A Report on the 19th Summer Camp Activities, 2013

Introduction

The annual summer camp in the Ghirass Centre is one of the most important events into which all the staff members put their efforts and experience to make it a success and achieve everything necessary to support the children and their families.

The first summer camp took place in 1994, the first year the Centre was established. Since then a camp has been held annually and we have now reached the 19th. This year the summer camp ran from June 13th to 8th July. 157 children were participating. During the closing ceremony the children performed and presented the results of their activities.

The following aspects will give an overview of the goals of the summer camp and its activities and structures.

1. Goals

- Physical and emotional expression of the children through the various games and activities.

- Improved reading and listening skills of children and the motivation to read and carry out research in the library.

- Development of the children’s creative skills through music, arts and craft activities.

- Encouragement of a positive attitude by involving volunteers in the work of the Centre and focusing on environmental issues affecting it, such as the gardens, trees and the building itself and the importance of maintaining it and keeping it beautiful and clean.

- Behaviour modification in order to reduce violence among the children through individual and group meetings and interactive activities.

- Raising awareness of the importance of acceptance of each other, especially children with disabilities, in order to bind the children in cohesive groups for different activities. This will enable the children to provide physical and emotional support for each other and enhance their self-esteem.

- Discovering children who are suffering from educational, social and health problems and cooperating with their parents in setting a plan for each child.

- Widening the children's horizons by introducing them to other places and organizations through various field visits, and providing an overview of their history. They visited Irtas village, Solomon’s Pools, Nativity Church and Mary Duty park.
- Providing a safe and a stimulating environment for children in order to give them the confidence to stand up for their rights, express their feelings and to achieve their aims freely.

- Coordinated with five institutions and centres to participate in the summer camp by doing entertainment activities as Badil institute, Mary duty park, Nativity church, Inad theatre and Irtas village.

- All the summer camp activities were covered by the media as Ma’an Agency, the centre’s website and Facebook.

4. Overview of the daily activities

Art section (under the supervision of the teachers Areej Faraj and the volunteer Jihad Abusrur, Ru’a Al Ayasa and Ru’a Allaham).

According to the daily schedule all participants in the summer camp took part in activities in every section. The art section taught free art, expressionism and colour mixing, as well as handicraft with cartoons, plastic, wooden spoons, bottles and paper. The children drew on these materials and coloured them, making them into beautiful shapes. An exhibition was held in the Centre in the Ghirass hall during the closing ceremony, in order to display the work to family members and people from the community.
Drama section (under the supervision of Abeer Albataha and Hamzah Abu Alia)

All children in the Centre trained in dancing, sport, acting and movement, according to their schedule. They also performed these dances at the closing ceremony. The teacher in that section worked with Hakaya Band that helped children on improving their communication skills, body language, accepting others and attention.
Educational toys section (under the supervision of Samar Owyna and Cordula)

In this section the children played, learned new games and had several group activities under the supervision of the Centre. They played ‘law’ games such as Chess, Centre, Marrakech and The Pluck. The children called them law games because they depend on specific laws and rules. They also played mind games such as puzzles, Lego, besides some other movement games and other popular games.

Library section (under the supervision of Hannan Ayasa and Mohammad Zughayer)

Reading and listening to storytelling under supervision of Hanan Alaysa:

The library is one of the main sections in the Centre and played an important role in the summer camp. The librarian carried out many activities with the children such as reading stories, running cultural competitions, writing summaries of stories, discussing plots with the whole group and making a wall hanging of the migration from cities and about other literary subjects.
Music section (under the supervision of Maher Frarja with the volunteers Mawal Ayasa, Yazan Mezher and Taha M’ale)

The children learned five traditional Palestinian songs, which they performed in the closing ceremony. They also played with some mobile games that taught them how to accept each other, how to respect the winners and accept the losers.
Computer section (under the supervision of the teachers Jihad Hammad, and Shireen)

Each of the supervisors was in his/ her place in the department according to the schedule. The children learned how to start and close the computer safely, how to surf the internet and find educational information, particularly from Google and the YouTube websites. All children watched some educational videos (Phonics), and a short video about how to protect the environment. They also played games and learned how to print with Microsoft Office Word.

Psychological and social section:

Parents were satisfied when they attended the activities in the end of each day. They also talked about their children problems. Five cases were discussed and found some suitable solutions with the parents. During each activity teachers and volunteers worked together. To solve these problems the social worker cooperated with the parents and asked them to work with their children at home, then he put a plan to follow up with these children in the special education program.
The indoor activities organized by the Centre with other friendly institutes and organisations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of visits</th>
<th>No. of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inad theatre</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>17-6-2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dr. Waleed Fararjeh</td>
<td>Health care</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hara theatre</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>1-7-2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Musicians without borders</td>
<td>Games of movement</td>
<td>All the summer camp’s days</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Badil institute</td>
<td>Poycut the Isreali product</td>
<td>8\7\2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following outside activities were organised by the Centre:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>Place of visit</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>No. of visits</th>
<th>No. of beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Irtas Village</td>
<td>27-6-2013</td>
<td>Visiting the museum in Irtas monastery, walking trip around the village and Solomon’s pools.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Digool pool</td>
<td>20-27-6/4-7</td>
<td>All groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nativity church</td>
<td>17-24/6-1-7</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mary duty park</td>
<td>5-7-2013</td>
<td>Games and singing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ghirass centre concluded its summer camp activities

250 children and their family members came on Monday to conclude the summer camp activities. After the open speech for the anthem, the director of Ghirass Ibtisam Ilzoghyyer appreciated the employees in the center. She also mentioned how creative the children were during the camp. The ceremony included different and excited paragraphs like art, health care, music and a play about good behavior while we are eating.
In addition there was the art and hand crafts exhibition for the children work during the summer camp, using materials from the environment. All parents were happy to see their children’s work during the month. In the end, Ibtisam thanked Ghirass employees and the volunteers for their creativity and loyalty to the center that appeared during the summer camp.
The Art Exhibition
**Evaluation of the summer camp activities**

Ghirass staff evaluated the activities of the summer camp on a daily basis and discussed the participation, acceptance and feedback from the children. The problems that occurred were discussed with the whole team and solutions worked out together. The parents and family members also gave positive feedback to the Centre.

The closing ceremony of the summer camp was evaluated with the following conclusions:

- 12 meetings were organized after the indoors activities with all teachers and volunteers. They discussed all the strong and points that need development in all departments during the camp. They also discussed children who have behaviour and health problems.

- Many of the parents were very impressed of the ceremony which showed how much the children enjoyed performing.

- The children represented the camp’s activities in a positive way. Most of the children attended and it was the day with the least absenteeism.

- The volunteers, mostly from the Hakaya group, showed great commitment to the activities and performed well.

- The supervisors made a great effort to succeed in their plans and goals and this was shown clearly during the ceremony.

- Numbers of children were between 125-157 children.

- Children visited Irtas village, Mary duty park and the Nativity church.