



just
childhood
جست نشایدرو

2025

ANNUAL REPORT





INTRODUCTION

The year 2025 brought its own weight to Lebanon – a country still piecing itself together after the economic collapse of 2019, the devastating Beirut port explosion, the war of 2024, and the chronic displacement that has reshaped the lives of hundreds of thousands of families. Yet within this landscape of ongoing hardship, Just. Childhood has continued to show up – for the children in Sabra, in Karantina, in the Palestinian camps, and beyond the Lebanese border in Northwest Syria.

This report reflects a year of genuine work: moments of care and creativity alongside real challenges – closures, disruptions, and the constant uncertainty of operating in a fragile context. It documents what our teams built and sustained in 2025 across our three core programs: Early Childhood Education, Psychosocial Support, and Sport for Development. It also captures the quiet, often invisible work of building an organization that can hold – and grow – under pressure.

What stands out from 2025 is not only the number of children reached, but the depth of the relationships we cultivated: with families, with partner organizations, with educators in Syria, and within our own team. Trust is slow work, especially in communities that have known too much loss. This report is our account of that work.

We are grateful to our donors, partners, and – above all – to the children and families who continue to place their trust in us.





About Us

Just.Childhood grew out of a community-led initiative in the Palestinian refugee camps of Beirut, where a group of educators and volunteers wanted to do something different: to bring a genuinely child-centred, holistic approach to early childhood education in one of the most neglected educational contexts in the region. More than a decade later, that founding impulse still shapes everything we do.

We have been registered as a local, non-profit NGO in Lebanon since 2014. Politically and religiously independent, we work at the intersection of education, psychosocial support, and sports for development – three areas that, in our view, are inseparable when it comes to nurturing whole children in contexts of adversity.

Our programs are rooted in Waldorf pedagogy, an approach that prioritizes experiential learning, rhythm, creativity, and developmentally appropriate practice. We believe that the early years are foundational – not just for school readiness, but for emotional resilience, social belonging, and the long-term capacity to learn and contribute. In communities marked by displacement, trauma, and poverty, quality early childhood education is not a luxury; it is a form of protection.

MISSION

To empower underprivileged children and youth through education, psychosocial support, and sport – enabling them to overcome adversity and build brighter futures.

VISION

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





A Changing Landscape



The Local Context in 2025

Lebanon entered 2025 in a state of cautious, fragile transition. The ceasefire that ended the 2024 war brought relative calm to Beirut, albeit not in the South and the Bekaa, but the underlying conditions — economic collapse, political deadlock, and mass displacement — remained largely unchanged. The currency continues to lose value, public services remain unreliable, and the majority of Lebanese and refugee families are living well below the poverty line. For the communities Just.Childhood works with, 2025 was not a year of recovery. It was a year of managing ongoing hardship.

Palestinian and Syrian refugee families, who make up the majority of our beneficiaries, face particular vulnerability. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have no right to work in most professions, no access to the national social security system, and live in camps where overcrowding, poverty, and lack of infrastructure compound the effects of displacement. Syrian families, many of whom have now been in Lebanon for over a decade, face increasing pressure from deportation policies and dwindling humanitarian funding. The combination of poverty, trauma, and legal precarity leaves children exposed to risks that go far beyond what any educational program can fully address — but it also makes the presence of a stable, caring space more important than ever.

In the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Shatila, the situation remained tense throughout the year. Periodic closures of the center, related to internal security dynamics in the camps, disrupted our programming at several points. Each closure required the team to adapt quickly — maintaining contact with families, ensuring continuity of support, and resuming activities as soon as it was safe to do so. These moments underscored both the vulnerability of working in such contexts and the resilience of our team, who navigated each disruption with professionalism and care.

Amid these challenges, Lebanon also experienced moments of political movement — the election of a new president in early 2025 and the formation of a new government raised cautious hopes for economic reform and institutional stability. Whether these developments will translate into meaningful change for the most vulnerable communities remains to be seen, but they provided a backdrop of slightly greater national stability for the second half of the year.

For Just.Childhood, the local context of 2025 reinforced what we already know: that our work is not simply educational, but fundamentally about protection. In communities where so much is uncertain, the rhythm of a kindergarten morning, the space to skate, or a counselling session with a psychologist can be the thread that holds.

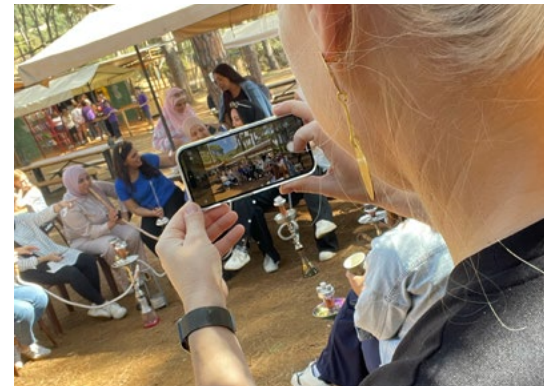


October 2025 marked a significant moment for Just.Childhood: ten years of working alongside children, families, and communities in some of the most challenging circumstances imaginable. The anniversary was not celebrated with fanfare, but with something more fitting — the team gathered at Swings Camp to pause, reflect, have fun and take stock of a decade's worth of shared effort and hard-won learning.

Since its founding, Just.Childhood has grown from a small, determined initiative into a recognised presence in early childhood education and emergency pedagogy — always guided by the belief that every child, regardless of circumstance, deserves safety, nurturing, and the space to grow. The years have brought expansion, adaptation, and no shortage of difficulty. They have also brought moments of real joy: children finding their footing in a kindergarten classroom, teachers discovering new confidence through training, communities reclaiming a sense of normalcy through play and creative expression.

The anniversary gathering was a chance to honour all of this — and the people who made it possible. The Just.Childhood team brings not only professional expertise but a depth of personal commitment that sustains the work even when conditions are at their hardest. Ten years in, that commitment remains the organization's greatest asset.







Early Childhood Education Program

CREATING A SAFE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

In 2025, the Waldorf Early Childhood Education Program at Just.Childhood unfolded as a living rhythm of play, discovery, and care. At Bait al-Shams kindergarten and within our mother-child group, children were immersed in meaningful activities — kneading dough, painting, singing, and exploring the world around them with wonder. Each day carried the Waldorf principles of rhythm, imitation, and free play, nurturing resilience and joy even during uncertainty. A total of 129 children were embraced in this environment, where growth was allowed to blossom at its own pace. The program keeps aiming at cultivating trust, imagination, and belonging, offering families a place where their children can simply be children.

Seasonal and Cultural Celebrations

Throughout the year, our kindergarten brought the philosophy behind Waldorf education to life through seasonal rhythms, cultural traditions, and festive celebrations — moments where children sang, crafted, and came together in ways that nurtured creativity, curiosity, and a genuine sense of belonging.

March was a particularly rich month. The spirit of Ramadan filled the classrooms as children listened to stories, sang traditional songs, and crafted handmade moons and lanterns. Mother's Day brought a quieter tenderness — each child planted a flower to take home, filling the room with care and laughter. The month closed with Eid al-Fitr, where children dressed in traditional clothing, celebrated together, and fully embraced the joy of the occasion.

In April, families stepped into the kindergarten to make strawberry jam alongside their children — a simple, warm moment of shared doing. Children also crafted felted flower crowns to mark the Spring Festival, then moved into the garden to taste fresh fruits and welcome the new season together.



Educational Enrichment and Community Engagement

In May, children celebrated Land Day with their educators, preparing traditional saj bread with thyme with the support of a few parents. They also explored Palestinian heritage during Nakba Day by wearing traditional clothing and engaging in age-appropriate stories and songs, deepening their understanding of history and culture.

Later in the month, the kindergarten hosted a Community Open Day, welcoming families to observe children at work — baking, felting, clay modelling, painting, and storytelling with marionettes. Videos of our activities were also presented, and the event brought parents and guardians into genuine contact with the Waldorf approach in practice.

A nutrition awareness programme offered to parents across several sessions covered practical topics including reading food labels, understanding the effects of sugar, fat, and salt, food safety, affordable healthy meal preparation, hydration, and the role of nutrition in supporting immunity. The sessions also created space for parents to connect and reflect together.

In December, a qualified dental professional led an educational session for parents on child oral health. Key topics included the importance of primary teeth, correct brushing techniques from an early age, fluoride, diet, and strategies for managing children's resistance to brushing. A notable finding was that many parents were unaware that milk teeth require brushing — an important gap that the session helped to address. Follow-up activities are planned, informed by parent feedback.

As every year, the preschool health check was conducted under the guidance of Dr. Anne Kröhn-Wellhausen, encompassing hearing assessments, growth monitoring, and parent consultations. The process was designed to feel supportive rather than clinical, and families left with greater confidence in their children's development.





Responding to Disruption

Throughout 2025, periodic closures in the camp forced us at times to pause activities at the center. Each time, the team worked to maintain continuity — staying in contact with families, offering support where possible, and resuming the kindergarten rhythm as soon as conditions allowed. Even in moments of disruption, the music, storytelling, and creative play carried the children, offering them safety and belonging whenever the center was open.

Just.Childhood

SUCCESS STORIES

Ramzi's* Story

At three years old, Ramzi entered the Bees Group like a child suspended between two worlds — lively and talkative at home, yet silent and withdrawn in the kindergarten. He cried quietly during breakfast and spent his days on the old wooden bench beside the sandbox, watching everything but joining nothing.

The team did not push. Instead, they created a soft, safe space and waited. The shift came in small, quiet moments — Ramzi returning a misplaced piece of wood to its basket, choosing his spoon at lunch, building alongside another child without a word. Then one day, after being helped into his coat, he looked up and said clearly: “Thank you.” It was his first initiated speech, and from that moment, his voice began to find its way out. By four, he was guiding younger children, humming while he painted, and using language to express needs and share discoveries. Ramzi’s journey was not dramatic — it was a slow, patient unfolding of trust. And that, at its heart, is what Waldorf education is about.

*Name changed for privacy

SUCCESS STORIES

Tarek's* Story

Tarek joined the Butterflies Group as a gentle, calm child — the only boy among five sisters, shaped by a warm and nurturing home. His nature expressed itself in quiet, imaginative play, soft speech, and a preference for order and care over vigorous group activity. Rather than seeing this as something to correct, the Waldorf approach recognised it as a starting point.

Gradually, Tarek was invited into movement — running, climbing, balancing, and circle games — alongside practical tasks like kneading, baking, and carrying materials. Storytelling with strong, grounded archetypes gave him images to inhabit and imitate. The outdoor space offered room to chase, jump, and find his place within the group naturally.

Now in his third year, Tarek moves with greater confidence and stability, speaks with a clearer and stronger voice, and participates fully in peer play — while remaining entirely himself. His sensitivity was never lost; it was met with respect and, over time, balanced with physical grounding and self-assurance. His story reflects a core principle of Waldorf education: working with the child, not on the child

Haitham's* Story

When Haitham first joined the Birds Group, she carried silence, exhaustion, and deep withdrawal. Living with Thalassaemia Major — a condition requiring regular blood transfusions — meant his stamina was low, his motor skills weak, and touch often overwhelming. He did not speak, avoided peers, and cried quietly in solitude.

The Waldorf environment met him without pressure. Through daily rhythm and meaningful hands-on activities — wiping tables, kneading dough, watercolour painting, clay work, and beading — his body grew stronger and his emotions steadier. Group songs and free play gradually drew him toward his peers, and in time he formed his first close friendship. Haitham moved from complete silence to words, conversation, and expressed emotion. His physical stamina improved, his tolerance to touch grew, and he began to participate with genuine joy. His story is a reminder of what becomes possible when a child is met with patience, consistency, and love.

*Names changed for privacy

Teacher Training

In 2025, the Early Childhood Seminar in Lebanon completed its third and final year across four intensive modules. Module 9 centred on child study, observation, and seasonal awareness. Module 10 explored mixed-age classroom dynamics, supported by practical work in painting, doll-making, and role-play. Module 11 focused on parent and colleague collaboration, inner work, and transparent communication. Module 12 brought together music, eurythmy, and handcrafts while addressing contemporary challenges such as electronic media and the therapeutic value of live singing and imaginative language.

Throughout all modules, participants engaged in rhythm, artistic practice, and structured reflection. By the seminar's close, educators reported stronger professional capacity, deeper understanding of child development, and more confident collaboration with families and colleagues — affirming the seminar's role in building supportive communities for children, families, and educators alike.

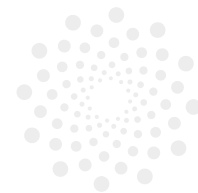
External Trainings

In November, the full Early Childhood team took part in a self-care training covering emotional regulation, stress management, and renewal — a reminder that sustainable care for children begins with the wellbeing of the adults around them. The training that was organized and facilitated by our long-term partner Friends of Waldorf Education - Emergency Pedagogy with support of Aktion Deutschland Hilft e.V. (ADH) also offered a valuable opportunity to reconnect with colleagues across Just.Childhood's programmes and administration.

In June, the team attended a child protection workshop supported by long-term partner Kindernothilfe e.V., reinforcing that child protection is a shared responsibility that requires continuous learning and close collaboration with caregivers.

The team also participated in Phase 1 of the Baytna Lebanon training provided by Amna, which focused on building a values-based learning community rooted in trust and shared purpose. Topics included identity and belonging, trauma in early childhood, and trauma-informed practice in crisis contexts. The programme deepened the team's understanding of holistic child development and the healing role of play — insights that continue to strengthen Just.Childhood's work with children and families in vulnerable settings.





Training Facilitated by Just.Childhood: Nurturing Resilience Initiative

From January to November 2025, Just.Childhood advanced its Nurturing Resilience initiative, supporting pedagogical and organisational capacity within psychosocial support services in Northwest Syria. Across 14 online workshops for educators and youth centre staff in Syria and Türkiye, the programme wove Waldorf pedagogy with trauma-informed approaches, strengthening classroom rhythm, emotional regulation, parent engagement, and community collaboration.

In parallel, the organisational strand conducted needs assessments and delivered targeted workshops on financial management, HR structures, and fundraising – building the governance and resource mobilisation capacity of partner kindergartens and youth centres.

Early Childhood Education Program: At a Glance



Total children reached in 2025:

129



Safeguarding & Support

CARING FOR THE WHOLE CHILD, ACROSS EVERY PROGRAM.

At Just.Childhood, psychosocial support and child protection are not confined to a single program — they are woven into the fabric of everything we do. Our psychologist and social worker operate across all three programs, accompanying children and families who attend the kindergarten, the skateboarding project, and the psychosocial activities. This integrated model reflects our conviction that a child cannot be separated into parts: the same child who learns to skate may also need a safe space to talk, and the same family whose toddler attends Bait al-Shams may be navigating a protection concern at home.

Psychosocial Support

In 2025, our psychologist provided 94 individual sessions with children and 20 sessions with parents, alongside 5 joint psychosocial sessions and 3 emergency referrals — one medical and two psychiatric. She also delivered 11 child protection awareness sessions across the programs. The cases she worked with reflected the compounded vulnerabilities many families face: poverty and overcrowding, exposure to physical and verbal punishment, emotional neglect, and the chronic stress of displacement.

Her recommendations for 2026 centre on expanding group-based sessions, deepening parent psychoeducation, and integrating more creative and expressive activities into the support offered to children — recognising that healing rarely happens through words alone.





Child Protection

In November 2025, Just.Childhood strengthened its child protection capacity with the addition of a dedicated social worker. In her first two months, she opened and actively managed nine cases spanning physical abuse, neglect, psychosocial support needs, and economic hardship — working closely with families, schools, and the organisation’s psychologist to develop tailored responses for each child.

Six referrals were completed across health, psychological, and social services, ensuring children and families were connected to the most appropriate specialised support available. One school was formally reported to authorities for physical violence against children, reflecting Just.Childhood’s commitment to accountability within the communities it serves. A service map of over ten partner organisations was also completed, creating a practical coordination tool for the team going forward.

This work makes one thing clear: the need significantly exceeds current capacity. An estimated 25 or more additional children in our communities require structured support that we are not yet resourced to provide. For 2026, priorities include regular parenting awareness sessions, child self-protection workshops in school settings, and the expansion of the psychosocial and protection team. Every intervention, referral, and follow-up visit remains guided by the same principle: the best interests of the child.



Emergency & Trauma Pedagogy

There is a particular kind of exhaustion that settles into communities living through a crisis that never quite ends. In Sabra and Karantina, the families Just.Childhood serves have spent years navigating war, economic collapse, displacement, and the relentless uncertainty of life in Lebanon's most precarious neighbourhoods. For the children who come through our doors, this is not background context — it is the texture of daily life. 2025 was another such year. And yet, within it, Just.Childhood's Emergency and Trauma Pedagogy programme that was built as of 2022 in cooperation with the Friends of Waldorf Education - Emergency Pedagogy continued to offer something steady: a rhythm, a space, and a relationship that children could rely on.

A Community Under Compounding Pressure

The children and families served by Just.Childhood in 2025 lived at the intersection of multiple, overlapping vulnerabilities. Palestinian and Syrian refugee communities in Sabra, Karantina, Borj Hammoud, and Nabaa faced not only the long-term consequences of displacement and prior conflict exposure, but also the acute pressures of Lebanon's continuing economic crisis and the psychological residue of the 2024 war. Despite the announcement of a ceasefire, the sense of relief many had hoped for was slow to arrive. Families remained under extreme financial stress, and the emotional reserves of caregivers — already depleted by years of hardship — were stretched further still.





The impact on children was visible and immediate. Field assessments and ongoing observation throughout the year documented a consistent constellation of distress signals: emotional withdrawal, hypervigilance, sudden outbursts of aggression or tears, difficulty sitting within group structures, limited capacity for peer interaction, and — particularly at the Karantina Centre — elevated levels of hyperactivity and hygiene-related challenges linked to the instability of home environments. Some children had experienced direct exposure to violence or the sudden loss of a family home. Others carried the quieter, more chronic weight of neglect or inconsistent caregiving. Many carried both.

This was the landscape the programme operated within. Not as an exceptional circumstance requiring an emergency response, but as the sustained, grinding reality that shaped every session, every relationship, and every pedagogical decision made throughout the year.

What We Did and How We Did It

Between January and December 2025, the Emergency and Trauma Pedagogy programme ran in two structured cycles at both the Sabra and Karantina centres. Fifteen groups in total reached 311 children between the ages of 3 and 12: five groups serving 100 children at Sabra, and ten groups serving 211 children at Karantina. The programme reached children from across Sabra, Karantina, Borj Hammoud, and Nabaa — communities whose residents have in common their experience of displacement and their exposure to conditions that few children anywhere should have to navigate.

The decision to structure the programme in cycles rather than open-ended sessions is deliberate. Cycles create a clear beginning, middle, and end that children can orient themselves within. They allow educators to observe development over time, to assess where children start and where they arrive, and to plan activities that build meaningfully on one another. For children whose experience of time has often been marked by rupture — a sudden move, a school interrupted, a relationship ended without warning — the experience of completing something, of moving through a predictable arc, has its own quiet therapeutic value.

The pedagogical approach drew on Waldorf-based emergency and trauma pedagogy, a methodology Just.Childhood has developed and practised over more than a decade. At its core, this approach is not therapeutic in the clinical sense. It does not diagnose or treat. What it does is create the conditions in which healing becomes possible: conditions of safety, rhythm, beauty, and warm human encounter. The adult in the room is not a therapist but a steady, caring presence whose consistency and attentiveness communicate, through action rather than words, that this space is different — that here, children are seen and they are safe.





The Shape of a Session

Every session followed a recognisable structure, carefully maintained across groups and centres. This predictability was not bureaucratic routine — it was a pedagogical tool. For children who live with chronic unpredictability, knowing what comes next is itself a form of relief. The structure gave children permission to settle, to participate, and gradually to trust.

Sessions opened with movement and rhythm: circle games, call-and-response songs, physical activities that brought children into their bodies and into the group. Movement served multiple purposes simultaneously — releasing stored physical tension, establishing a shared group rhythm, and creating moments of joy and spontaneity that many children rarely experienced elsewhere. From movement, sessions typically moved into storytelling or role play: the telling of a tale chosen for its emotional resonance and its capacity to carry difficult feelings at a safe narrative distance. Children were not asked to speak about their own experiences. Instead, they were invited into the experience of characters — heroes who faced fear and found courage, communities that were broken and rebuilt, children who were lost and then found.

Creative activities — drawing, craft, work with natural and sensory materials — formed the expressive heart of many sessions. These activities required no verbal articulation. A child who could not say what was troubling them could communicate it through the colours they chose, the pressure of a crayon on paper, the way they shaped clay. Educators were trained to observe and hold these expressions without interpreting or directing them, creating a space in which children could encounter their own inner life at their own pace. Cooperative activities brought the session toward its close, building the experience of working together, contributing to something shared, and belonging to a group that welcomed each child as they were.



Seasonal and Cultural Rhythm

One of the most distinctive features of Waldorf-based emergency pedagogy is its relationship to time — not clock time, but the deeper rhythms of the year. In 2025, both programme cycles were structured around seasonal and cultural moments: Spring and the renewal it carries; Eid al-Adha and its themes of sacrifice and community; Prophet's Day and its place in the shared fabric of Muslim family life; the turning toward Autumn and then Winter with their particular textures of reflection and gathering.



These were not decorative additions. Cultural and seasonal rhythms offer children something that purely skill-based interventions cannot: a sense of being held within something larger than their own distress. When a group gathers to mark the first day of Autumn with a story about leaves and transformation, they are participating in something that their grandparents participated in, something that connects them — however tenuously — to a continuity of human experience that no war or displacement has been able to fully sever. For children in refugee communities, many of whom have been cut off from the cultural landscapes of their families' origins, this kind of reconnection carries particular weight.

Practical activities marked these moments in ways that engaged children's hands as well as their imaginations: making things, decorating spaces, preparing collectively for a celebration. The experience of anticipating something, preparing for it, and then living it within the group was, for many children, simply rare. That rarity was itself a form of gift.

In June, the team attended a child protection workshop supported by long-term partner Kindernothilfe e.V., reinforcing that child protection is a shared responsibility that requires continuous learning and close collaboration with caregivers.





The team also participated in Phase 1 of the Baytna Lebanon training provided by Amna, which focused on building a values-based learning community rooted in trust and shared purpose. Topics included identity and belonging, trauma in early childhood, and trauma-informed practice in crisis contexts. The programme deepened the team's understanding of holistic child development and the healing role of play – insights that continue to strengthen Just.Childhood's work with children and families in vulnerable settings.



Caregiver Engagement

No programme working with young children in crisis contexts can afford to stop at the child. What happens in the session is one part of a child's week; what happens at home is the rest of it. Just.Childhood has always understood this, and in 2025 the programme maintained an active caregiver strand running alongside the work with children.

Eighteen caregiver support sessions were held across Sabra and Karantina, attended by 30 caregivers. These were not parenting classes in the conventional sense. They were spaces in which mothers and fathers – many of them living under extreme stress, carrying their own unprocessed grief and fear – could pause, reflect, and encounter practical tools for managing their own emotional responses and improving the quality of their relationships with their children. Sessions addressed stress regulation, positive communication, emotional awareness, and the particular challenge of parenting a child who is showing signs of distress without having the vocabulary or the capacity to name what is happening.

Progress among caregivers was measured and often slow, which is entirely consistent with the depth of the challenges involved. Changing ingrained responses to stress – particularly in an environment that continues to generate stress daily – is not a task completed in a few sessions. What the programme observed, however, was genuine movement: a growing willingness among some caregivers to reflect on their own reactions, to try breathing and grounding techniques, to describe spending more deliberate and present time with their children. These shifts, modest as they may appear on paper, represent real change in the lives of families navigating extraordinarily difficult circumstances.



Challenges, Honesty, and Adaptation

Just.Childhood does not believe in presenting its work without acknowledging its limits and its difficulties. 2025 surfaced challenges that tested the programme's adaptability and the resilience of its team.

Building trust with children who have experienced trauma or inconsistent caregiving is not quick work. Some children arrived guarded, resistant, or so dysregulated that participating in a group activity felt genuinely threatening. Educators responded not with pressure or correction but with patience: maintaining the rhythm, remaining warm and consistent, and allowing children to engage at their own pace. For some, this process took weeks. For a few, the full arc of a cycle was barely enough to begin. This is the reality of trauma-sensitive work, and the programme holds it honestly.

At the Karantina Centre in particular, higher concentrations of hyperactivity, anxiety, and hygiene-related concerns placed additional demands on educators. Sessions were adapted with clearer transition signals, more frequent physical grounding activities, and additional support for children who struggled to remain within group boundaries. These adaptations were developed collaboratively, through regular team reflection meetings in which educators shared observations and worked through challenges together. The quality of this reflective practice — the willingness of the team to learn from difficulty rather than paper over it — was one of the programme's genuine strengths in 2025.

Parental engagement also presented ongoing challenges. Caregivers operating under extreme stress sometimes struggled to sustain regular participation or to apply, at home, what was explored in sessions. The programme did not respond to this by lowering its ambitions but by extending its patience, tailoring follow-up to individual circumstances, and recognising that consistency of presence, over time, is its own form of impact



What Changed

Across 2025, educators and programme staff documented patterns of change that, taken together, constitute a meaningful picture of impact. Children who had arrived unable to sit within a group structure began anchoring themselves within the session's rhythm. Peer relationships that had begun with conflict or withdrawal became more reciprocal. Creative expression grew more confident — drawings more detailed, stories more elaborated, movement more willing and joyful. Children who had presented with significant emotional dysregulation showed increasing capacity to recognise and name their feelings, and in some cases to use the tools they had encountered in sessions — breathing, grounding, group belonging — in moments of distress outside the programme context.

These are not dramatic transformations. Just.Childhood does not claim to undo, within the span of a programme cycle, what years of war and displacement have done. What the programme offered in 2025 was something at once more modest and more essential: a consistent space in which children were treated as whole human beings deserving of beauty, play, and care — and in which that treatment, repeated across months and cycles, began to take root.

Partnership: Building Resilient Futures

Alongside its core Emergency and Trauma Pedagogy programme, Just.Childhood has been implementing the Building Resilient Futures project in partnership with Warchild, extending structured psychosocial support to children and caregivers at both centres through three complementary methodologies. This partnership has broadened Just.Childhood's psychosocial reach and added methodological depth to the organisation's overall offer in Beirut.



SUCCESS STORIES

Othman's Story

Othman, a six-year-old child, joined the program feeling emotionally withdrawn and disconnected. Having experienced displacement and loss, he rarely spoke, avoided eye contact, and preferred to remain alone during activities.

The team introduced rhythm-based and creative activities, emphasizing emotional safety and sensory engagement. Othman responded particularly well to beeswax modeling and watercolor painting, which offered him a safe, non-verbal way to express his feelings and regulate anxiety.

Gradually, small but meaningful changes appeared. Othman began engaging more confidently with materials, sharing space with peers, and participating during circle time. Through role play and felting, he started creating small figures and using them to tell simple stories, an important step in his communication journey.

With consistent routines and a supportive environment, Othman's confidence and emotional regulation improved. Today, he participates actively in both structured and creative activities, demonstrating stronger social connection and a renewed sense of security.

Samer's Story

Samer, a five-year-old boy living in Sabra and Shatila camp, joined the PSS program at the Just.Childhood Sabra Center with noticeable challenges in social interaction. He often played roughly, grabbed toys, and struggled to communicate clearly, which led to frustration and isolation from peers. He preferred free play and usually interacted only with a relative in the group.

Through consistent support, educators focused on building trust and introducing activities that nurtured emotional expression, cooperation, and respect for boundaries. Samer engaged in circle games, storytelling, painting, role play, baking, and collaborative play. These experiences helped him gradually express his needs more effectively and understand turn-taking and sharing.

Over time, Samer's communication improved significantly. He began speaking more clearly, regulating his voice, and showing greater awareness of others' feelings. He started participating enthusiastically in group activities, volunteering to help with daily routines, and forming positive friendships.

Emotionally, Samer also showed progress. Separation at drop-off became easier as he developed a sense of safety and belonging at the center. By the end of the cycle, Ali demonstrated strong social skills, empathy, and confidence. His journey reflects the positive impact of a nurturing environment, consistent routines, and relationships.

*Names changed for privacy



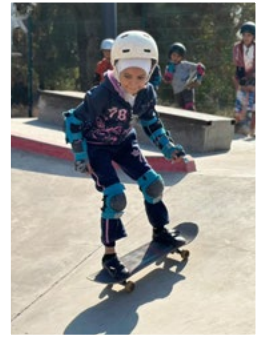
Sport for Development Program

EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH SKATEBOARDING.

The Skateboarding Project continued in 2025 to serve as the cornerstone of the Sport for Development Program, building on the achievements of previous years. Through sustained partnerships with Skateistan (since 2022) and Kindernothilfe e.V. (since 2023), the program maintained its reach and impact, providing children and youth with safe, inclusive spaces for recreation, personal growth, and community integration. Skate Beirut and Skate and Educate remained at the core of the program, delivering structured skateboarding and educational activities that promote resilience, teamwork, and psychosocial well-being among refugee children and youth.

Skate Beirut continued to engage 60 children and youth aged 6 to 18 from Palestinian refugee camps Shatila, Borj al-Barajneh, and Mar Elias. Weekly three-hour sessions, led by our three skilled coaches, focused on skateboarding skills, balance, coordination, and teamwork, while also offering a supportive environment that nurtured confidence, discipline, and social connection. Skate and Educate likewise continued to support 60 children, with 40 participants attending both academic and skateboarding sessions and 20 participating exclusively in skateboarding activities.

With the continued generous support of the Shams-Rumi Foundation, educational sessions remained at 12 hours per week and were further enriched in 2025 through the introduction of practical activities such as weaving, finger knitting, and creative math. These additions enhanced children's focus, fine motor skills, creativity, problem-solving, and emotional regulation, while complementing literacy and numeracy learning. The integration of hands-on activities deepened participants' engagement, strengthened their sense of belonging, and increased their motivation to attend regularly.





Girls Growing Stronger on and off the Board

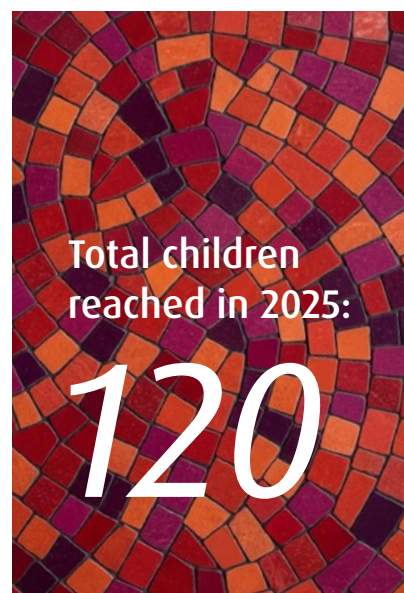
Sustained efforts since 2021 to challenge gender stereotypes in skateboarding continued to take root in 2025. Consistent support for girls kept female participation strong across both projects. The progress was encouraging — girls moving with growing confidence on their boards, supporting one another, and pushing their own limits. Their commitment reaffirmed skateboarding as a powerful space for self-expression, resilience, and girls' empowerment. Gender-sensitive design ensured equitable participation, with separate groups providing safe spaces where young people could open up, share their thoughts, and build advocacy skills.



Child Rights and Community Events

Sport for Development participants took part in age-appropriate awareness sessions on child rights and personal safety, tailored to children and adolescents aged 7 to 18. Younger children explored child rights through interactive activities, while teenagers engaged in guided discussions on personal boundaries, consent, and healthy peer relationships.

Just.Childhood also engaged youth and strengthened Lebanon's skateboarding community through three memorable events in 2025. At Snoubar Skatepark, skaters from Beirut, Saïda, Sour, and Tripoli came together for a competition, with two special Gaza decks designed by French artist Eric Flogny awarded to the winners. A Sunday skate gathering at Snoubar brought the community together around shared energy and a love of skating. Later, during a Christmas event at Nadia Aoun School in Ain El Remmaneh — organised by the Lebanese Red Cross Youth Furn Al Shubak — Just.Childhood introduced skateboarding to children and Lebanese Red Cross staff, providing boards, helmets, and safety gear for a day of exploration, laughter, and connection.



SUCCESS STORIES

Maria's Journey

Maria* is a 13-year-old girl from Syria who has grown up in Shatila refugee camp. Before joining Just.Childhood in 2023, she helped her family by selling tissues and collecting plastic, and experienced difficult and unsafe situations in the streets. After joining our skateboarding and learning sessions, Maria found a safe space where she could focus on education, sports, and personal growth. Skateboarding helped her improve her mental health, manage stress, build confidence, and make new friends. The supportive guidance of the coaches and teachers made her feel safe and valued. Maria also enjoys learning English and history, which inspire her curiosity and social engagement. Through the program, she has become more relaxed, confident, and open to others — a transformation her family notices clearly at home.

*Name changed for privacy

Capacity Building

Across all three programs, 2025 saw continued investment in the professional development of Just.Childhood's team — both through internal training initiatives and through participation in external learning opportunities. Building the capacity of our educators, psychologists, and program staff is not a secondary priority; it is fundamental to the quality and sustainability of everything we do.

Highlights from 2025 include the completion of the three-year Early Childhood Seminar in Lebanon, which equipped a cohort of educators with deep knowledge of Waldorf pedagogy adapted to crisis contexts; continued delivery of the Nurturing Resilience program supporting educators in Northwest Syria; and team-wide training in self-care, emotional regulation, and trauma-informed practice.

Just.Childhood also continued to develop its work on child safeguarding, with the psychologist contributing to the organization's Safeguarding Policy and delivering child protection awareness sessions to beneficiaries.





Conclusion & Outlook

Looking back on 2025, what stands out is not the scale of what was achieved — though the numbers tell a real story — but the steadiness with which the team kept showing up. In a context where disruptions are a given, where funding is uncertain, and where the needs of the children we serve far exceed what any single organization can address, consistency is itself a form of care.

The year ahead brings both continuity and new ambition. Just.Childhood is deepening its focus on organizational sustainability — diversifying its funding base, strengthening its internal systems, and investing in the professional development of its team. We are also working to deepen the connections between our programs. The children we reach do not all overlap — each program has its own participants and its own community. But our approach is shared: whether a child comes to us through kindergarten, through skateboarding, or through psychosocial support, we see and respond to a whole person. Our programming increasingly reflects that understanding.

The Nurturing Resilience initiative in Northwest Syria continues to grow, reflecting our conviction that quality early childhood education and trauma-informed practice are urgently needed across the region — and that knowledge can travel, even across borders and in difficult circumstances.

We remain deeply grateful to our donors and partners, without whom none of this would be possible, and to the children and families of Sabra, Shatila, Karantina, and beyond — who continue to teach us, every day, what resilience actually looks like.



Donors and Partners 2025

We are grateful to our institutional donors and partners who supported Just.Childhood's work in 2025, including

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The background of the page is a vertical gradient from light orange at the top to dark purple at the bottom. It is decorated with numerous semi-transparent dark circles of various sizes scattered across the surface. On the right side, there is a vertical strip showing a blurred outdoor scene with trees and ground.

Just.Childhood

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