



To serve the Church in Lebanon and the Arab World through spiritual, social and educational development.

LSESD
E-Newsletter
Volume VI -
Issue 14
August 2011

GROWING UP IN LEBANON

Lebanon is truly a country of contrasts with its many different religious sects, its poverty and wealth, and its continuance of everyday life in the face of political and regional instability. Children here—as everywhere in the world—are deeply affected by their environment and personal circumstances. While many children are fortunate to be loved, well cared for, and properly educated, there are many others who fall through the cracks. Children in Lebanon face a variety of challenges including high levels of institutionalization, inadequate access to special education (and in some cases any education), poverty, and the stigmatization and lack of opportunities that come from being part of marginalized groups.



LSESD's mission of spiritual, social and educational development presses us to ask what we can do. Most of our ministries are in some way connected to children, and several ministries are child-centred (for example the Baptist Children & Youth Ministry, SKILD Special Education, and the Beirut Baptist School).

This summer, we gather children together at a variety of camps under the LSESD umbrella. Some are educational, some are recreational, some share the gospel... *All* give children the ever-important chance to be children.

“The continuously unstable security situation in Lebanon has impacted negatively on all aspects of children’s lives. School closures, sporadic fighting and a worsening economic situation have undermined their security, wellbeing and sense of normalcy.”

UNICEF 2011

He took a little child whom he placed among them. Taking the child in his arms, he said to them, “whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.”

Mark 9:36-37

Prayer Requests

Please pray for:

- ◇ The love of God to embrace, strengthen and guide the children and youth participating in LSESD's summer camps
- ◇ Inspiration for the Youth Leaders (local and international) who share Christ's message with young people
- ◇ The children of Lebanon—that they may grow, learn, and be filled with the love and wisdom of the Lord in challenging times and throughout their lives

For more information about any of our work, please contact us: information@LSESD.org

NEWS FROM LSESD'S SUMMER CAMPS

Basketball Camps in Marjeyoun

In July, three basketball camps for children and teenagers were held in villages in the region of Marjeyoun near the southern border of Lebanon. Supported by local churches, the camp leaders taught basketball skills and sportsmanship in a spirit of group fun and cooperation. Organized recreational activities are virtually non-existent for young people in this impoverished rural region, and these camps are meeting an important need in the lives of the participants.

South Lebanon has been identified by various Government of Lebanon and United Nations reports as the second poorest region of the country as well as one of the most marginalized. LSESD has plans to develop a plot of land for a Marjeyoun community centre that will help address community needs in areas such as public health, education and livelihoods.

Having a ball!



"Last week, between 11 and 15 July, we had a basketball camp held by an American group in our village, Deirmimas. A group of teenagers attended this camp. It was a tremendous idea since our region lacks such events and basketball experts. The youth spent good time and enjoyed the skills the American group offered and they wished to prolong this camp for another week. Sports provide numerous opportunities for children and teenagers to grow socially, emotionally, and physically in a Christian environment. Many thanks to the American group."

Pastor Maroun Shammam, Deirmimas Baptist Church

Smart Kids with Individual Learning Differences (SKILD) Camp

Thirty-six children who have special needs or require remedial support are attending a seven-week daycamp at the SKILD learning centre that opened earlier in the year. Academic and therapeutic skills are balanced with fun summertime camp activities. This is the first year of the camp, and the team of professional educators have their hands full leading the energetic group in activities and also streamlining the curriculum with an eye to next year's camp. God willing, this camp will run for many summers to come, helping to fill a crucial gap in special education services in Lebanon.



"Our son has benefited a lot since he came here [...] socially and academically, and we hope to be able to see this improvement in winter when he goes back to school."

Parent of a KG II student with Asperger Syndrome who is attending SKILD summer camp

Baptist Children & Youth Ministry (BCYM) Camps

BCYM is hosting sleep-over camps for different groups of children and youth from local churches, children's homes, and marginalized communities. In this sixth year of summer programming, local and international youth leaders have come together to provide Christian-based recreational activities at three highly successful camps. Training is planned in early fall for young adults who are preparing to become Youth Leaders.

We thank the visiting teams from First Baptist Church (Atlanta, GA), Calvary Baptist Church (Waco, TX) and Community Bible Church (Nashville, TN) for their invaluable participation!



"The BCYM camp for orphans and needy kids was a special outreach program that was a great blessing to me. The foundation for my faith was developed at a summer church camp when I was a young boy. To have the opportunity to teach these special kids about God's love and to instill the truth of the Gospel into their hearts at this summer camp was a privilege and a tribute to those teachers of my youth. These are special kids who have suffered greatly to this point in their lives. Just as Christ's love for us knows no bounds, it is not possible for us to love these kids too much! I pray that the truth that they heard and the love that was showered upon them impacts them in such a way that their faith is strengthened and that they too, someday in the future, have the desire to share with a child the reason for their faith. May God greatly bless the ministry of BCYM as BCYM blesses these incredible children of God."

Tim Goist, First Baptist Church - Atlanta
Youth Leader, camp for vulnerable children