



جمعية مركز إبداع المعلم  
Teacher Creativity Center  
Association

**Healing Through Learning:**  
**TCC's Emergency Education Journey in Gaza**  
**(2023–2025)**

**Teacher Creativity Center**

**October 2025**

## Introduction – Our Human and Educational Mission

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**“No real education can exist without a clear understanding of the meaning of humanity”**

Gaza has faced an unprecedented humanitarian and educational crisis since October 2023. **Bombardment, the destruction of infrastructure, and ongoing political instability have plunged thousands of children into environments of trauma, fear, uncertainty, and learning loss.** Schools have been destroyed or repurposed as shelters, families displaced, and children continuously exposed to violence, while access to basic services remains severely limited. **In these circumstances, education alone is not enough—it must serve as a lifeline, a source of normalcy, and a tool for emotional recovery and resilience.**

At the Teacher Creativity Center (TCC), we have always believed that **education is a fundamental human right, a platform to uphold dignity and civil values, and a transformative space where children can heal, grow, and thrive—even amidst war.** Since the onset of the crisis, TCC has mobilized rapidly to provide emergency interventions that **integrate psychosocial support, catch-up classes with social-emotional learning, and adaptive education.**

Our approach is grounded in the philosophy that **true impact emerges from the intersection of humanitarian principles and innovative educational methodologies.** Central to this approach is the empowerment of **local volunteers from the affected communities, who act as agents of change—delivering programs, connecting with families, and sustaining interventions long-term.** Over the past two years, this model has reached **over 100,000 beneficiaries, including children, caregivers, educators, and volunteers, proving its effectiveness in supporting the hardest-to-reach populations while fostering community resilience.**

The experience of the initial emergency response highlighted the importance of **rapid, flexible, and community-centered interventions.** TCC's programs have emphasized **creating safe spaces for learning and psychosocial support, restoring routines, and nurturing hope,** while ensuring that children not only recover academically but also develop the emotional tools to navigate trauma. By 2024, these efforts



evolved into **structured learning and resilience-building programs**, including **Temporary Learning Spaces** and educational forums, where **catch-up classes integrated with social-emotional learning** became a cornerstone of recovery. These interventions demonstrate that even in the most volatile contexts, education can restore dignity, protect childhood, and build the foundations for long-term resilience.



## Our Methodology in Emergency Education

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Our methodology is **holistic and child-centered**, combining **academic recovery with emotional and psychological healing**. We recognize that children living in conflict cannot learn unless they first feel safe, seen, and emotionally supported. Therefore, we integrate a layered approach that includes:

- **Catch-up classes integrated with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):** These classes help children regain foundational literacy and numeracy while simultaneously rebuilding emotional resilience, problem-solving skills, and positive peer interaction. **Every catch-up session embeds SEL principles** to support emotional regulation, confidence-building, and hope.
- **Psychosocial Support (PSS) – Individual and Group Sessions:** Our PSS model supports children in processing trauma, reducing distress, and restoring a sense of stability. Through structured sessions, children learn coping mechanisms and emotional expression in a safe, supportive environment.
- **Recreational and expressive activities:** We incorporate play, arts, music, movement, and storytelling to help children **release emotional tension, improve social connection, and regain a sense of childhood**.
- **Psychoeducation for caregivers:** We believe that healing must include the family. We train parents and caregivers in **stress management, self-care, emotional support strategies, and positive communication**, helping them meet their children's needs while managing their own psychological strain.
- **Debriefing and crisis emotional first aid:** At the heart of our approach is immediate emotional stabilization. Through structured debriefing activities in all sessions, children and families process difficult experiences and learn techniques that reduce trauma impact.

All our interventions are focused on **Community engagement** by mobilizing and training local volunteers, teachers, and youth facilitators, we build local capacity and ensure cultural relevance and ownership. This

also strengthens community protection networks and sustainability far beyond the emergency phase.

Finally, our methodology is **dynamic and evidence based**. Continuous monitoring and feedback allow us to adapt interventions to evolving needs, ensuring relevance and impact amid crisis conditions.

Through this **integrated approach, education, PSS, SEL, caregiver engagement, and community participation, TCC delivers a compassionate and effective response that protects children's rights, promotes healing, and restores hope and dignity**, even in the most difficult times.



## 2023 Interventions – Emergency Response Begins

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In 2023, as Gaza was thrust into one of the most severe humanitarian and educational crises in recent history, TCC rapidly mobilized to respond to the urgent needs of children and their families. The war displaced thousands, destroyed schools, and exposed children to continuous trauma, fear, and instability. Understanding that **education in emergencies must protect as well as teach**, TCC launched a rapid, field-based response combining emergency learning with psychosocial support.



Through **83 shelter schools** in Khan Younis, Rafah, and Middle Gaza, TCC established safe and structured learning environments where children could begin to **reclaim a sense of routine, stability, and emotional security**. These learning spaces integrated **catch-up classes combined with Social-Emotional Learning, psychosocial support, and recreational and expressive activities**, enabling children to recover academically while receiving emotional support. During this phase, **56,206 beneficiaries**, including children, caregivers, and community members, were reached with life-saving education and psychosocial services:

- ✓ **Reached 56,206 beneficiaries** (46,093 children, 10,113 caregivers)
- ✓ **Implemented 160 emergency activities** (PFA, PSS, SEL, recreational support)
- ✓ **Distributed 1,471 humanitarian aid packages**, including **winterization kits, hygiene kits for women, men, and children, and essential food baskets**, to support the most vulnerable displaced families living in shelters.
- ✓ **Provided 13,000 educational and recreational toys** to children to promote emotional relief, reduce war-related stress, and encourage healthy play and social interaction.

**A key milestone in late 2023 was the piloting of our first initiative of catch-up classes integrated with SEL.** This pilot was designed to address not only learning loss but also trauma-related behavioral and emotional challenges. After implementing the model in selected shelters, **TCC conducted a rapid evaluation to measure its impact on children's emotional regulation, motivation to learn, and classroom participation.** The results showed significant positive outcomes—children demonstrated improved emotional stability, increased engagement in learning, and renewed levels of hope and social interaction. **Based on these findings, TCC decided to expand and strengthen this integrated SEL catch-up model in 2024**, further enhancing methods, tools, and materials for wider implementation.

Throughout 2023, **community trust-building and local participation were essential pillars of our intervention.** TCC trained and mobilized local volunteers, teachers, university students, and community activists to support implementation, act as facilitators, and ensure cultural relevance. Activities during this phase included **psychological first aid, individual and group psychosocial support, structured recreation, SEL-integrated catch-up classes, and caregiver support sessions**, in addition to humanitarian kit distribution. This community-led approach not only increased reach and acceptance but also **laid the foundation for long-term resilience and local ownership of emergency education initiatives.**

## 2024 – From Response to Structured Learning & Resilience

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**Building on the urgent lessons from 2023, TCC transitioned in 2024 to a more structured and sustainable approach to emergency education.** Recognizing that children required not only protection but also structured recovery learning, TCC designed interventions that restored educational continuity while addressing deep emotional and psychological wounds caused by war and displacement.

From the beginning of 2024, TCC implemented large-scale psychosocial and educational support across **more than 400 displacement shelters** throughout Gaza. This phase focused on creating meaningful learning environments for children living under chronic stress while strengthening the capacity of families and communities to support healing. Over **600 volunteers and educators** were mobilized and trained in **trauma-informed methodologies, psychosocial first aid, and catch-up classes integrated with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)**, forming a strong local workforce capable of delivering sustained educational and emotional support inside affected communities.



Through structured shelter-based programming, TCC reached **40,562 children** with a holistic package of interventions that included group and individual **psychosocial support sessions, expressive arts therapy,**



**stress-release and recreational activities, and SEL-based learning circles** that nurtured emotional resilience, self-regulation, problem-solving, and positive peer interaction. These child-focused interventions were complemented by intensive community engagement, where **25,300 caregivers** participated in **psychoeducation sessions** designed to help families manage chronic stress, strengthen emotional communication with their children, and apply practical tools of **self-care, emotional containment, and trauma-responsive parenting** at home.



In parallel with its educational and psychosocial response, TCC delivered **comprehensive humanitarian relief to more than 10,000 displaced families in 2024**, ensuring dignity, safety, and basic living conditions in overcrowded shelters. This support included:

- **Hygiene and dignity assistance:** Distributed a total of **1,727 hygiene kits**, including **1,255 for women, 272 for men, and 200 for children**.
- **Winterization and basic clothing support:** Provided **6,436 winter clothing kits for children** in addition to **250 pairs of shoes**.
- **Food security support:** Delivered **approximately 30,000 hot meals, 1,300 fresh vegetable baskets, and 560 boxes of eggs**.
- **Child well-being and learning continuity:** Distributed **3,000 toys and 2,920 psychosocial support and stationery kits**.
- **Essential household supplies:** Delivered **1,000 cleaning and sanitation packages** and provided **mattresses, blankets, and pillows to 12 of the most vulnerable families** with no basic bedding.

## Innovating in Crisis – Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS)

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At the end of 2024, TCC broke new ground by becoming the **first organization in Gaza to establish Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS)** – safe and flexible community learning environments. This initiative not only responded to the urgent need for accessible education amid conflict but also **became a model for other local and international organizations**, inspiring the creation of additional Education Forums across Gaza. Over time, TLS and the educational approach they embodied were **recognized by the Palestinian Ministry of Education as part of formal learning**, cementing their role as a sustainable pedagogical model.

A major milestone of this phase was the **establishment of 12 TLS**, safe community spaces that integrated remedial education with psychosocial support. These hubs offered catch-up classes in **Arabic, English, and Mathematics**, all delivered through TCC's **SEL-integrated educational model**, ensuring that children were not only rebuilding academic skills but also restoring emotional balance, social connections, and motivation to learn. More than **10,000 children** joined these spaces, which became anchors of stability, hope, and normalcy in their communities.



TLS were carefully designed to be **both safe and engaging**, combining catch-up classes integrated with SEL, psychosocial support, and recreational activities. By leveraging **local volunteers as facilitators**, TCC empowered community members as agents of change, strengthening both the reach and sustainability of the program. The initiative quickly became **a benchmark for innovation and adaptability**, later adopted by other NGOs and recognized by the Education & Protection Cluster.

**Partnerships were central to TLS's success.** Coordination with the Ministry of Education, local authorities, and community stakeholders ensured alignment with the national Emergency Education Plan, embedding TLS into Gaza's broader humanitarian and educational response. This innovative approach demonstrated that, even amid extreme conflict, **education could continue, emotional recovery could be supported, and community resilience could be strengthened**, setting a precedent for emergency education across the region.



## 2025 Strategic Direction – Education for Resilience

By 2025, all of TCC's interventions have become **centered on Temporary Learning Spaces**, organized systematically across Gaza Strip according to region and available funding.

The volunteer network has expanded to **over 300 trained individuals of educators and PSS specialists**, enabling the operation of **more than 27 TLS**, which reached **over 3,700 children** and **2,800 caregivers** through TCC's holistic methodology - integrating **catch-up classes with SEL, psychosocial support, and recreational activities**, ensuring learning recovery while supporting psychosocial well-being and resilience.



On the humanitarian side, TCC continued to **address families' urgent needs**, distributing **300 food packages**, **300 women's hygiene kits**, and **1,000 children's psychosocial support and stationery kits**, ensuring that learning, safety, and dignity go hand-in-hand with basic survival.

The organization is also **strengthening the hybrid model of emergency and development education**, ensuring interventions are both responsive to crises and aligned with longer-term learning recovery. Informed by **research findings and evidence from catch-up classes integrated with SEL**, TCC continues to **advocate for improvements in education policy and child protection**, at both local and international levels.

This strategic direction reflects TCC's **commitment to resilience, innovation, and child-centered education**, ensuring that even in the most volatile environments, children can continue to **learn, heal, and thrive**, while communities are empowered as active participants in sustaining education and psychosocial support.

# Impact of the Teacher Creativity Center's Interventions in Gaza

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TCC has consistently demonstrated that education in emergencies can be **both a healing process and a tool for resilience**. Through its Temporary Learning Spaces in Gaza, TCC implemented a **holistic model that integrated psychosocial support, catch-up classes with SEL, and community engagement**, targeting children, parents, educators, and volunteers during the war. Five independent field-based research studies, conducted in partnership with TCC by PhD-level educators, provide robust evidence of the multidimensional impact of these interventions.

## Impact on Children



Children who participated in the TLSs experienced **significant improvements in emotional regulation, social behavior, and academic engagement**. The forums offered safe, structured, and emotionally supportive learning spaces where children could express their fears, sadness, and trauma through **art, storytelling, play therapy, and interactive SEL-integrated catch-up classes**. Children who initially displayed **aggression, withdrawal, or anxiety** gradually became more cooperative, confident, and socially engaged. Interventions such as psychological first aid, group counseling, and emotional regulation exercises



equipped children with **coping techniques** including deep breathing, positive self-talk, and problem-solving strategies. Teachers observed **higher concentration, better communication, and a notable reduction in behavioral challenges**, reflecting the integration of academic recovery with emotional support. Overall, children regained a sense of normalcy, resilience, and motivation to learn despite the ongoing destruction and instability in Gaza.

## Impact on Parents and Caregivers

Parents and caregivers who engaged in psychoeducation sessions and psychosocial activities reported substantial improvements in their **mental well-being, coping capacity, and parenting skills**. Over 90% of participants noted that they were better able to manage family stress, communicate effectively with their children, and address behavioral issues at home. Many mothers observed that their children began to **express emotions and fears rather than reacting with anger or silence**, indicating the **intergenerational benefits** of holistic psychosocial interventions. Through group support and counseling, parents also developed stronger community bonds, sharing experiences of loss and coping strategies, which reinforced the therapeutic environment and amplified positive outcomes for children.





## Impact on Teachers and Volunteers

TCC's interventions also strengthened the **capacity and resilience of educators and volunteers**, who operated under extreme conditions including destroyed infrastructure, limited resources, and ongoing displacement. Teachers applied **learner-centered, trauma-informed, and SEL-integrated teaching methods**, combining academic recovery with psychosocial support. Volunteers adapted creatively, using peer-to-peer training, digital coordination, and limited resources to maintain educational continuity. Despite challenges, many reported enhanced **empathy, professional growth, and personal resilience**, highlighting that psychosocial interventions can benefit both providers and recipients.



## Inclusion and Special Needs

The forums implemented a **holistic inclusive approach**, ensuring that children with disabilities were integrated into both educational and social activities. Research showed that approximately 85% of the forums successfully identified and supported children with physical, cognitive, or learning difficulties. These children received **tailored interventions, peer support, and inclusive awareness sessions**, while teachers improved their readiness for inclusive education. The studies also underscored the ongoing need for specialized training, accessible learning spaces, and assistive tools.



“The collective findings from these studies confirmed that TCC’s educational forums *and* TLS served as **islands of safety, learning, and psychosocial recovery** amidst the devastation in Gaza. Children regained **emotional stability and continuity in learning**, parents recovered confidence and psychological balance, and teachers and volunteers strengthened their **professional resilience and community commitment**. By combining **catch-up classes integrated with SEL, psychosocial support, recreational activities, and community engagement**, TCC’s interventions demonstrated that education in emergencies can simultaneously **heal, empower, and rebuild social cohesion**, protecting childhood and fostering long-term resilience in communities under crisis.

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## Challenges & Lessons Learned

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The implementation of TCC's emergency education and psychosocial interventions in Gaza revealed both the immense **complexity of the humanitarian context** and the resilience of children, families, and communities. The war created **unprecedented obstacles**: schools destroyed or repurposed as shelters, displacement of families, restricted mobility, and continuous exposure of children to trauma, violence, and uncertainty. These conditions demanded **flexible, rapid, and culturally sensitive responses** while maintaining the quality and sustainability of educational and psychosocial support.

One of the central challenges was **balancing immediate emergency response with structured, long-term learning recovery**. Rapid deployment was essential to reach children in shelters and conflict-affected areas, yet sustaining interventions over time required systematic planning, volunteer training, and community engagement. TCC's reliance on **local volunteers as agents of change** proved crucial, but it also highlighted the need for continuous capacity building, emotional support, and supervision to prevent burnout among educators and volunteers working under extreme stress.

Another challenge was ensuring **inclusivity and accessibility**. Integrating children with disabilities and other marginalized groups into catch-up classes with SEL demanded creative solutions, specialized training, and adaptive materials. While TCC achieved significant success in this area, the experience demonstrated that **inclusive emergency education requires dedicated resources and ongoing innovation**.

The **lessons learned** from this experience have shaped TCC's approach and offer guidance for future emergency education efforts:

- **Integration of psychosocial support and learning is essential:** The combination of catch-up classes with SEL, PSS, and caregiver psychoeducation has proven far more effective than isolated interventions, enabling children to process trauma while regaining academic skills.
- **Local action drives global impact:** Empowering community volunteers and caregivers not only extends the reach of interventions



but also ensures cultural relevance, community ownership, and sustainability, demonstrating that effective policy and advocacy efforts start from the field.

- **Strategic partnerships multiply impact:** Collaborations with the Ministry of Education, local NGOs, universities, and global education campaigns enhanced coordination, improved adherence to national emergency education plans, and reinforced advocacy for children's right to education.
- **Flexibility and innovation are key in crisis:** Initiatives like Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) and mobile forums illustrate the importance of adaptive strategies and resourcefulness in delivering education amidst rapidly changing circumstances.
- **The Palestinian voice must be present globally:** TCC's engagement in international and regional education forums has shown that emergency interventions in Gaza can influence broader education policies, highlighting the role of evidence-based advocacy in protecting children's rights.
- **Evidence-based approaches strengthen interventions:** Continuous monitoring, assessment, and research ensured that programming remained responsive, impactful, and capable of addressing evolving needs in a volatile environment.

These insights underscore that **emergency education is not just a response to crisis but a platform for resilience, innovation, and social reconstruction**, providing children, families, and communities with the tools to navigate trauma and rebuild hope for the future.