus remains on creating safe, nurturing environments where children can rebuild their lives with dignity and hope, ensuring that every child, regardless of their circumstances, has access to quality education and psychosocial support.









# Early Childhood Education Program

## CREATING A SAFE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

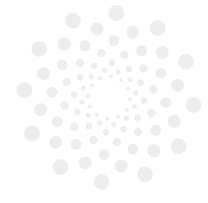
The Waldorf Early Childhood Education Program at Just.Childhood continues to serve as a sanctuary for young children, providing them with stability, security, and a holistic learning experience amidst an ever-changing environment. Throughout 2024, our **Bait al-Shams Kindergarten and Mother-Child Group** have upheld the values of experiential learning, nature-based education, and community engagement, ensuring that children grow in a setting that fosters curiosity, creativity, and emotional resilience. This year, a total of 150 children benefited from the enriching and supportive activities offered at our center, reinforcing our commitment to providing quality early childhood education despite the many challenges faced.

## Seasonal and Cultural Celebrations: Strengthening Identity and Connection

Throughout the year, our kindergarten celebrated seasonal festivals and cultural events that align with the Waldorf philosophy, allowing children to experience the rhythm of the year in a meaningful way.

In February, our preschool children embarked on a memorable seasonal trip to the snow, where they played freely, built snowmen, and enjoyed nature's beauty. The experience was further enriched by a breakfast by the sea, offering a unique contrast between mountain and coastal environments, deepening the children's connection to nature.

In March, several meaningful celebrations took place. The Ramadan Festival allowed children to craft beautiful lanterns, listen to Islamic stories, and engage in traditional songs, fostering respect and understanding of Islamic traditions. Mother's Day encouraged children to express their love and gratitude through handcrafted gifts and heartfelt songs. Additionally, our Land Day Commemoration honored Palestinian heritage by engaging children and their mothers in traditional bread-making, singing folk songs, and wearing cultural attire, fostering a strong sense of identity.



April brought further festivities, including an Eid Al-Fitr celebration, where children dressed in traditional Islamic costumes and engaged in storytelling and singing. A strawberry jam-making activity in collaboration with mothers strengthened family bonds while teaching children about food preparation and sensory exploration. The Spring Festival encouraged creativity and movement, as children crafted felted crowns, participated in ribbon dances, and engaged in seasonal storytelling.

## Educational Enrichment and Community Engagement

The kindergarten not only provides an emotionally supportive environment but also prepares children for their next educational steps. In May, preschoolers visited a nearby UNRWA school, allowing them to familiarize themselves with their future learning environment and ease the transition to formal schooling. During Nakba Day, children learned about Palestinian heritage through age-appropriate storytelling, cultural attire, and traditional songs, reinforcing their historical and cultural awareness.

A community Open Day provided parents and guardians with insights into the Waldorf-inspired approach in action. Visitors observed creative storytelling, interactive learning through movement, and a marionette show, highlighting the importance of imagination in early childhood education. This month also featured a trip to a donkey farm, where children enjoyed farm life, interacted with animals, and learned about nature, further deepening their appreciation for the environment.

Health and well-being remained a priority throughout the year. In May, a comprehensive preschool physical examination was conducted by Dr. Anne Kröhn-Wellhausen, assessing children's overall development through hearing screenings, growth tracking, and parental consultations. Her child-friendly approach helped alleviate anxiety, ensuring a comfortable experience for both children and parents.





## Hands-on Learning and End-of-Year Traditions

In June, the kindergarten embraced cultural traditions by engaging children in the making of Kaak al-Eid, a festive activity that combined practical skills, teamwork, and an appreciation for culinary heritage. The month concluded with a joyful Eid Al-Adha celebration, filled with storytelling, singing, and dressing in festive attire.

The Summer Festival in July welcomed the new season with vibrant activities such as crafting crowns, fruit sharing, storytelling, bubble play, and singing summer songs, reflecting the spirit of renewal and joy. Later that month, the Farewell Ceremony provided a meaningful send-off for graduating children, featuring candle lighting, circle dances, a song medley, and gift-giving, marking a heartfelt transition for children moving on to new educational experiences.



In September, the kindergarten honored the Prophet's Day, integrating storytelling, candle-lighting rituals, and the sharing of dates as part of a reflective and community-building experience. This celebration underscored the Waldorf approach of integrating spiritual and cultural narratives into learning.



## Responding to Crisis: Emergency Intervention and Psychosocial Support

On September 27, the war began expanding from the South into Beirut, significantly impacting both educators and children. As a result, our regular activities were suspended for two weeks, requiring a rapid adaptation to emergency interventions. Recognizing the need for emotional support, staff and parents participated in 10 drama therapy sessions, focusing on emotional expression, stress management, and conflict resolution techniques. These sessions helped participants navigate personal and professional challenges while fostering resilience and interpersonal growth.

In October, educators shifted their focus to psychosocial support (PSS) interventions at two locations: the Sabra Center and Hariri Institute. These structured sessions provided children with a sense of rhythm and normalcy through movement games, arts and crafts, storytelling, finger knitting, and circle gatherings. The kindergarten educators participated in two sessions, ensuring their involvement in the emergency response efforts. This two-month intervention (October–November) reached a total of 119 children, offering them a safe space for emotional expression and support.



## Relief Efforts and Restoring Normalcy

During the war, Just.Childhood launched a Relief Campaign, conducting a needs assessment to identify urgent support areas for families. In December, we provided essential aid, including food boxes, blankets, winter clothing, and gloves, reaching 420 individuals. As the conflict subsided, our kindergarten welcomed children back into the centers, resuming structured daily rhythms to help restore emotional stability and a sense of security.

Our focus in the post-war phase has been to support children's reintegration into the classroom environment. Through singing, movement-based exercises, creative play, and structured storytelling, we have aimed to help children process their experiences and rebuild their inner balance. We continue to monitor each child's progress using our child observation tool, ensuring that their social, emotional, and behavioral development is carefully tracked as they recover from recent disruptions.

## Conclusion: A Year of Growth, Resilience, and Hope

Despite the turbulence of 2024, Just.Childhood's Waldorf Early Childhood Education Program has remained a pillar of support for children and their families. Through a balance of experiential learning, cultural enrichment, community engagement, and emergency response, we have continued to nurture young minds in a way that aligns with the core principles of Waldorf education.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to expanding our outreach, strengthening our psychosocial support structures, and ensuring that our kindergarten continues to be a sanctuary of healing, discovery, and growth. By integrating holistic educational approaches with responsive interventions, we aim to provide children with the foundation they need to thrive, no matter the circumstances.



## SUCCESS STORIES

### A Journey of Growth: Jad's\* Story at Bait Al Shams Kindergarten

Early childhood is a transformative stage where the foundation for physical, emotional, and social growth is laid. The journey of Jad, a child who joined Bait Al Shams Kindergarten's Butterfly Group at the age of three, illustrates how the Waldorf educational approach fosters holistic development. Arriving with significant physical and linguistic challenges, his progress over a year demonstrates the impact of structured activities, patient guidance, and a supportive environment.

When Jad first entered the kindergarten, he faced difficulties that affected his daily life. His weak hand and leg muscles made simple tasks like holding a spoon or climbing stairs challenging. He struggled with personal hygiene, including washing his hands, and had disorganized eating habits. His speech was unclear, and he found it difficult to express himself, making social interactions daunting.

The structured rhythm of the kindergarten, rooted in Waldorf pedagogy, provided a nurturing space for Jad's growth. Activities such as the morning circle played a crucial role in improving his coordination and muscle strength. Rhythmic movements like clapping, walking, and acting out stories strengthened his motor skills, while repetitive songs and stories supported his speech development. Through watercolor painting, he learned to hold and move a brush, gradually improving his hand and finger strength while finding joy in creative expression. Wool felting and bead stringing further enhanced his fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, instilling patience and a sense of accomplishment.

Another key element in Jad's development was natural playdough, which strengthened his fingers while fostering creativity. Simple tasks that required precision, such as threading beads, helped him gain control over his hand movements, improving dexterity and confidence. Beyond physical and cognitive improvements, his educators played an instrumental role in his transformation. With consistent encouragement, clear communication, and patient guidance, they helped him build self-esteem and develop independence.

His peers also played a significant role in his journey. Through group activities, his friends encouraged him to participate, reinforcing his language skills through play and conversation. Their support provided emotional comfort and motivation, making him feel included and valued in the community.

After a year of structured support and engagement, Jad made remarkable progress. His

ability to hold objects improved significantly, allowing him to perform daily tasks with ease. His speech became clearer, enabling him to communicate effectively and actively participate in group activities. He learned proper handwashing techniques and developed better eating habits. Most importantly, his confidence grew, and he became more socially active, forming friendships and engaging in various activities with enthusiasm.

Jad's story is a testament to the transformative power of Waldorf education. The nurturing environment, hands-on activities, and patient guidance helped him overcome his initial challenges, demonstrating the profound impact of holistic early childhood education. Today, he is a lively and self-assured child, embodying the success of collaborative efforts between educators, peers, and the unique learning approach at Bait Al Shams Kindergarten.

*\*Name changed for privacy*

## A Journey of Transformation: Karim's\* Story at Bait Al Shams Kindergarten

At the beginning of the year, Karim, a young boy in the Flower Group, faced significant behavioral challenges that impacted his interactions with peers and his ability to engage in structured activities. He exhibited aggression, often hitting and biting his classmates, and struggled with emotional regulation, frequently crying when faced with frustration. Social cooperation was particularly difficult for him—he found it challenging to share toys, take turns, and participate in group play. Additionally, his hyperactivity and short attention span made it difficult for him to focus, and he had trouble maintaining organization, especially when cleaning up after playtime. It quickly became clear that a structured and supportive approach was needed to help him develop essential social and emotional skills.

To address these challenges, Karim was gradually integrated into the classroom rhythm with small yet purposeful responsibilities. He was encouraged to assist with tidying up and organizing activities, giving him a sense of ownership and belonging within the group. Creative activities such as painting provided him with a constructive outlet for emotional expression, helping him release tension in a safe and calming way. Dough play became a particularly effective tool for him, engaging his hands in focused activity, which in turn helped regulate his emotions and reduce impulsive behaviors. Additionally, physical activities like walking on balance boards and participating in free play allowed him to channel his excess energy productively. These activities not only helped him manage his hyperactivity but also encouraged cooperative play, fostering patience, social engagement, and the ability to share with others.

Over time, Karim's progress became evident. He began engaging more willingly in group play, gradually learning to share toys and interact positively with his peers. Instead of reacting physically, he started expressing his emotions through words, demonstrating improved emotional regulation. His patience increased, and his ability to focus during structured activities noticeably improved. Moreover, he began taking on more responsibility within the classroom, willingly participating in maintaining order and assisting with tasks, which further boosted his confidence and sense of belonging.

Karim's transformation highlights the effectiveness of Waldorf education in supporting the emotional, social, and behavioral development of young children. Through consistent rhythm, hands-on learning experiences, and patient guidance from his educators, he was able to overcome his initial challenges and develop into a more cooperative, confident, and engaged child. Today, Karim continues to thrive, demonstrating the profound impact of a nurturing and developmentally appropriate educational environment.

*\*Name changed for privacy*





## Teacher Training

One of the cornerstones of our capacity-building initiatives in 2024 was the Early Childhood Seminar in Lebanon: Year 2, an intensive training program designed to deepen educators' understanding of Waldorf pedagogy. The training was conducted in a hybrid format, combining online and in-person sessions to accommodate security constraints while ensuring comprehensive learning experiences.

To maintain accessibility, full-day online training sessions were implemented where necessary, with international expert Jill Taplin delivering key sessions remotely from England. While this virtual format allowed for uninterrupted learning, certain essential aspects—such as Eurythmy, handcrafts, biodynamic principles, and morning routines—proved more effective in in-person settings. As a result, the training sought to balance both approaches, integrating practical, hands-on learning whenever feasible.

The training was structured into three key modules, each addressing fundamental aspects of Waldorf education. Module Six, 'Work and Play Outdoors,' took place from January 2–6, 2024, focusing on outdoor education, the 8-fold path, human development theories, and biodynamic gardening. Participants engaged in hands-on activities such as gardening and Eurythmy, exploring how outdoor environments support early childhood development. Module Seven, 'Making Everyday Life Suitable for Imitation,' was held from July 24–29, 2024, emphasizing domestic work in early childhood education, Steiner's approach to nutrition, and woodworking. Participants explored the significance of imitation in child development, particularly how daily tasks and rituals create a rhythm of security and learning. Module Eight, 'Working with Seasons and Festivals,' took place from September 2–7, 2024, highlighting the importance of seasonal rhythms and cultural traditions in Waldorf education. Trainees engaged in practical exercises, including Eurythmy and modeling with beeswax and salt dough, to understand how seasonal changes can be meaningfully integrated into early childhood learning.

Despite the challenging circumstances, the training succeeded in achieving its goals. Participants actively engaged in discussions, study groups, and post-training assignments, deepening their understanding of holistic child development and pedagogy. Feedback from trainees emphasized the value of interactive and varied learning methods, including group discussions, practical demonstrations, and reflective exercises. While some challenges arose—such as maintaining engagement during extended online sessions—the overall impact of the program was positive, with many participants reporting a renewed sense of purpose and confidence in their teaching methodologies.



A key takeaway from this year's training was the need to tailor future sessions to the practical realities of educators' daily work. While concepts such as Biodynamics introduced valuable perspectives, their application in Lebanon's educational settings remains limited. Moving forward, our training approach will focus on enhancing practical relevance while maintaining the depth of Waldorf pedagogy.

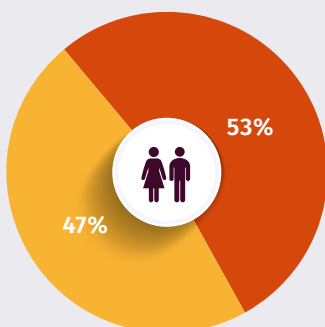
In conclusion, the Teacher Training Program in 2024 was a significant milestone in Just Childhood's commitment to strengthening Waldorf education in Lebanon. By equipping educators with specialized knowledge, hands-on experience, and a deeper appreciation of child development, we have taken important steps toward ensuring sustainable, high-quality early childhood education that will benefit generations to come.

## Impact since inception 2024

Total children benefited: 150

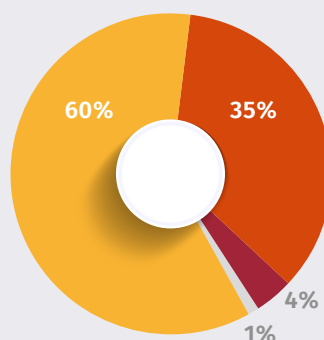
### GENDER

- Female (71): 47%
- Male (79): 53%



### NATIONALITY

- Palestinian refugees (90): 60%
- Syrian refugees (52): 35%
- Lebanese (6): 4%
- Others (2): 1%



### ACHIEVEMENTS

- Enhanced Curriculum Implementation: Strengthening the curriculum to provide a well-rounded early learning experience.
- Educators Training & Development: Ongoing professional development initiatives to improve teaching strategies.
- Student Progress & Development: Measurable improvements in children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth.
- Innovative Learning Approaches: Introduction of new methodologies to enhance early childhood education.



## External Trainings

In addition to our in-house teacher training, Just.Childhood played a vital role in delivering Waldorf education training for educators in Northwest Syria (NWS). From October 2023 to July 2024, a comprehensive training program was conducted for 15 educators from six kindergartens and one organization, providing 40 hours of specialized training aimed at integrating Waldorf pedagogy into their classrooms.

The training consisted of ten workshops covering key aspects of early childhood education, including rhythm in learning, child development, imitation, movement, storytelling, and free play. Given the security constraints in the region, sessions were conducted twice a month online, allowing educators to participate while ensuring their safety. Through interactive discussions, hands-on assignments, and self-reflective exercises, participants explored how Waldorf methods could be adapted to their specific context, ensuring that children in crisis-affected areas benefit from a holistic and developmentally appropriate education.

A key takeaway from the training was the emphasis on observation and child study, helping educators develop a deeper understanding of how children learn, interact, and express themselves. Practical exercises such as finger games, storytelling techniques, and puppet-making reinforced creative and imaginative teaching methods, fostering emotional resilience and social skills in children.

This initiative reflects Just.Childhood's commitment to expanding access to quality education beyond Lebanon, equipping educators in conflict-affected regions with innovative, child-centered teaching methodologies that nurture both learning and emotional well-being.





# Emergency Pedagogy Project

RESTORING STABILITY & HOPE

## Responding to Crisis: The Need for Emergency Pedagogy

In 2024, Just.Childhood expanded its emergency pedagogy and psychosocial support (PSS) initiatives in response to the worsening crisis in Lebanon. As the war spread beyond the South and into Beirut, thousands of families were displaced, experiencing severe emotional and psychological distress. The crisis deepened economic hardships and increased instability, leaving children in urgent need of structured support to process their experiences.

Building on our existing work, we broadened our reach to vulnerable communities in Wadi El Zeini, Burj Barajneh Camp, and other affected areas. Our emergency pedagogy team worked directly with displaced families in shelters and temporary housing, ensuring that children had access to essential psychosocial care. Recognizing the immense pressure faced by our staff, we also provided them with safe spaces and emotional support so they could continue their vital work with resilience and strength.

Despite the uncertainty, Just.Childhood remained steadfast in fostering emotional well-being and resilience among children affected by war and displacement. By adapting to the crisis and engaging the community in sustainable solutions, we have ensured that children receive both immediate care and long-term support to rebuild their lives.





## Providing Safe Spaces for Healing Emergency Pedagogy Activities: Structured Support for Displaced Children

Throughout 2024, 740 children across Lebanon benefited from Just.Childhood’s emergency pedagogy and psychosocial support interventions. As displacement increased, our team rapidly mobilized to provide immediate relief. In addition to our existing centers in Sabra and Karantina, we extended our support to children housed at the Hospitality and Management Institute and other emergency shelters.

Within these safe spaces, children participated in structured activities designed to help them regain a sense of normalcy. Storytelling, art, music, movement, and theater workshops provided them with creative outlets to process their emotions, while group activities helped foster social connections and emotional resilience. Many children we worked with had faced immense hardships—loss of homes, separation from loved ones, and exposure to ongoing violence. Our programs helped them regain stability by providing predictable routines, emotional expression opportunities, and nurturing relationships with peers and educators.

At the heart of our work was a commitment to ensuring that no child was left without support. By adapting our interventions to meet the evolving crisis, we continue to stand by the most vulnerable, offering them the care, stability, and healing they need to move forward.



## Strengthening Families Through Counseling Guiding Parents Through Crisis

In 2024, 190 parents benefited from our counseling services at Sabra and Karantina, designed to equip them with tools to navigate their children’s emotional and behavioral challenges during this turbulent time. Individual counseling sessions, focus groups, and awareness sessions addressed critical issues such as managing children’s anxiety, supporting emotional regulation, and fostering resilience at home.

Recognizing the need for a community-based approach, Just.Childhood partnered with organizations such as Abaad and 5 Skoler to expand its outreach and strengthen family support networks. These collaborations enabled us to provide parents with resources that empowered them to support their children’s healing while also addressing their own emotional well-being.

As Lebanon’s crisis persists, Just.Childhood remains committed to providing parents with essential guidance and fostering a sense of solidarity within the community, ensuring that families have the support they need to rebuild their lives.





## Building a Future of Resilience Empowering Professionals Through Capacity Building



Just.Childhood's Capacity Building Program, a key component of the Psychosocial Support (PSS) project, further expanded its reach, offering eight specialized training modules. The program provided essential skills to professionals across diverse sectors, including education, medicine, social work, and humanitarian aid. By integrating theoretical and practical training, participants were equipped to respond effectively to emergencies and trauma, strengthening their ability to support vulnerable children and families.

The program was designed to be both flexible and accessible, offering in-person and online sessions that allowed for cross-border collaboration between professionals from Lebanon, Türkiye, and Syria. This approach enhanced the training experience, facilitating knowledge-sharing and reinforcing international networks of support.

A significant milestone was reached in 2024, with 20 participants receiving an official Emergency Pedagogy Certification from Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiner. Among them, seven Just.Childhood team members became certified trainers, enabling them to train colleagues in the field. This achievement marks a crucial step toward ensuring the sustainability of the program, creating a ripple effect of knowledge and strengthening local capacities to support children in crisis.



## Emergency Relief: A Lifeline for Families in Need Providing Essential Support During the War



As war intensified in Lebanon, thousands of families found themselves displaced and struggling to meet basic needs. In response, Just.Childhood launched a comprehensive relief campaign aimed at providing immediate assistance to those most affected. Through the campaign, we distributed essential supplies—including food, hygiene kits, blankets, baby milk, diapers, and clothing—to families in Shatila, Sabra, Karantina, and Burj Al Barajneh Camp.

Our relief efforts reached approximately 2,000 individuals, including 320 members of our Emergency Pedagogy Program, as well as families from our Early Childhood Education (ECE), Psychosocial Support (PSS), and Sport for Development (SFD) programs. These distributions provided not only material aid but also a sense of security and hope during an incredibly challenging time.

In cooperation with the Fraternity Association and with generous support from ADH, FWE, and Shams Rumi, Just.Childhood was able to stand by the most vulnerable, offering both physical relief and emotional resilience-building.

# STORIES OF STRENGTH & TRANSFORMATION

## From Isolation to Inclusion: A Young Boy's Journey in Sabra

In the heart of Sabra, a five-year-old boy enrolled in the PSS program, struggling with social interactions and communication. He often played aggressively, taking toys from others and resorting to pushing and hitting instead of verbal expression. His frustration with unclear speech further alienated him, making structured activities challenging.

Through a carefully designed support system, educators worked to build trust, integrating him into activities that encouraged respect, cooperation, and self-expression. Circle dances, storytelling, wax block drawing, and role-playing exercises allowed him to develop confidence in communication. The turning point came during a cooperative storytelling session, where each child contributed to the narrative. This collaborative experience helped him listen, take turns, and engage with his peers in a more positive way.

By the end of the year, he had transformed—his interactions became more respectful, his speech clearer, and his willingness to share and play collaboratively had flourished. His journey is a testament to the power of structured psychosocial support in helping children develop essential emotional and social skills.

## Finding Her Voice: A Young Girl's Musical Breakthrough

In Karantina, a twelve-year-old girl struggled with severe stuttering, making verbal expression an anxiety-inducing challenge. During music circles, she hesitated to participate, afraid of being laughed at. But one day, she bravely asked if she could sing alone.

With the gentle encouragement of her peers and the structured rhythm of the music, she took a deep breath and began to sing. To everyone's astonishment—including her own—she sang fluently, without a single stutter. The safe and supportive environment allowed her to break free from fear, demonstrating the profound impact of rhythm, encouragement, and community support.

This moment underscores the deep connection between music and healing, highlighting the importance of incorporating rhythm-based interventions into psychosocial support programs for children facing trauma and speech difficulties.

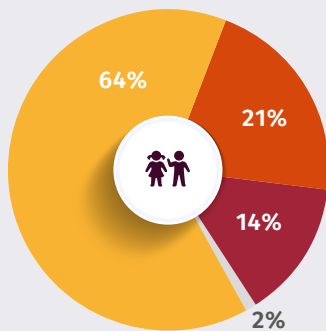


## Looking Ahead: Strengthening Our Commitment A Vision for 2025 and Beyond

As Just.Childhood moves into 2025, we remain committed to expanding our emergency pedagogy initiatives, strengthening our capacity-building efforts, and ensuring that children affected by crisis receive the care and support they deserve. Our focus remains on creating safe spaces where children can heal, develop resilience, and reclaim their childhood.

With continued collaboration from partners, donors, and dedicated professionals, we will work toward building a sustainable model for psychosocial support, ensuring that no child is left behind. Together, we can provide children and families with the tools to rebuild their lives and create a future filled with hope.

Total Children benefited: 740



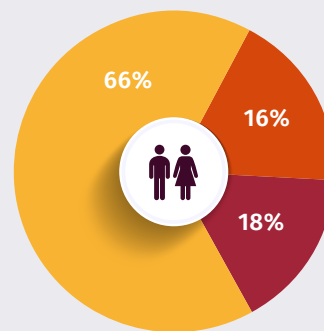
### NATIONALITY

- Syrian refugees (476): 64%
- Lebanese (162): 21%
- Palestinian refugees (100): 14%
- Others (2): 1%

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- 740 children received psychosocial support through structured interventions in Sabra, Karantina, and newly reached areas.
- Expansion of emergency pedagogy programs to shelters and temporary housing for displaced families.
- Implemented trauma-informed activities such as storytelling, art, music, movement, and form drawing.
- Strengthened emotional resilience and social integration among children affected by conflict and displacement.

Total Parents benefited: 190



### NATIONALITY

- Syrian refugees (125): 66%
- Lebanese (30): 16%
- Palestinian refugees (35): 18%

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- 190 parents engaged in counseling, awareness sessions, and focus groups.
- Sessions addressed the emotional and behavioral challenges of children during crises.
- Partnerships with Abaad and 5 Skoler enhanced outreach and parental support.
- Provided tools for parents to better understand and manage their children's trauma responses.





# Sport for Development Program

## EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH SKATEBOARDING

### Expanding Our Reach: A Growing Skateboarding Community

The Skateboarding Project continues to be a cornerstone of the Sports for Development Program, with significant milestones achieved in 2024. Through ongoing partnerships with Skateistan—established in 2022—and Kindernoithilfe e.V., which joined in 2023, our initiatives have expanded their reach, providing more children and youth with safe spaces for recreation, personal growth, and community integration.

Skate and Educate and Skate Beirut remained at the heart of our program, offering structured skateboarding sessions that foster resilience, teamwork, and psychosocial well-being among underprivileged youth. This year, Skate Beirut engaged 60 children and youth (ages 6–18) from Shatila, Borj al-Barajneh, and Mar Elias Palestinian refugee camps. The sessions provided not only physical activity but also psychological support, offering participants a secure and inclusive environment to develop confidence, discipline, and social connections. Led by three skilled coaches, weekly three-hour sessions focused on skill-building, balance, and teamwork.

Meanwhile, Skate and Educate supported an additional 60 children through an innovative mix of educational and recreational activities. Forty participants benefitted from both academic and skateboarding sessions, while 20 engaged exclusively in skateboarding. With the generous contribution of the Shams-Rumi Foundation, educational sessions were extended to 12 hours per week, enhancing children's learning opportunities and providing them with a safe space to develop their skills. This expansion not only improved their literacy and numeracy but also deepened their sense of belonging and motivation to participate.





## Breaking Barriers: Increasing Female Participation

One of the most inspiring achievements of 2024 has been the increase in female participation in our skateboarding sessions. Encouraged by previous efforts to break gender stereotypes, this year saw more girls actively joining the program, many of whom have emerged as role models and leaders in their communities. Their involvement underscores our commitment to creating equitable opportunities in sports, empowering girls to challenge social norms and embrace skateboarding as a tool for self-expression and resilience.

## Responding to Crisis: Skateboarding as a Lifeline

When war broke out in October and November, the Sport for Development (SFD) program swiftly adapted to meet the urgent needs of displaced children. Recognizing the importance of stability and recreation during times of crisis, we organized skate sessions in displacement centers, providing children with a safe and supportive space to engage in physical activity and temporarily escape the emotional strain of war.

Beyond recreation, these sessions played a crucial role in fostering leadership skills. Older participants were encouraged to assist coaches, taking on mentoring roles and helping younger children navigate both the sport and the difficult circumstances surrounding them. Additionally, Just.Childhood educators integrated pedagogical activities alongside skateboarding sessions, supporting children's cognitive and emotional well-being. These interventions helped maintain a sense of normalcy and provided children with a structured and encouraging environment despite the instability around them.

## Standing Together: The SFD Program's Role in Relief Efforts

In addition to providing psychosocial support through sports, the SFD program took an active role in Just.Childhood's relief campaign during the war. Many of our beneficiaries and their families were directly impacted by the conflict, and we ensured they received critical support, including food, hygiene supplies, and clothing. This initiative strengthened the program's bond with the community, fostering trust and reinforcing our commitment to standing with children and families in times of crisis.

By integrating skateboarding with emergency support, we deepened our impact beyond recreation, ensuring that young people felt valued, supported, and part of a broader community that prioritizes their well-being.





## Transforming Lives: Behavioral Growth Through Skateboarding

One of the most remarkable aspects of the SFD program is its impact on children's behavioral development. Participants displayed increased respect, discipline, and self-organization, with families recognizing the positive influence of sports on their children's confidence and social skills.

Beyond physical agility, children acquired essential life skills, including teamwork, emotional regulation, and perseverance. The program also strengthened literacy and numeracy skills through integrated learning sessions, reinforcing an education-through-sport approach that nurtures well-rounded development.

## The Power of Partnerships: Sustaining and Scaling Our Impact

The continued success of the SFD program would not be possible without our strategic partnerships. Skateistan's expertise and resources, combined with Kindernothilfe's unwavering support, have enabled us to broaden our impact and ensure sustainability. These collaborations have helped us build a supportive, inclusive, and thriving skateboarding community, where young people develop not only as skaters but also as confident individuals ready to take on life's challenges.

## Looking Ahead: Building a Future on Four Wheels

As we move forward, we remain committed to expanding access to skateboarding, ensuring that children and youth—especially girls and marginalized groups—continue to benefit from structured and empowering activities. Our vision is to enhance social, emotional, and cognitive skills through sports, fostering self-efficacy, self-esteem, and resilience among young people.

By strengthening community engagement, advocating for inclusive sports programs, and integrating new learning opportunities into our skateboarding curriculum, we are working toward a future where every child has the opportunity to thrive—both on and off the skateboard.





# SUCCESS STORIES

## Nour's\* Journey from Skater to Leader

At 13, Palestinian skater Nour found her passion in skateboarding, transforming it into more than just a hobby. Through the structured sessions, she discovered a safe space, support, and encouragement to grow—not only as an athlete but as a young leader.

Despite the challenges of learning new tricks, Nour never gave up. Each fall was met with determination, each setback with perseverance. After nearly three years of practice, she now masters moves she once thought impossible. But her journey does not stop there—her dream is to become a coach, passing on the same support, motivation, and resilience that helped her find her voice.

Through the SFD Project, Nour found more than just a sport—she found confidence, empowerment, and a community that believes in her potential. Her story is a testament to how the right support, inclusive spaces, and encouragement can inspire young people to break barriers and dream bigger.

\*Name changed for privacy

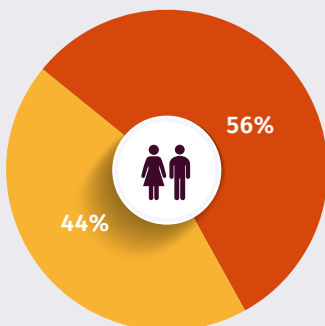
### Impact since inception (2021)

460 (from 2021–2023) + 172 (from 2024) = 632 beneficiaries.

2024, the averages are as follows:

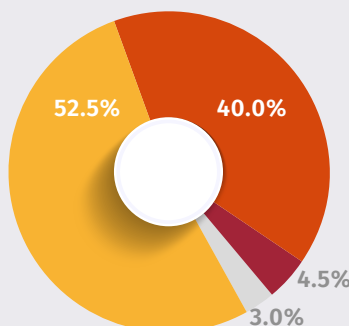
#### GENDER AVERAGES (%) 2024

- Females: 44%
- Males: 56%



#### NATIONALITIES

- Syrians: 52.5%
- Palestinians: 40.0%
- Lebanese: 4.5%
- Other Nationalities: 3.0%



#### ACHIEVEMENTS

- Around 460 kids acquired advanced Skateboarding skills
- All beneficiaries acquired new life skills including but not limited to: Hygiene protocols, socializing, basic literacy, basic cooking, and team working in groups.
- The kids' usual aggressive behaviour decreased and they started to have more acceptance towards kids coming from different and diverse backgrounds.



# Conclusion & Outlook

As we reflect on 2024, it is clear that Just.Childhood has made significant strides in providing quality early childhood education, emergency pedagogy, and psychosocial support despite immense challenges. Our ability to adapt and expand our initiatives in response to the war, economic crisis, and social instability demonstrates the resilience and dedication of our team and partners.

Looking ahead, sustainability remains at the forefront of our strategy. We aim to strengthen our Research and Training Hub, ensuring that more educators are equipped with trauma-informed, holistic teaching methodologies. Additionally, we plan to enhance community engagement through parental involvement initiatives and further develop financial sustainability models, including potential social enterprise ventures that support our long-term impact.

By deepening our partnerships, increasing capacity-building efforts, and securing diversified funding streams, Just.Childhood is committed to ensuring that the children we serve continue to learn, grow, and heal in a safe and nurturing environment. Despite the uncertainties ahead, our vision remains steadfast: to create a world where every child has access to education, psychosocial support, and the opportunity to thrive.

## Donors and Partners 2024







## Just.Childhood

Sabra & Shatila Camp and Karantina, Beirut  
[info@justchildhood.org](mailto:info@justchildhood.org)

[www.justchildhood.org](http://www.justchildhood.org)