



Palestinian Happy Child Centre “PHCC” Background , Aims and Activities

The Organisation

The Palestinian Happy Child Centre (PHCC) was established in 1994 as a grass roots NGO by a group of dedicated professionals and volunteers. ***It’s mission is to promote the welfare and well being of young children with special needs in Palestine.***

It adopts a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to child development addressing physical, psychological, intellectual and social needs, as well as, child’s rights and draws on the professional skills of physicians, educational psychologists, counsellors, special educators, speech therapists, social workers, art and music teachers and community leaders.

PHCC is based in **Ramallah** and provides services to children in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It networks **and works in partnership** with national NGOs, UN agencies and international NGOs who share the same philosophy.

Philosophy and approach

PHCC believes strongly that every child has the right to protection, good education, healthcare and well being. The unsettled political, social, emotional, economical and environmental conditions in Palestine have deprived many children, especially those with disabilities, of these rights. Through its activities, PHCC aims to help children with special needs to fulfil their potential as fully participating members of society. PHCC also believes strongly in the unique potentials that every child seeks.

PHCC’s activities encourage individual and collective initiatives aimed at developing a positive outlook and discouraging dependence. The centre aims to reinforce children’s natural resilience and confidence and to prepare them to function mentally and physically as capable members of Palestinian society. Priority is given to encouraging parental participation in programmes, which is viewed as essential for children’s positive growth and development.

Main objectives

- To meet the developmental, social, emotional and cognitive needs of children with special needs including those with learning disabilities and emotional disturbances
- To raise consciousness and promote understanding about children with disabilities amongst families and communities and to encourage the wider society to accept them as active members of the community.
- To help parents, teachers and others involved to detect and deal with individual disabilities at an early stage such as dyslexia, hearing impairment, stuttering, poor vision, learning disability, emotional trauma and any other developmental delays.
- To empower parents and especially mothers of children with special needs through supporting them in accepting the disability and equipping them with knowledge and skills to meet their children's developmental needs. Indirectly the aim is to empower these mothers within society.

PHCC's main activities

- 1) Routine screening for pre-school and school age children including early detection of disabilities especially those arising from birth
- 2) Effective diagnosis for early, timely interventions
- 3) Appropriate personalised professional support to suit children's individual needs, including intervention and rehabilitation
- 4) Education, support and training for parents and caregivers on how to take care of and manage special children at home and at school
- 5) A comprehensive information service about children's disabilities and special needs through a range of educational material, leaflets, pamphlets, and use of the media to increase knowledge and awareness amongst policy makers and the wider public.
- 6) A competency based, cascade training programme for health workers, social workers, pre school staff, teachers and mothers to equip them with knowledge about the most up to date techniques for timely diagnosis, professional interventions and appropriate referrals of children with special needs.
- 7) The PHCC is running a child neurology and epilepsy clinic, which is the only one in the country, where's a comprehensive, multidisciplinary approach is adopted in order to manage epilepsy and different neurological disorders that are common problems within Palestinian society.

- 8) Qualitative and quantitative research on health, psychosocial and gender aspects of child development.