



BRINGING  
HOPE TO  
GAZA

A PILOT  
PROJECT ON  
CHILDREN'S  
WELLNESS  
& FOCUSING.

## The Children of Gaza Need Help

In current circumstances, the Palestinian children of Gaza have little chance of having a normal childhood. Their psychological well-being is constantly at risk through exposure to on-going traumatic experiences.

Recent research carried out by Dr Mohammed Altawil, of the Palestine Trauma Centre (PTC UK), now a Focusing Trainer-in-Training, found that:

- **Every child in Palestine had been exposed to at least three traumatic events**
- **41% of children suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD)**
- **305,195 children in the Gaza Strip are in need of urgent psychological, social, and medical services in the areas of prevention, counselling, rehabilitation, and therapeutic treatment.**

Our proposed Pilot Project on Children's Wellness and Focusing is an innovative response designed to help develop greater resiliency in children. Focusing, combined with other psychosocial skills, promotes resiliency and the capacity to cope more easily with day-to-day difficult situations.

The programme has been developed jointly by the Gaza and UK-based Palestine Trauma Centre (PTC) and The Focusing Institute (TFI). It is based on the successful Community Wellness and Focusing project in Afghanistan.



“Resiliency is like a green stick - one that does not break when it is bent”

A Three–Stage Plan for the Pilot programme has been developed by the Palestine Trauma Centre UK in conjunction with The Focusing Institute and is now underway.



## A Pilot Programme on Children’s Wellness and Focusing in Gaza

This proposed one-year pilot project on Children’s Wellness and Focusing is a community-based programme designed to help children develop and sustain their own inner resilience and strength. Children (and their parents) will learn to use Focusing in the context of their own culture, their own coping style, their own connection to Islamic traditions.

### **Stage One: Development the Programme and Resources.**

Over the past two years, Dr Mohamed Altawil of the Palestine Trauma Centre (PTC UK) and UK- based Focusing Trainers Jerry Conway and Simon Kilner have been working on developing and refining a specific programme that will work in Gaza. The programme builds on the work of the Afghan project on Community Wellness (with Pat Omidian, Nina Joy Lawrence and Jerry Conway). By including ideas and activities from existing work on Children’s Focusing a new and innovative dimension has now been added to the Community Wellness Focusing model.

### **Stage Two: Train a Core Group from Gaza**

With limited access to Gaza, the PTC UK proposes to bring an initial group of four people from the PTC Gaza and train them in the UK in February 2011. The core group will be given intensive training in self focusing (Level One) and in how to teach Focusing in a community setting to children. The main emphasis will be on parents using Focusing to help children connect and be with feelings that may be sorrowful, scary or angry; to be kind to themselves in these situations and so learn to become more resilient.

During the initial training, the group will be assisted in the development of a plan to set up Family Support Groups on their return to their own community.



### Stage Three: Core Trainers Train and Support Families in Gaza

On their return, as they begin to work through PTC Gaza with family groups in Gaza, they will continue to be supported with further training and mentoring by the PTC UK for a full year as they implement and evaluate the initial pilot programme. They will liaise with other programmes being run by PTC Gaza, for instance by referring families that need further assistance to specialists in the treatment of more severe trauma.

At the end of the Pilot Project, the core group will continue with their own Focusing training and begin to train other trainers such as parents and teachers in basic Focusing skills that can be used in everyday living. These, in turn, will develop further support groups and teach new trainers, developing the capacity of more and more children in Gaza to become more resilient in the face of the traumatic situation in which they live.

### Progress to Date

With funding already received from The Focusing Institute, The British Society of Friends (Quakers), and the Focusing community in Ireland, the UK and Holland we have made considerable progress and have developed:

- A workable and innovative programme for a pilot project on Children's Wellness and Focusing
- New training materials, translated into Arabic and tested with a trainee group
- A training plan funded by the Quakers in the UK to bring a core group of four trainees from Gaza for initial training in the UK in February 2011 and planning of their work in Gaza
- An outline of how further training, mentoring and support will be provided to the core group over the year in their return to Gaza

# Can you help?

## Can you help us with the work on the ground in Gaza?

We need to raise a further £36,000 (\$57,600) to get the Pilot Programme on Children's Wellness and Focusing underway in Gaza when the core trainees return from their initial training in the UK.

We will use the £36,000 (\$57,600) to:

- Provide a basic wage for four trainers in Gaza for one year
- Assist with administration costs for running the programme in the PTC Gaza
- Pay a small fee for mentoring and evaluation over the year
- Provide further training with a Certified Trainer who will travel to Gaza to continue training the core group during the year

If you would like to help with this project, please send a donation, however small, to The Palestine Trauma Centre in the UK (Registered Charity No 1133560) via our bank account:

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Account Name:	Palestine Trauma Centre (UK)
Bank Account Number:	71594893
Sort Code:	40-23-19
Reference	Focusing Project
Bank Address:	HSBC Bank Plc (UK, Hatfield)
International Account	GB90 MIDL 402319 71594893
Swift code:	MIDLGB2114W

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## About the Palestine Trauma Centre



Palestine Trauma Centre (PTC) was established on January 2007 as a charitable institution which aims to provide psychological, social and specialized medical services for Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

A sister organization, PTC UK has been formed to support the PTC in Gaza. It received charitable status in the UK in 2010. Drawing on the support of some of the best known experts working in the UK in the area of trauma treatment, the PTC UK seeks to identify modern, traditional therapeutic, and innovative approaches (including Focusing) to treat trauma and adapt these to local cultural and environmental conditions in Palestine.

[www.ptcuk.org](http://www.ptcuk.org)



## Contact for this Project

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The Focusing Institute's Commitment

*The Institute's psychosocial model of Focusing is particularly suitable to address the needs of communities ravaged by war and poverty. The Focusing Institute is keen to support the training of trainers to teach local leaders and aid workers the Focusing process, who in turn can teach selected groups in the community. We are committed to making Focusing locally sustainable and practiced in everyday living, as well as in specific conflict situations.*

[www.focusing.org](http://www.focusing.org)



Thank you.