

The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre

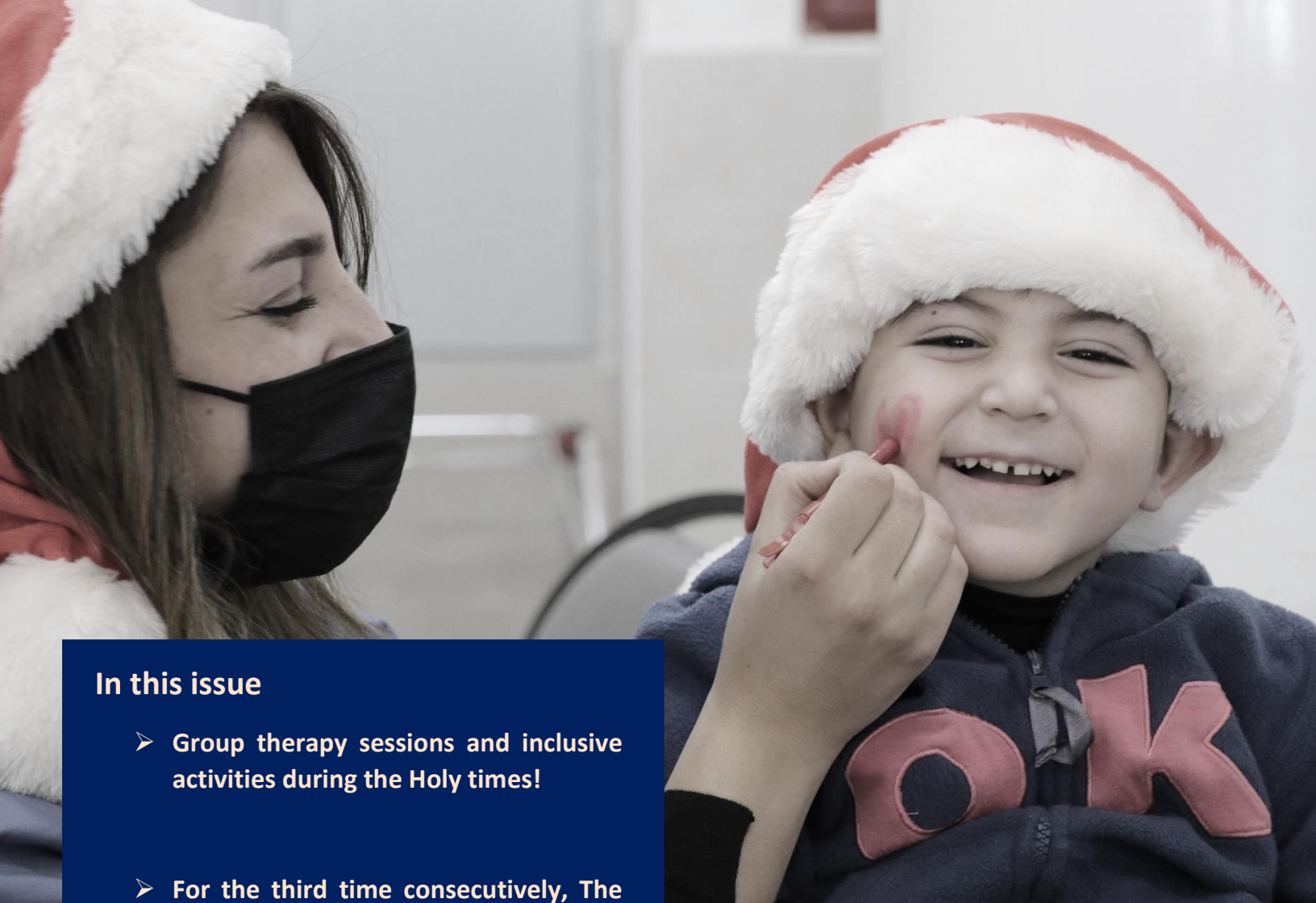
WINTER NEWSLETTER 2021

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Basma

The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre



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**Serving Our Communities
since 1964**

Meet us

The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre (JPBC) operates under the umbrella of the Anglican Church across the Middle East in the fields of education, rehabilitation and disability.

JPBC implements long-term community-based programs and has always maintained a clear vision of providing Comprehensive Rehabilitation and Inclusive Education through the Child Rehabilitation Center and the Inclusive School.

By creating a sustainable process of knowledge sharing and service provision in the field of Rehabilitation, the JPBC Child Rehabilitation Center has always maintained a track record of quality service and accordingly has obtained the Joint Commission International Accreditation (JCIA) for Ambulatory Care three times in a row, in 2015, 2018 and recently in November 2021.

JPBC is a member of the East Jerusalem Hospital Network, and the main referral Centre by the Palestinian Ministry of Health for treatment of Children with Disabilities (CwD) and acts as a National Resource Centre for capacity building, clinical training, dissemination of knowledge and best practice to practitioners and partner organizations.

"At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of the Christ Child. This blessed event reminds us of seeing the face of Christ on children in need, and this is precisely the ministry of the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre. In this spirit of compassion, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas!"

Archbishop of the Arab Anglican Episcopal Church
In Jerusalem and the Middle East, Hossam Naoum



We are pleased to issue this newsletter which touching stories and news about how all the great efforts at the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre have transformed lives of children with disabilities and their families for the better! In this occasion I want to thank all the staff members who as usual worked hard and were supportive in the most difficult times, and to our partners, donors and supporters who made our mission a reality. Wishing you all happy and blessed holidays!

Acting General Director, Violette Mubarak



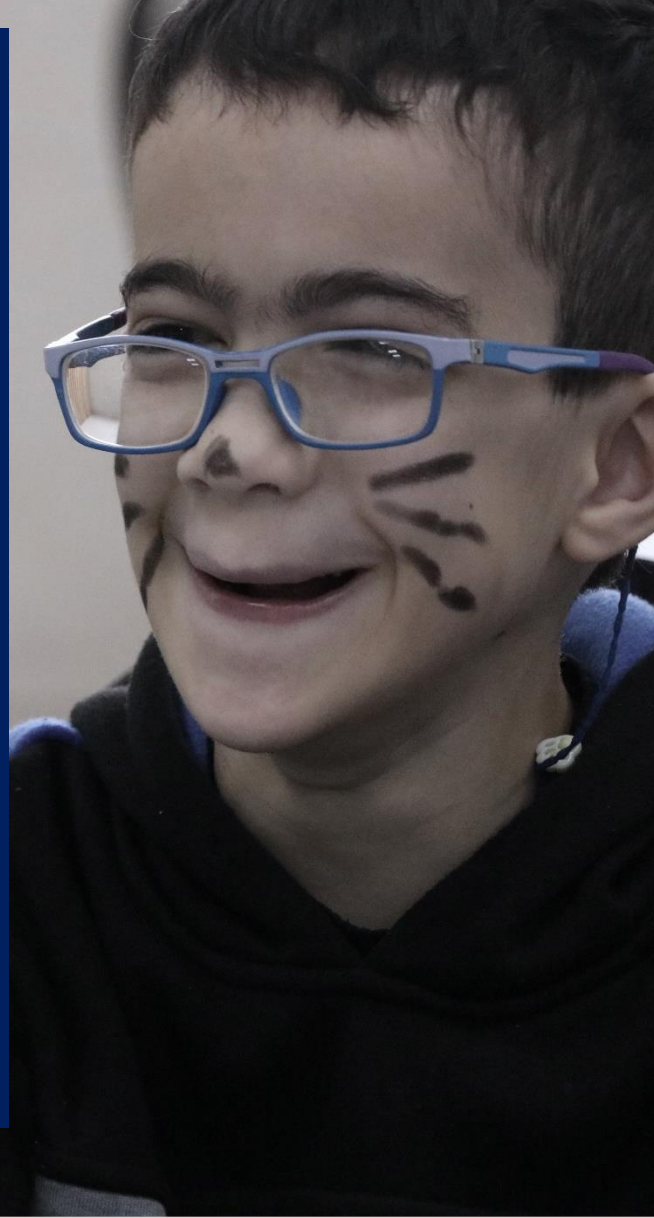
Group therapy sessions and inclusive activities during the Holy times!

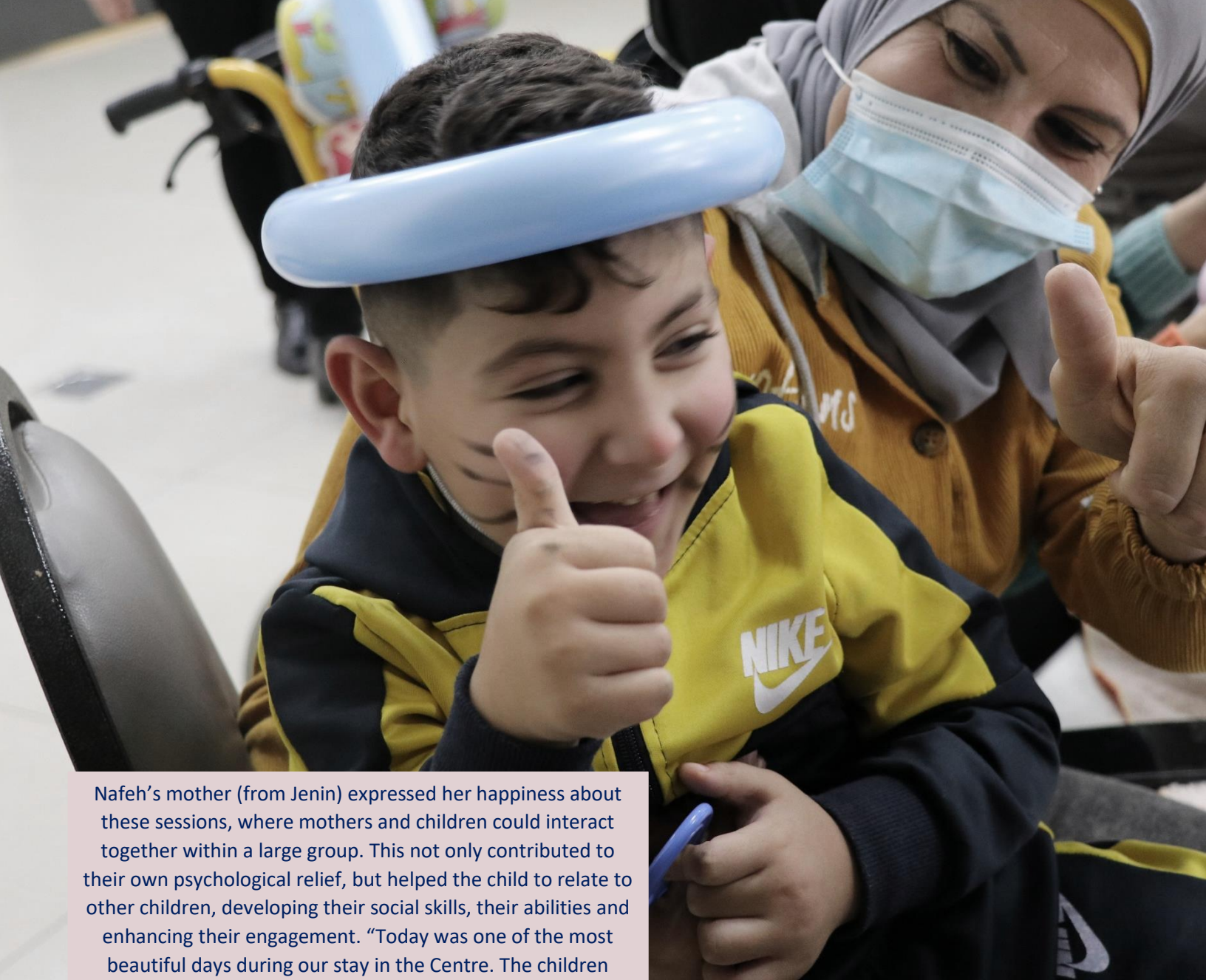
Both the Centre and the school organized the annual Christmas activities for the students. All activities were designed to create an environment of sharing and interaction in order to promote our inclusive vision and equal opportunities.

As the Christmas tree and decorations were put up, the Basma Centre celebrated International Day of Disability through a festive day of activities for the children and their mothers. This took place within our schedule of weekly group therapy sessions. The celebration included writing wishes, in addition to songs and motivational competitions for children.

Another happy day

The multidisciplinary team conducted another day of activities to celebrate Christmas with the children at the Child Rehabilitation Centre. On this day, children enjoyed Christmas music and festive chocolate treats, as they joined their mother in creating Christmas stockings. This activity is a great occupational therapy activity to enhance fine motor skills for children, especially those with physical disabilities. In the end, every child had their own uniquely created Christmas stocking full of chocolate!





Nafeh's mother (from Jenin) expressed her happiness about these sessions, where mothers and children could interact together within a large group. This not only contributed to their own psychological relief, but helped the child to relate to other children, developing their social skills, their abilities and enhancing their engagement. "Today was one of the most beautiful days during our stay in the Centre. The children were very happy with the activities offered, and we as mothers feel really happy that our children have received this comprehensive attention and care."

From his side, the Medical Director, Dr. Waddah Malhees explained the importance of group therapeutic sessions, considering them as one of the best rehabilitative and therapeutic methods to make a significant impact on the cognitive and physical abilities of children with disabilities, as well as on the psychological situation of the mothers and parents present. Dr. Waddah stressed the importance of pre-planning for these sessions, thus doubling their effectiveness and contribution when used in physiotherapy and occupational therapy sessions.



For the third time consecutively, The Jerusalem Princess Basma achieves the International Accreditation Certificate “JCIA”

rehabilitation team, who have consistently maintained the highest level of quality of services, to achieve the best results for the beneficiary children and their families; “Together, we work in the Child Rehabilitation Centre as in a ‘beehive’, to ensure the continuation of high-quality Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services, in all circumstances. We are constantly working to raise the capabilities of our staff and renew our facilities in a way that meets international standards of quality.”

Mrs Mubarak added, "Obtaining International Accreditation gives the beneficiaries and their families trust in us, and assures them that the Rehabilitation Centre is committed to the policies and highest standards to preserve their safety. This is in addition to the Centre’s ongoing motivation to provide support and empowering services for children with disabilities and their families. This bridges the gap between people with disabilities and their communities and enhances the therapeutic process, as well as contributing to their integration into their communities.”

The Medical Director of the Basma Centre, Dr. Waddah Malhees, added that obtaining the international accreditation certificate for the third time in a row is an indication of the commitment of the Centre to the highest international standards. “Our staff were able to deliver our services consistently and to the highest levels of quality, especially at this critical time that the whole world is going through, due to the spread of the epidemic.”

The JCI is the international branch of the Joint Commission and works in over 100 countries worldwide to provide accreditation. Hundreds of health care organizations around the world are seeking to achieve the JCI Gold Seal of Approval, from academic medical centers and hospitals to primary care providers.

The Child Rehabilitation Centre at The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre (JPBC), has for the third time, successfully passed the audit for the Joint Commission International Accreditation (JCIA) for maintaining quality in providing Comprehensive Rehabilitation Services for Palestinian children with disabilities in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

JPBC had previously obtained the International Accreditation for Ambulatory Care twice in a row in 2015 and 2018, passing the examination that took place on three days 16-18/11/2021; the award is on a three-year cycle. This accreditation marks one of the most important achievements of the Child Rehabilitation Centre, recognizing them to be a provider of quality rehabilitation services in accordance with international standards and best practices.

The Most Reverend Archbishop Hosam Naoum, Archbishop in Jerusalem and Chair of the Board of the JPBC met with staff to celebrate their success, commending them for their excellent service in creating lasting positive change in the lives of children with disabilities.

The Acting General Director, Violette Mubarak, expressed her thanks and appreciation to the Basma staff in its various departments, headed by the



New chairman meeting the team

Within his overarching plan for The Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre, Archbishop Hosam Naoum met the Child Rehabilitation Centre's team and the Inclusive School Team. He offered support and encouragement for the team, and acknowledged their efforts in sustaining service provision for Palestinian children with disabilities, especially during the challenging times of the coronavirus pandemic.



Face to face and hand in hand to reach our children in their communities Our Outreach Program in the West Bank

“We are trained by the Basma team on the very fine details of the best practices of dealing with children with disabilities. We also receive training on integration methodologies so as to fully involve the mother and the family in the therapeutic process of their child in order to achieve the best results in the rehabilitation process and sustain progress through the family's increased knowledge. Therefore, it's very important that skilled and expert teams share their experience and knowledge with other teams. The training we receive in the field by the Basma team contributes to raising the quality of our services, enhances the growth of our children and enables us to continue our work professionally with a deeper knowledge.”

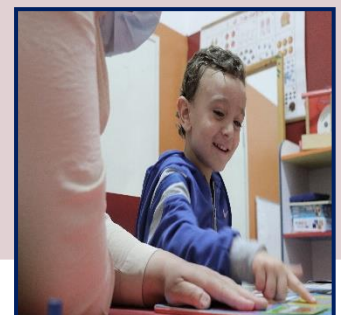
Janat Manasra, physiotherapist in Al Qarama Center for Rehabilitation – AL Jalazone

“The Basma team conduct a number of visits to our center, where they provide assessments and diagnoses for the children, in order to refer them to the Child Rehabilitation Centre in Jerusalem for Comprehensive Rehabilitation.

Moreover, the Basma multidisciplinary team supports our own team by sharing expertise within the therapy sessions. This empowers us and enhances our quality service, thus improving the results of the therapies and empowering children to be better integrated in the community.

In addition, the Basma team creates an overview of logistical and administrative needs to support our work at the end of each visit. And then they set a plan with us to meet these needs. We also recently received new equipment and PPE's.”

Mrs. Muzaian Armosh, manager of Al Qarama Center for Rehabilitation – AL Jalazone





Mother and Family Empowerment Program (MFEP) Three paths for empowering families

Training within the therapy sessions

Within the MFEP we provide training to mothers, fathers and family members to become shadow therapists for their children. Parents return home with a Home Therapy Plan, customized to the needs of their child. In this way, parents continue with their child's therapies at home to ensure continuity and progression.

Mariam's mother has benefited from our MFEP in the 4th quarter of the year 2021 and feels satisfied because of being able to join her daughter in all and every therapy session at the Child Rehabilitation Centre "I'm so very happy because I learnt a lot about supporting my daughter, and for being with her in each step of the therapy. Now, I can let go stress since I have valuable experience on Mariam's needs and treatment".



Psychosocial support

Our therapeutic process is designed to include all the elements around the child specifically his family. An empowered mother can provide more for her child and be more involved in their treatment and rehabilitation. Therefore, the MFEP provides psychosocial support through individual and group sessions for mothers led by our social worker at the Centre, in addition to recreational activities.



“The presence of a social worker creates real serenity for us. She takes good care of us, listens carefully to us and gives us the best advice. And it’s a great relief for us to have someone like that since we go through stress and depression because of our children’s condition.

Elaf’s mother / Bethlehem

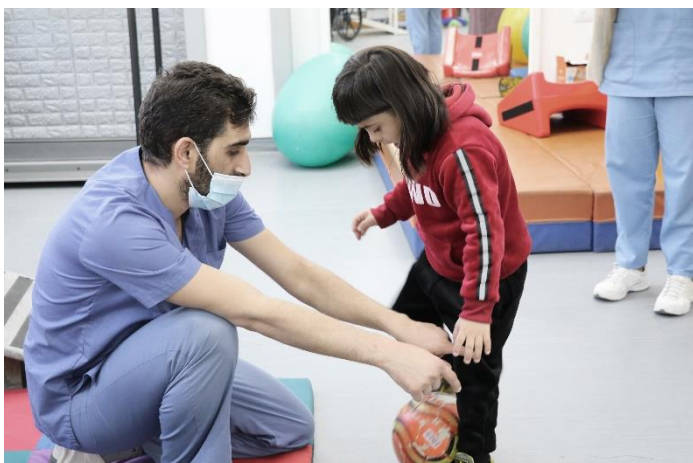


Awareness-raising and guidance

Parents attending this program benefit from awareness-raising and education on topics related to disability and the wellbeing of the mother and child. Topics cover positive parenting, health, hygiene and infection prevention, and nutrition. Furthermore, a special focus is given to the opportunities and challenges that face their children and how to overcome these challenges.

Mothers receive short awareness-raising sessions each evening and a more in-depth awareness-raising session every week. “These sessions remind me and tells us as mothers that there are people who give their time to take care of us and help us overcome our challenges. Every evening we gather and share positive thoughts. This has really influenced me and enhanced my life”.

Wissam’s mother/ Hizma



Empowering mothers through the rehabilitation of their children

Yusif, aged two years and six months from Ramallah was born with Down Syndrome. Although, the mother was not informed of this during pregnancy or after the birth, she recognized that he had Down Syndrome symptoms. Nobody from the family believed her but she was determined to visit doctors to get an accurate diagnosis for her son.

Yusif's mother's thoughts were confirmed through a genetic test, which gave her the motivation to look for the best therapies and treatment for her son. She told us it was not easy and for six months, she searched for a Centre that provided comprehensive rehabilitation. Eventually, her son was referred to the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre by our Medical Director, Dr. Waddah Malhees through our Outreach Program.

Previously, Yusif's mother had worked as a freelance translator, having studied English at Birzeit University in the West Bank, but because of her son's condition she decided to leave her work in order to give him the time and attention he needed.

After two years of rehabilitation and support for both Yusif and herself, she now feels more empowered saying;

"The best thing that happened to me is that my friend told me about the Basma Centre.

Each admission gives me a huge push forward and I return home with positive energy for my other children and family. The comprehensive program that we receive for both the mother and the child improves our psychological state and enhances our abilities to deal with our other children."

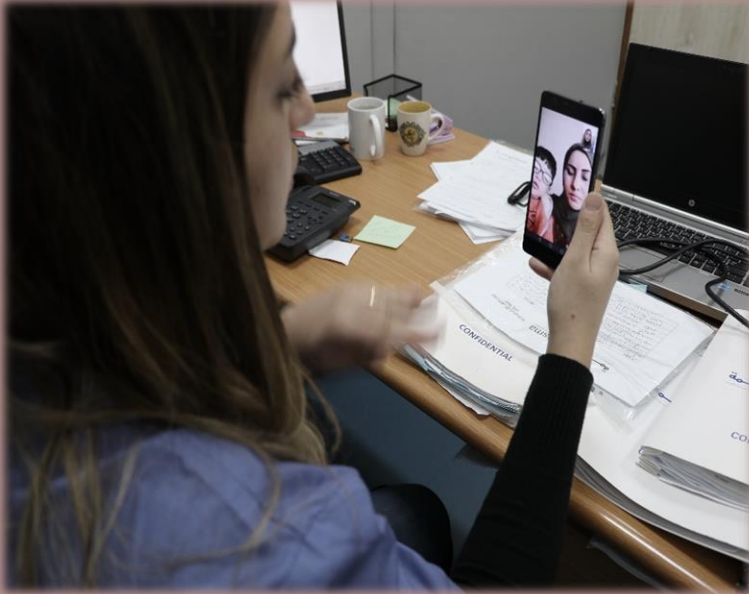
After six admissions, Yusif is flourishing, is now keen to interact with people around him, and his cognition and own unique personality have really developed.

His mother's says: "Yusif's development has encouraged me so much so that I can prepare to return to work when all my children turn six years old, (since I prefer to spend the first six years with each child). But when Yusif was born, I thought that I would never be able to work again!"

Through the Mother and Family Empowerment Program, Yusif's mother and many other mothers are being empowered at the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre every year as they become instrumental in the rehabilitation and progress of their children. Together, we work to create lasting change in the lives of our children and parents, transforming lives and promoting equal opportunities to enable individuals, families and communities to thrive.



Virtual Follow up sessions



In spite of the pandemic, our Medical Team continued to serve Palestinian children with disabilities by raising the technological capacities of the Child Rehabilitation Centre through purchasing a new server and online program to reach families. At the same time, staff received new laptops in order to sustain a quality service.

The JPBC IT Officer trained all therapists and professional staff in the use of this program which offered greater confidentiality and ease of use. In turn, the multidisciplinary team, have cascaded the training to parents who were enrolled on the Mother and Family Empowerment Program, in order to make subsequent therapeutic sessions online more effective.

Once trained, families were invited to attend an online follow-up session one month after their child's discharge from the Child Rehabilitation Program to review their care plan (Home Therapy Plan), assess progress and to plan the next admission to the Centre. All families, to date, have taken up this offer, which ensured more effectively that the 'Home Care Plan' was being followed accurately, and that timely interventions were implemented, thus improving each child's life opportunities.

Mohammed's story

Mohammed, like many children his age in Hebron, enjoys playing with his brothers and sisters. But this was not always the case. His mother, describes how a lack of oxygen at birth left her son with physical mobility difficulties and how he underwent an operation on his legs when he was just one month old. She recalls feeling 'broken', "I didn't have any hope about anything at that time."

In November, Mohammed now age two and half years old, finished his second residential admission to the Child Rehabilitation Centre here in Jerusalem. An assessment earlier in the year through the Outreach Programme with Dr. Waddah, our Medical Director, led to a referral to the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre, for a comprehensive package of treatment. This has given him access to a whole range of therapies and expertise. During his first stay at the Centre, to the delight of everyone, Mohammed took his first steps, and last month we celebrated with him as he walked confidently without any assistance. His progress has been rapid and he surprised both therapist and his family with the developments in his speech.

Mohammed's mother also reflects on the support she received for herself through the Mother and Family Empowerment Programme, which made everything feel different:

"The social worker listened to me, took care of me and gave me excellent advice. This changed my mind about how I saw my son, myself and our future."

After each two weeks stay in residence in the mother and child dormitory, on discharge, all families receive a Home Therapy Plan for their child. This year we have trialed a system of online monitoring and follow-up whereby a multidisciplinary team 'meets' the child and family virtually, through whatever devices are available to them; mothers have been trained as part of their programme how to access these sessions through a simple technology platform.

Mohammed's mother stresses the importance of this for her:

"This is such an important new opportunity for us. It means that my child can exceed his targets, reaching new levels. It is also a joy for him to see the therapists in between admissions- he is so very attached to all his therapists."

Other family members have been able to join the virtual therapy sessions and now support Mohammed together through the 'Home Therapy Plan.' This includes his siblings, who also are feeling more skilled in how to play with and care for their brother. Mother and son are both looking forward to their next admission soon and the JPBC team look forward to welcoming them back!

The official opening of a new Rehabilitation Wing.

Under the patronage of Archbishop Hosam Naoum, and with generous funding by the Federal Republic of Germany through its Development Bank KfW, and through implementation by the United Nations Development Program, the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre has inaugurated the newly renovated suite of therapy rooms.

The Archbishop expressed his pride in the services offered by the Basma team, acknowledging it was not easy to ensure the growth of this unique service provision. However, the organization's commitment to developing its capacity ensured that the Centre remained up to date with new developments in the field of rehabilitation of children with disabilities.

The Head of the German Representative Office in Ramallah, Mr. Oliver Ownza praised the quality of the services at the Child Rehabilitation Centre, pointing out that the Centre is a source of inspiration, while expressing his respect for the positive spirit there. Moreover, he thanked all partners for completing this important project so successfully. Mr Ownza honored the Basma Centre's role, specifically within this project in overcoming the many challenges of continuing to provide rehabilitation services during the spread of the Coronavirus.

The Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Development Program, Ms. Chitose Noguchi, said that she could see the pride and commitment of the Basma staff, who strives to ensure that Palestinian children can access rehabilitation services, especially through the Virtual Therapy Program that provides services to children from Gaza Strip and the West Bank including East Jerusalem.

The event concluded with a speech by Mrs. Violette Mubarak, from the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre, who thanked all the supporters of the Basma Centre while explaining the importance of these kind of projects in raising the capacities of its staff, and in providing additional opportunities for Palestinian children with disabilities to access medical and rehabilitation facilities of the highest quality.

It is worth noting that the new suite in the Child Rehabilitation Centre includes 6 therapy rooms, in which the Centre provides physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and psychosocial support.



Developing the Premises

- With a generous donation by NGO Development Center (NDC), a new renovation project is being implemented at the Jerusalem Princess Basma Centre. This project will provide a new fully equipped computer lab and two new class rooms with additional space for students with Autism.
- With a generous support by USAID American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) renovation in the existing rooftop playground has been approved, to make it more suitable for all students with and without disabilities.



OUR INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

First Semester Activities

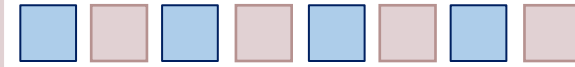
In addition to the inclusive and special classes, our school focuses on implementing recreational and non-academic activities. Our staff, composed of teachers, assistant teachers and the disabilities coordinator, work in partnership to promote cultural, community and national values, including sharing, commitment and many others. We believe that these activities will better encourage interaction between academic staff and students, and between the students themselves. They also enable new skills and talents to be explored and developed which the academic activities might not.



“We believe in the importance of recreational activities, especially during holy seasons. The good thing about this day is that the students were part of each activity. Essentially, they are the ones who made this day successful and joyful.

Days such as these highlight the importance of collaborative group work that enhances our inclusive vision of education. From our inclusive school we wish everyone Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.”

Shereen Said, School Principal



Christmas Activities at the Inclusive School

The inclusive school celebrated the Christmas season on a special open day that consisted of a number of artistic activities, including singing for students with visual impairments, speechmaking for students with physical disabilities and dance for other classes, including our Autism class.



A School Trip

In the light of the value of education through recreational events, the school conducted a trip to a tourist trail in the Palestinian village of Soba, where students were taught about the history of the village.

This natural environment was also healthy for our students, who enjoyed learning and playing together in a green area. Activities for the trip were designed to ensure they were suitable for students with disabilities. There was a high ratio of specialized assistant teachers supporting, who worked hard to make all the needed alignments and alternative arrangements, especially for students with autism, who were particularly happy and engaged on this trip.



Every year the school marks Olive Harvesting Day and Heritage Day through group activities to ensure students remain close to their cultural roots. This year the Heritage Day was special, with teachers cooking traditional food for their students on the school premises whilst listening to traditional music. Teachers and students also danced the Palestinian traditional dance, "Dabkeh".

Young Researchers

The spread of Coronavirus has led to widespread online teaching, enabling students to become more responsible about finding information rather than relying on the teachers as their only or major source of learning. In this period, students developed great research skills and amazing projects, which enhanced the academic level of many. After returning to frontal education, we still want the students to learn through the national curriculum from different sources and to transform our students from receivers of information into creators of information.

Every week, a committee that consists of teachers under the supervision of the school's principal announce the winner of the weekly prize for the 'Young Researcher'. The winners read out their research in morning assemblies and other students benefit from the new information.

Winning the Diocesan Christmas Competition

One of our students has won the Christmas Art Competition that was organized by the Diocese of Jerusalem, with a number of our students from the elementary level also participating. Students with disabilities and without disabilities took part in this supportive competition to exhibit their abilities and talents.



Finally,

We will continue to envision that all Palestinian children with disabilities have access to quality health services and inclusive education, can participate and influence, have hope and opportunities.

This vision is being enhanced through our different programs that you can learn more about by visiting our website www.basma-centre.org. Please feel free to contact us by email info@basma-centre.org or phone on +972-2-6283058.