



Fall 2022

SCC Heals Traumatized Children

By The Very Reverend David duPlantier, a member of AFSCC and SCC Boards of Directors.

This article is based on his August 2022 visit to SCC.

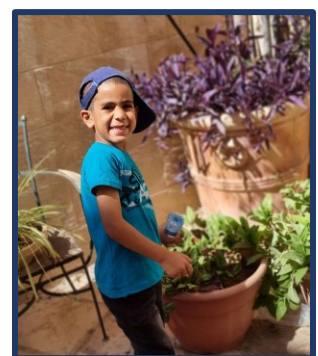
One of the critical programs at the **Spafford Children's Center** makes use of visual and dramatic art to allow traumatized children to engage their fears and memories in a non-triggering environment. Lead therapist Yazan skillfully evaluates each child. He then invites them to draw, paint, or act out things imbedded in their imaginations. Inevitably what emerges are the stories and images of the experiences that haunt the children's memories, albeit in ways that allow them a safe distance from the actual event.



Above: Paintings showing the hopes and fears of the children and youth in the SCC Trauma Program

Left: Shahd Sour, SCC CEO; David duPlantier, Board Member; and Yazan Ghareeb, Trauma Therapist

Children who come to SCC have seen family members killed, have endured body searches as they walk to school, and have witnessed home demolitions in their communities. These traumatic events are routine and the effect on children is pervasive. This program, sponsored by the **American Friends of the Spafford Children's Center**, is effective and unique in the region. Due to the necessity of one-on-one work, there is a great need for additional funding to increase the scope of treatment in an environment where the vast majority of children have multiple traumatic experiences to process in order to grow into healthy, productive adults.



Summer Camp: New Experiences, New Friends

They wore their brightly colored t-shirts and hats with the SCC logo and brought their big smiles—for more than three weeks, in July and August, 50 Palestinian children enjoyed summer camp. The youth counselors and teachers had planned each day full of games: teams ferrying water across the courtyard to a bucket on the other side; individual and group art projects; crafting clay masterpieces; touring a museum; visiting the incredible Dome of the Rock; playing chess; and petting cute, furry animals. If that wasn't enough there were also balance games, dexterity challenges, and creative diversions.

A particularly meaningful day was Palestinian Heritage Day where boys and girls donned beautiful, traditional, embroidered dresses and vests to honor their culture. At the end of the camp there was a trip to a cool pool; on a hot Jerusalem day—nothing felt better. For children whose environment may at times feel chaotic, the SCC is an oasis of learning and healing and respites like summer camp are important to their development and growth.

All year the SCC offers academic tutoring in Arabic, English, and math plus speech and occupational therapy and everyday the teachers, social worker, and therapists incorporate their understanding of trauma and its effects on developing minds into their individualized plans for each child. SCC is unique in taking a wholistic approach to helping all children reach their potential.

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Thank you for your support,



The Rev. Canon Matthew Dayton-Welch, *Chair*



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