

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Your tax-deductible donations can be made **online** by PayPal or credit card at **GazaMentalHealth.org/support/** (also see this link for stock transfers), or by **check** payable to **The Gaza Mental Health Foundation Inc.**

With trustees assuming overhead costs, The Gaza Mental Health Foundation Inc. will forward your donation in its entirety for the critical mental health work being carried out in the Gaza Strip. Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent provided by section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

You can send your check/money order with this form to:

**The Gaza Mental Health Foundation  
PO Box 380273  
Cambridge, MA 02238**

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Photos by Eman Mohammad Used with permission.

## THE GAZA MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION Inc.



Photo by Cristina Ruiz Cortina

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**The Gaza Mental Health Foundation Inc.**  
**[www.GazaMentalHealth.org](http://www.GazaMentalHealth.org)**



**THE GAZA MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION**

# HEALING THE SPIRIT • INSTILLING HOPE

**The Gaza Mental Health Foundation Inc.** was formed in 2001 to support the critically important work of providing mental health services for the people in Gaza, especially the children who are the region's future. It is difficult to imagine any future in which Palestinians and Israelis can one day live peacefully together without the efforts of mental health workers who are endeavoring to heal the spirit of a people subjected to decades of violence and deprivation.

Among the organizations we support is **The Gaza Community Mental Health Program** (GCMHP), established in 1990 by the renowned psychiatrist **Dr. Eyad el Sarraj** (1943 - 2013) to meet the mental health needs of people exposed to violence and the loss of freedom daily. GCMHP - professional, non-aligned with factions or governments - is headed by **Dr. Yasser Abu Jamei** (pictured below).



In addition, we assist the three women's empowerment groups which had their start within the GCMHP: **Aisha, Al Zahraa**

and **Wefaq**. They provide family-focused counseling and training to marginalized women throughout Gaza.

We also support **Afaq Jadeeda**. Its therapy program, **Let the Children Play and Heal**, enables thousands of children to express themselves through art, music, dance, story-telling and theater.

**Programs like these are urgently needed because of the dire conditions in the Gaza Strip.** Just 26 miles long and a few miles wide, it is home to two million Palestinians, more than half of them children. Over 70% are refugees who live in eight densely-crowded refugee camps.

Severe restrictions imposed on Gaza since Israel's military occupation began in 1967 led Dr. el Sarraj to strongly **link mental health and human rights**. During the first *intifada*, an unarmed uprising against the occupation that began in Gaza in December 1987, some 1,200 Palestinians were killed and more than 100,000 imprisoned, including children. Many were subjected to torture under interrogation.

The brutal repression has intensified in the years since then, with Israel routinely using US-supplied armaments, tanks, helicopter gunships and F16s against a civilian population. When Hamas prevailed in the 2006 election and took control of Gaza the following year, **Israel made the Gaza Strip a locked prison.**



*Destroyed homes in Gaza City.*

Worse was to come. Major attacks that took place in 2008-9, 2012 and for 51 days in 2014 killed over 4,000 Gazans, 800 of them children. Rebuilding has been stymied by the **11-year-long Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip**. Through largely peaceful civil society protests initiated in March 2018, Gazans have demanded an end to the closure and the right to return to homes from which they had been expelled. The toll for six months of weekly protests: nearly 200 killed and some 18,000 injured.

The massive physical and psychological injuries experienced by a civilian population with no place to hide, the devastation of land, homes, schools, clinics, infrastructure and the economy, and the ongoing suffocating siege are bound to have a lasting, drastic impact on Gaza.



*A child burned with white phosphorus.*

Funds donated to **The Gaza Mental Health Foundation** will be used to support programs for women and children who are victims of violence, and GCMHP interventions and training programs that expand the number and capacity of mental health workers to provide quality care in the Gaza Strip.