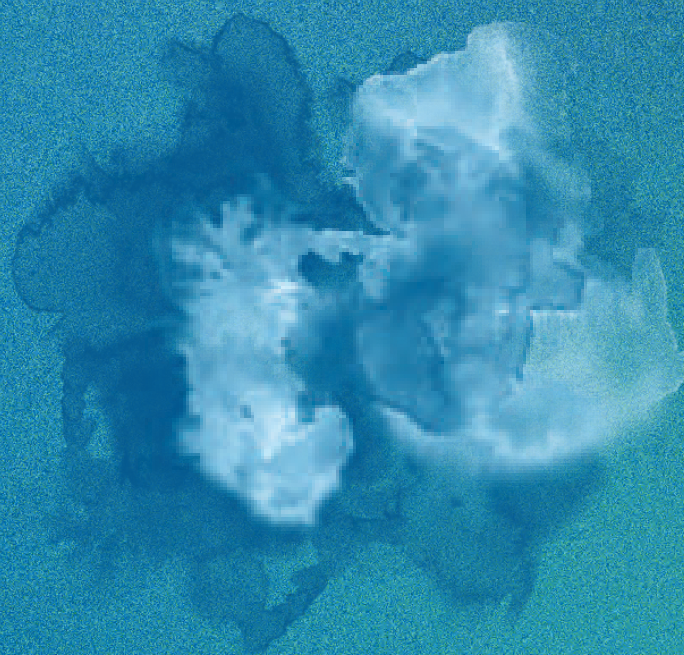


Psychotreatment and

Psychosocial Support

An Introductory Booklet

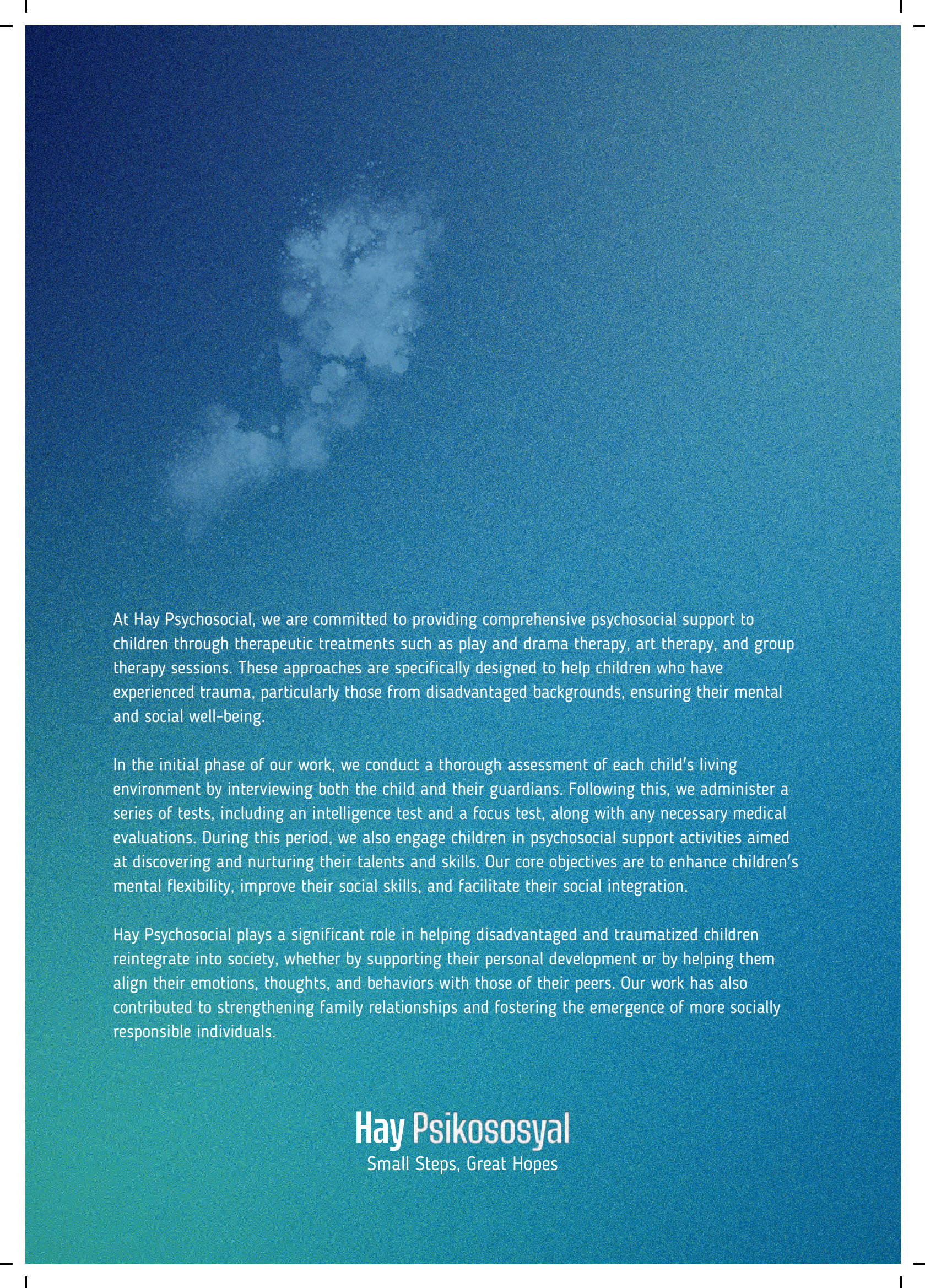


Hay Psikososyal

Hay Psikososyal

Small Steps, Great Hopes





At Hay Psychosocial, we are committed to providing comprehensive psychosocial support to children through therapeutic treatments such as play and drama therapy, art therapy, and group therapy sessions. These approaches are specifically designed to help children who have experienced trauma, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, ensuring their mental and social well-being.

In the initial phase of our work, we conduct a thorough assessment of each child's living environment by interviewing both the child and their guardians. Following this, we administer a series of tests, including an intelligence test and a focus test, along with any necessary medical evaluations. During this period, we also engage children in psychosocial support activities aimed at discovering and nurturing their talents and skills. Our core objectives are to enhance children's mental flexibility, improve their social skills, and facilitate their social integration.

Hay Psychosocial plays a significant role in helping disadvantaged and traumatized children reintegrate into society, whether by supporting their personal development or by helping them align their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors with those of their peers. Our work has also contributed to strengthening family relationships and fostering the emergence of more socially responsible individuals.

Hay Psikososyal
Small Steps, Great Hopes

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Introduction

Ever since the start of the war in Syria, Türkiye had endured a large wave of mass migration. The group most severely affected by this is, without a doubt, children. These children had to endure a continuous series of unfortunate circumstances such as being in close proximity with weapons, exile, the harsh living conditions that come with deportation, dealing with death and loss, starvation, explosions and bombings, and the need for shelter. Türkiye mainly focuses on providing food, shelter and fuel to the Syrian refugees. Children who do not receive proper psychological therapy treatment are prone to developing symptoms of PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). Moreover, the children affected by this war often struggle with adapting to a different geographical location, and they face significant academic setbacks or difficulties. For this reason, these children are in dire need of psychosocial support and comprehensive training to be able to adapt to the new educational system.

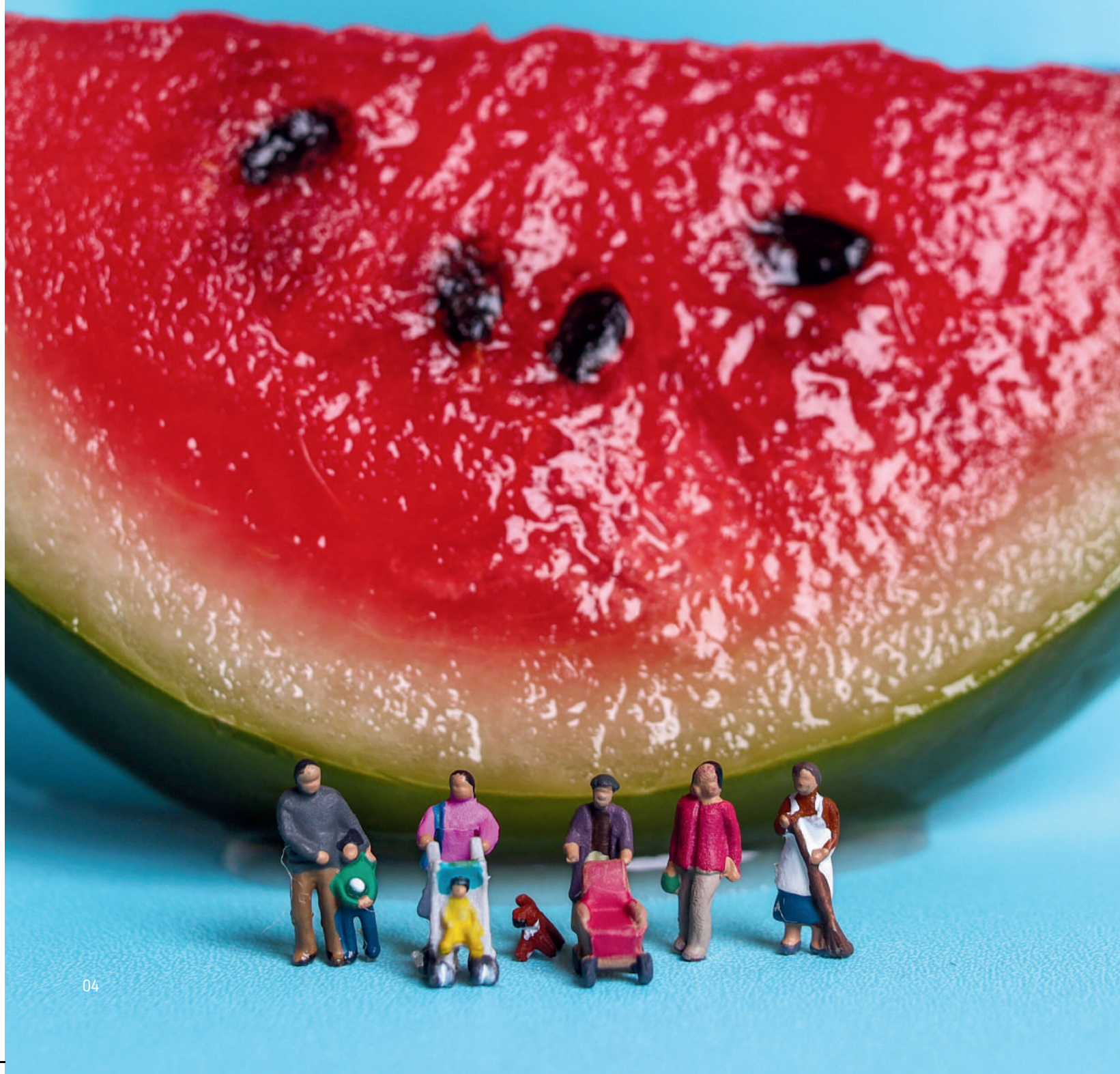


The catastrophic earthquake that hit the country of Türkiye on the 6th of February 2023 caused many lives and homes to be lost. Hayrat Aid has contributed all of its resources to the search and rescue efforts for the earthquake's victims since the time of the incident. After the events of that tragedy, the need for psychosocial support and educational aid has become more urgent. We at Hay Psychosocial have taken the responsibility of mending the deep wounds left by this atrocity, with our motto "Little steps, big hopes". Knowing the severe implications of horrible events on children, we decided to prioritize their comfort and happiness; thus, we employed a team of professionals to provide psychosocial support to the areas affected by the earthquake.



The trauma that the Palestinian people are suffering from due to the ongoing genocide, and the continuous attacks that they have endured over the years directly have affected the younger generations. After children or teenagers or adults have trauma they usually show symptoms like fear, anxiety, anger, depression, guilt or constant self-blame, a constant reliving of traumatic events and losing hope, sleeping disorders, isolation from family and society, difficulties in communication, unusual heart rates, trembling and shortness of breath, and being prone to violence due to poor anger management. The EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) treatment will be especially effective in reducing those symptoms to a minimum.

The aforementioned traumas prevent these children from reaching their full potential, building a healthy family, and fulfilling their academic desires to obtain a job in the future. To lessen the likelihood of such effects and to improve the mental health of the Palestinian people, they require psychosocial support.





"Kids are hope, and keeping that hope alive is our duty"

“Mending a child’s soul is like changing a whole world”





Our Goals

The reason behind our continued endeavors in the psychotreatment and psychosocial support field is to ensure that individuals in our working group become aware of their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in response to traumatic events. Psychosocial support and psychotreatment are proven to help individuals reconnect with their thoughts and emotions.

What Are Psychosocial Support and Psychotreatment?

We, as humans, are fragile, sensitive beings by nature, even if most of us do not show it. When we come face to face with internal pain (loss, trauma, relationship problems, etc.), we tend to wallow in the depths of this pain, which in turn leads to a mental breakdown.

The term “psychosocial” refers to the dynamic relationship between psychological and social conditions, which constantly affect one another. Psychosocial support related to natural disasters aims to prevent psychological maladjustments and disorders that are caused by such disasters. Psychosocial support for affected people consists of rebuilding and strengthening social and familial relationships by knowing an individual’s strengths during the period in which they are rehabilitated to their ‘normal’ lives. During the psychosocial support period, “coping, recovery and resilience skills” are focused on to prepare for potential disasters and emergencies in the future. Psychosocial support activities also include multidisciplinary services that are implemented at all levels of the disaster cycle, as well as support for rescue workers.

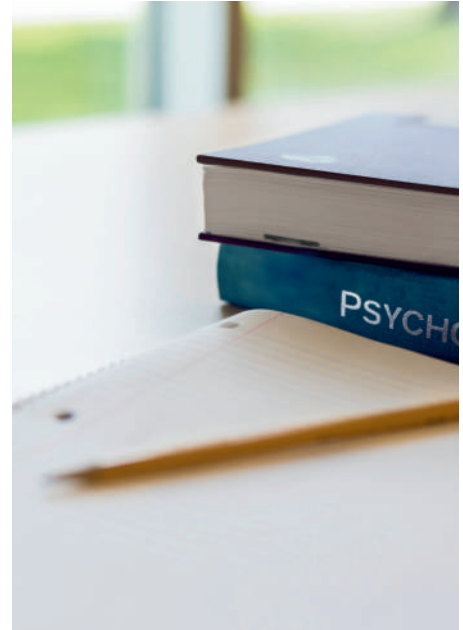


The individual theories and the various treatment methods of psychotreatment help people contextualize their past experiences. By rekindling their links with their past, they can build a better future. Due to the reformation of those links, treated people can strengthen their coping mechanisms and gain empathy and insight skills to face life's difficulties in a healthier way. Psychotreatment also provides an opportunity to improve self-awareness, helping individuals control their lives and manage their issues.

Our psychosocial support interventions are designed to foster social harmony by implementing psychological treatment techniques that adhere to our moral, cultural and traditional values.



Our Fields of Work



Psychological First-Aid

Psychological First-Aid is a psychosocial intervention tailored to individual needs and resources. Its main purpose is to provide individuals who are affected by disasters or emergencies the means to express their experiences and emotions by teaching them about the basics of psychology, thus making them understand their past experiences and their effects on them.

Just as psychological first-aid can be executed either individually or amongst a group, it can also be done by various methods, such as making and distributing educational brochures, using social media, and organizing events such as panels and symposiums.

Moreover, a person's mental resources play a crucial role in their psychological recovery process when combined with methods of moral support, it is widely accepted that this is very beneficial for individuals.

Guidance and Counselling

Guidance and counselling is a psychosocial intervention that directs individuals who are in need of psychological or psychiatric services (including people with abnormal behavior or persistent cognitive impairment) to local professionals (e.g., psychologists and psychiatrists) and their institutions (e.g., mental/psychiatric hospitals or psychiatric clinics). Guidance and counselling is a part of psychological first-aid as well as the evaluation of needs and resources. During this process of evaluation, necessities such as nutrition and shelter are provided to people affected by disasters.

Education

Education is the most commonly used method of psychosocial support. It is crucial to reach out to people affected by the disaster and those involved in or who could be involved in the psychosocial support projects (e.g., NGO workers).

Target Group of Psychotreatment and Psychosocial Support Projects

The target group for the psychosocial support projects consists of students between the ages of 8-14 in primary or secondary school who have cases of trauma and psychological issues due to war or disaster, as well as difficulties with socialization.



The Methodology Behind Tutoring and Treatment

Group Sessions

In group sessions for children, we discuss trauma, struggles and significant past events along with the emotions, shortcomings and failures that come with them. Group sessions are a good opportunity for children to discover their prejudices, trauma and beliefs – which could lead to their transformation.

Our team of psychologists aim to address the following points during the group sessions which are especially tailored to the needs of the participants:

- Explaining that an individual's struggles are not exclusive to them, supporting an "I am not alone" narrative.
- Helping children to solve their problems in an interactive environment by making it easier to share and transfer information.
- Strengthening children to help them overcome their struggles. (Giving them hope)
- Encouraging the development of social skills.
- Improving the skill of evaluating of reality.
- Nurturing learning through relationships, along with awareness and insight skills.



Personal Sessions

Various therapeutic techniques are used during personal one-to-one sessions. We use methods like EMDR treatment, which is short for eye movement and desensitization and reprocessing, on children because cases of grief and terror are more common in times of war and natural disasters. EMDR treatment is used to deal with emotional disturbances that are caused by stressful experiences such as natural disasters and childhood trauma, as well as emotions like fear, performance, anxiety, panic disorder, sadness and other negativities.

The professional staff execute treatment methods such as game treatment, cognitive behavioral treatment and sand playtreatment. Each of them uses integrative psychotreatment that is more effective toward children, and this includes evaluating each child's needs accurately and assessing the best possible treatment method and performing it according to the child's condition.





The Applied Techniques of Psychosocial Support



1. Preparation and Test Implementation

- Preparing the materials: Arranging the facilities and counseling rooms, and printing the necessary papers.
- Implementing and marking the intelligence test “CATTEL 2A/3A” for all children.
- Implementing and marking the anxiety test “Beck” for all children.
- Implementing and marking the focus test “Benton” for all children.
- Marking and archiving all test results.



Anamnesis + Group Treatment Rules + Personal Introductions + A Safe Space

- Recording the anamnesis (examining children’s background by interviewing their families and archiving the information digitally).
- Separating the children into groups.
- Group treatment: Introduction of the facilities, the goals of the sessions, discussing mutual expectations, setting the rules and explaining the upcoming activities.
- Initiating the personal sessions: Each child has 45 minutes of Sand PlayTreatment.
- During the initial round, the technique used in Sand Playtreatment for all children is: “Create A Safe Place”. The children are asked to reenact a scene where they feel safe and healthy using miniatures on sand. It is an expression technique that represents a child’s unconscious psyche. The “Create A Safe Place” activity is to be recorded and archived for each child. Other than helping to express children’s unconscious minds, the session provides them inner peace of mind. The children will also be able to form a close bond with the therapist and ensure cooperation in future sessions.



3. DIXIT Board Game

- Personal treatment: Sand PlayTreatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: Playing the board game “Dixit” (The award winning Dixit is a Psychology-based board game that develops imagination, enables connections to imaginary elements, teaches strategy development, and strengthens group dynamics.)



4. Explanation of Emotions and Anger Psychoeducation

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: “Anger Psychoeducation” + “Simon is Going Fishing” activity- which aim to help identify emotions and express them, to understand anger and control it, to explain how preconceptions affect feelings, and to improve communication skills and problem solving abilities. The children will also learn at least three strategies for anger management and self-control.



5. Fear Psychoeducation

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of 8 people.
- Contents and process: Fear Psychoeducation activity + “Fear Hunter” activity



6. Psychodrama Game We Have a Castle to Protect

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The psychodrama game “Where is our home?” + “We must protect the castle”. The children sit in a circle and greet each other. They are informed that there will be talks about more sensitive subjects. Difficulties in their lives (like economic hardships, death, unfriendliness they experience) are discussed. They are then allowed to express their thoughts and emotions for a short time; after that, they are given a psychoeducational lecture about the nature of emotions. It is followed by an activity.

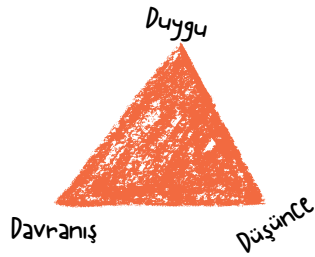


“Strong kids build a strong community.”



7. Yup Board Game

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create a Safe ‘Place’” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: A group of 8 children are instructed to play a game called “YUP”.



8. Cognitive Behavioral Treatment Triangle

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The “Cognitive Behavioral Treatment Triangle” activity.



9. What If You Lost Your Memories...

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The “What If You Lost Your Memories” activity.



10. Trauma Circle

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: Introduction activities are carried out to help children recognize and express their emotions; this process helps identify and rehabilitate cognitive distortions. It also allows the children to have better perspectives about the problems in their lives.



“Every child is ready to be the hero of their own story.”



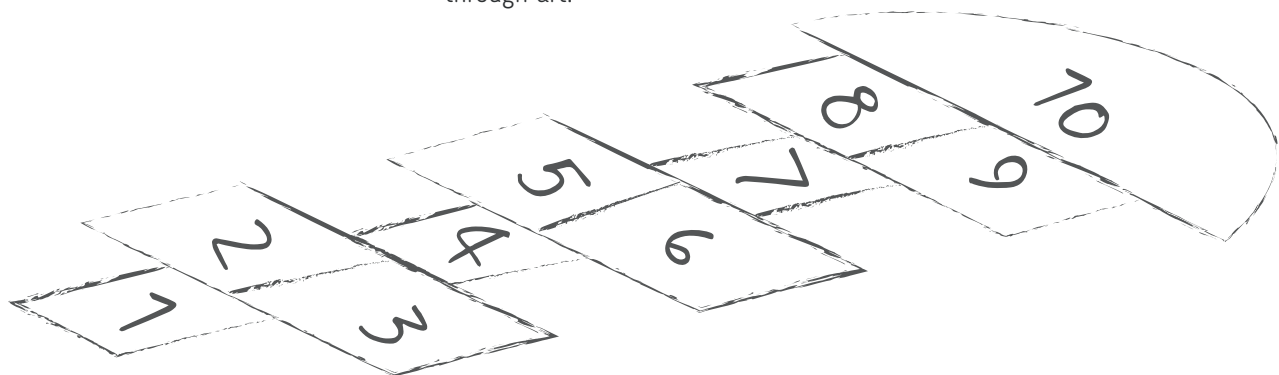
11. Optimistic Glasses and Building the Future

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: After gathering the children in the classroom or counseling room and having some icebreaker conversation prior to group work, the introductory sheet is read to the children and their opinions are asked by following the instructions. By the end of that, the children receive worksheets which they may color or cut as they please. One of the glasses’ lenses is meant to reflect the profession that a child wants to have in the future, while the other is to reflect the emotional state of the child when they will be practicing that profession. Some examples of professions are shown to the children, and relaxing music is played during the activity. After finishing their drawings, the children are free to express themselves in front of the group.



12. EMDR Group Treatment

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of 8 people.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight along with their leading therapist and a translator. After playing warm up games and chatting between the children, a protocol known as “EMDR Group Treatment” is applied to study and manage the trauma related emotional state of the children; following that, the children are given a small canvass and coloring tools. The kids are encouraged to act as artists and draw their own paintings accompanied by a fitting music; then each child must give a name to their piece. These drawings are meant to answer the question of “What does your body mean to you?”. Due to this, they are able to connect with their inner selves to experience self-healing and tap into their wisdom. This is how the children are able to express themselves through art.





13. What Is in the Bag Today?

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The “Create A Safe Place” activity continues.
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. After carrying out warm up games and talking with the children, they are encouraged to talk about various problems or struggles in their lives. After discussing how these problems and struggles are a natural part of life, the children are given cardboard bags and asked to answer the question “What are the problems that you would want to put in this bag for us to solve today?”. First, the children share their problems with the therapist one at a time, then they have a fun time full of games with the therapist on the “Island of Solutions”.

14. Alien Invasion



- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight; The children are then told about the story of an alien invasion of Earth. The story is left without an ending. The children are told to assume the role of scientists tasked with uncovering the nature of the alien invasion. The invasion could represent people, ideas or bad habits. After a child recognizes what the invasion is metaphorically, he fills in the rest of the story on his own.



15. Anxiety Boat

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. An explanation of anxiety is provided. The children are asked to make a list about their fears; then they are given pictures of boats, so the therapist ensures that all the fears are metaphorically placed on the boat before sending them away to the ocean.



16. Disaster Dinosaurs and the Well-Being Bag

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: An introductory exercise is conducted to teach the children about their potential physiological and emotional changes. This exercise helps them to understand the emotions that lead to their happiness and fulfilment and improves their ability to work in a group.



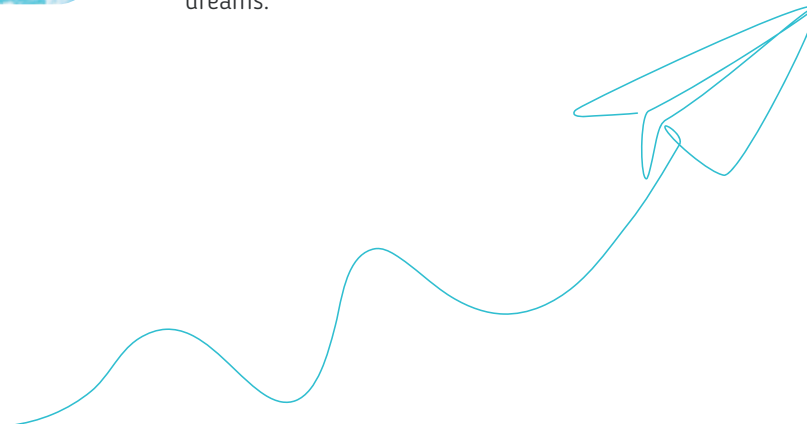
17. Emotional First-Aid Kit

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. A lecture is given about the importance of first-aid; then emotional first-aid is discussed. Just as having a first-aid kit in every facility is important, in this exercise the children are taught to create their own “emotional first-aid kits” with the therapist.



18. Dream Hunter

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight before engaging in a therapeutic activity focused on recurring or unforgettable bad dreams.



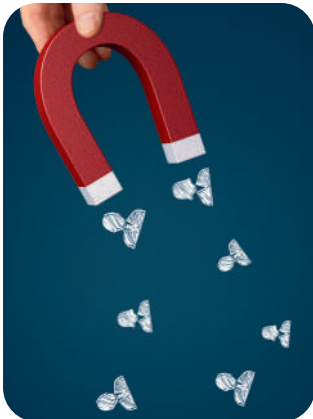


“Healing starts with the first step that we take together.”



19. My Palace

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. After warm up games and an introduction, the children discuss the concept and philosophy of the Enneagram of Personality. A palace is used to symbolize an individual’s personality, and each floor of the palace is marked representing different aspects. The children are given large papers to draw whatever they want on the palace; in the meantime they are asked appropriate questions like “What are the fears and traumatic experiences on the lowest floor?”, or “What are the morals and goals at the top floor?”, or “Who is your role model?”. The answers are later revised for each floor, and the EMDR system is applied to the lowest floor. The activity is concluded once all the palace floors are drawn and discussed.



20. My Ideal Self – Role Model and Emotional Magnet

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight, then the concepts of the ideal self and role models are explained; after that, the children are instructed to make a list of their role models, whether alive or dead, close or distant. After an explanation of the ideal self, the children are encouraged to use an “emotional magnet” to pull what traits of their ideal selves that they want so that they may attach them onto themselves.



21. Filling the Emotional Bucket

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. The children receive a list of emotions and a picture of a bucket, which they use to indicate how much each emotion fills their bucket. Then a list of needs is selected to fill the empty buckets.





*“Healing from the inside bring
sharmonyto the outside.”*



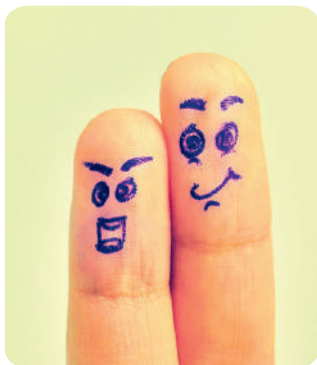
22. Social Media Addiction

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. An explanation of social media addiction is provided according to modules presented by the Turkish Green Crescent Society. Does spending time on social media platforms alleviate boredom? What is the meaning of deprivation and toleration? Addiction is losing control of something we use to the point where it feels like we cannot live without it; for example, when time passes without noticing it while playing computer or mobile games, or when spending time on the internet without being able to give it up, it could be a sign of addiction.



23. Game Addiction

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. Playing online games is very fun; however, we will discuss indicators of when these games become an addiction. ► Spending a lot of time playing games. ► Preferring to play games over spending time with friends and family. ► Prioritizing game progression over real life accomplishments. ► Avoiding family and having constant discussions of the time spent on playing games. ► Academic failure, skipping school, destabilization of friendships, insomnia due to excessive periods of playing video games due to the excessive time spent in front of screen.



24. Symbolizing My Feeling

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: An introductory exercise is conducted to teach the children about their potential physiological and emotional changes. They evaluate their development they achieved during the treatment process and gain the ability to symbolize it.



25. Good News Gazette and a Message to the World

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: A group treatment session for groups of eight.
- Contents and process: The children are taken into the classroom or counseling room in groups of eight. After warm-up games and an introduction, the children are informed that this will be the last activity of the year. The children’s feelings and feedback about the activities are thoroughly listened. After reviewing past activities, a pre-made worksheet called “Good News Gazette” is provided; this paper must include good news only, for example: “Attention, Good news: Ayyub has decided to decrease the amount of time he watches the television for the sake of his future.”, “Attention, good news: It seems that Ayyub wants to be a pilot.” So the children write various pieces of good news about their families. By the end of the session, the children are given another worksheet with the title “Message to the World” where they would write their last messages.



26. Performing the Last Test

- Personal treatment: Sand Play Treatment: The second round “Past and future exercise”
- Group treatment: The final test.
- Contents and process: The tests performed before the beginning of the activities are repeated. Each child is interviewed individually, and the results of the tests are recorded and statistically analyzed. The change in levels of anxiety, depression, and trauma from the beginning to the end of the activities is of significant importance.

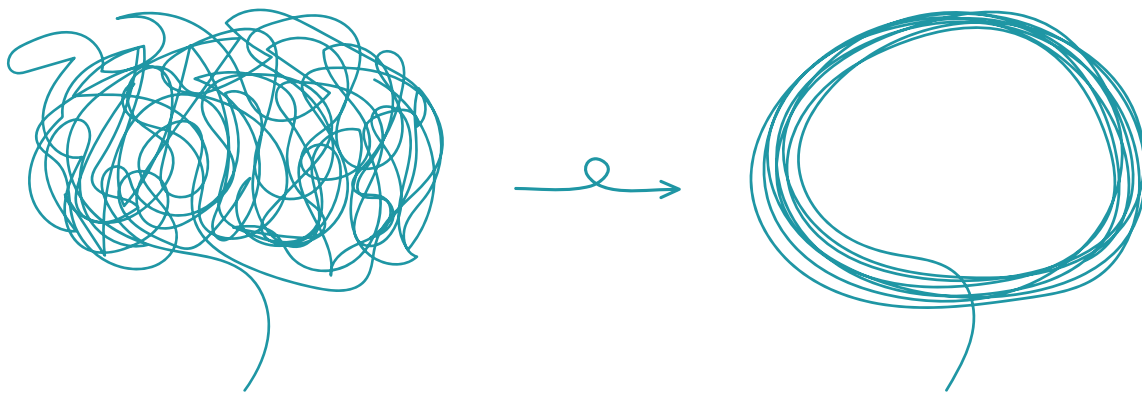


Examples of the Psychotreatment and Psychosocial Support Project's Results

There were a total of 624 treatment sessions across one year for a total of 120 children in Gaziantep city, and distributed as follows:

- A. 312 sessions of group treatment
- B. 104 sessions of personal treatment
- C. 208 intelligence, attention and emotional development sessions

After group sessions and individual sessions which were carried out for the psychosocial support project, the results showed a wide range of variety of expected results.

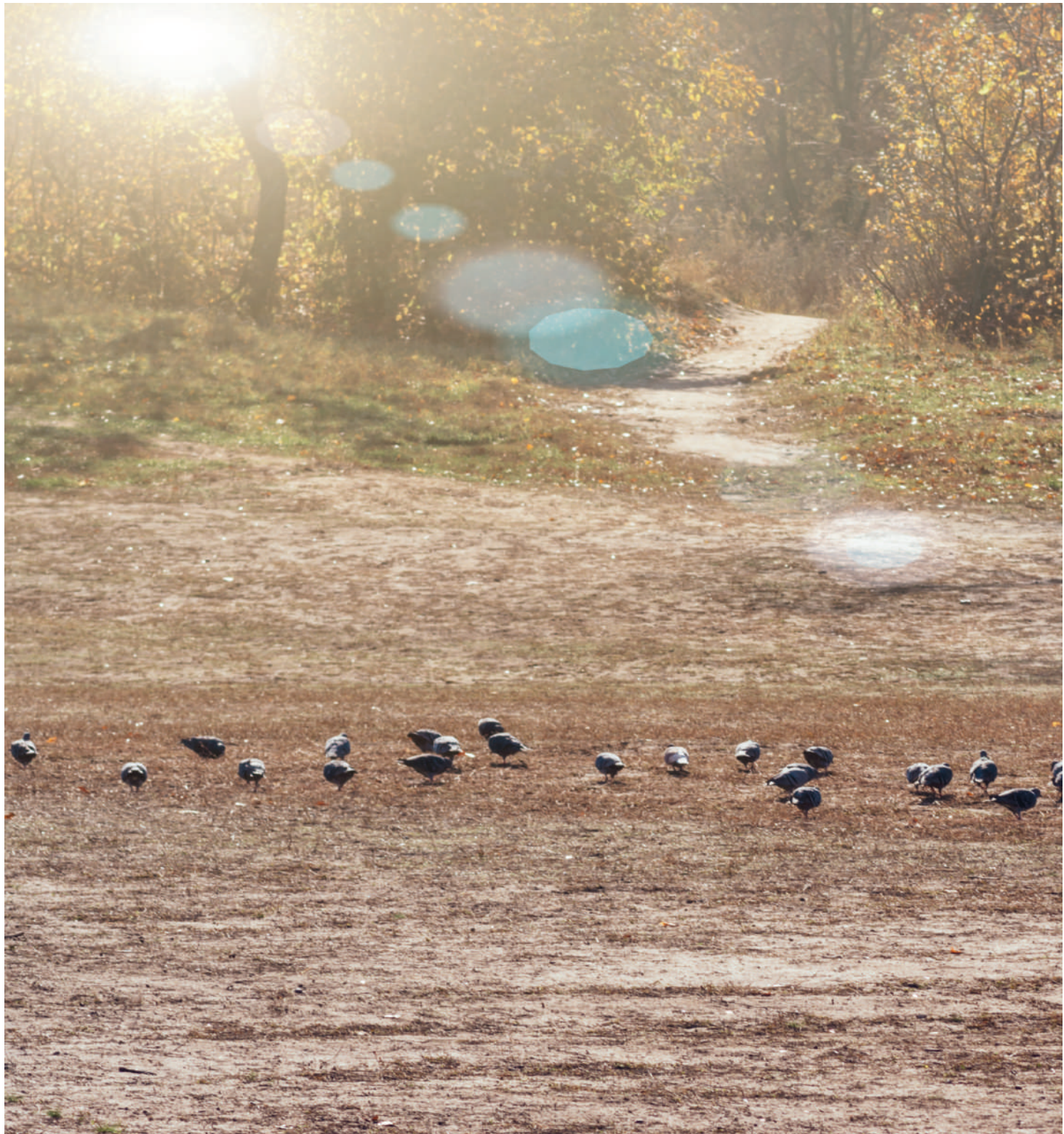


The Effect of the Psychosocial Support Activities on Children's Intelligence

Before starting the psychosocial support project activities, the average IQ (Intelligence quotient) of the children was 81.5 points, but after conducting the activities it rose to 118.45 points; this result confirms the validity of the goal that we believed in and worked for from the start. We noticed that the true cognitive abilities of the children affected by trauma were only surfaced after they had received the treatment. An increase of 36.95 points in IQ is considered a significant achievement, whereas 81.5 points is usually considered low on the IQ spectrum, while 118.45 points is commonly considered high on the same spectrum. There is a notable difference between those of average intelligence and those of high intelligence.

The Effect of the Psychosocial Support Activities on Children's Attention Span

The average attention span of the children increased from 9.66 points to 12.98 over the course of the program. The highest possible result for this test is 15 points. While 9.66 points is usually considered a sign of low attention span, 12.98 points usually signals a good attention span. The children's attention spans rose by 3.32 points over the course of the program, which is expected to help them improve in any field of work or study and lessen the likelihood of having work accidents or traffic accidents in the future.



“We heal together, we grow together.”





Our Reasons for the Investment in the Psychotreatment and Psychosocial Support Field

- Identifying and lessening the effects of traumatic experiences
- Identifying and lessening the struggles of social integration
- Providing a platform to solve familial problems and disputes
- Improving communication in families, schools, and communities
- Facilitating emotional expression and self-confidence for children
- Creating academic motivation
- Giving an optimistic outlook to the future and improving adaptation skills
- Facilitating emotional regulation
- Creating a safe space for emotional, behavioral and cognitive expression, and increasing self-confidence
- Improving social harmony in school and social life
- Curing cognitive distortions and correcting negative thought patterns
- Identifying and lessening the effects of PTSD



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