

Ayadina Association's Annual Report 2020

Dear friends,

We would like to share with you a summary of our activities in the year 2020.

To describe the year 2020 as challenging would be quite an understatement: a global health pandemic, a financial crisis destroying the social fabric of Lebanon, and a deadly explosion that left us with so much pain and anger.

Despite all this, we always wish to focus on the positives and to look forward to better days, and we will continue to believe in the healing power of art.

1- Arts Education Program:

The year 2020 had started on a good note! We were so excited about relaunching the theater classes with our new teacher, Stephanie Sotiry. We managed to have three classes of 15 students in each.

We were proud to have Stephanie on board as she has ten years of experience in teaching theater, and has worked for years on developing her psychosocial intervention skills by attending workshops with Clown Me In and Zoukak.



2- Fundraising Event - Avant Première:

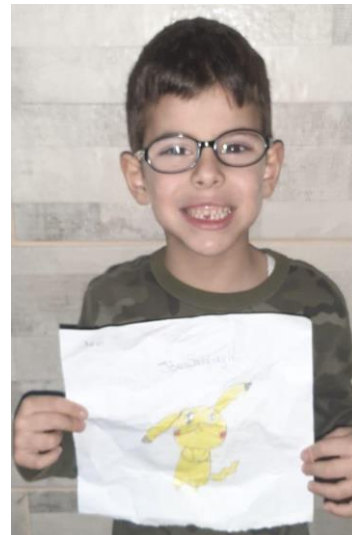
Prior to the initial lockdown that took place in March 2020, we managed to hold our only fundraising event in the year 2020: the Avant Première of the movie **C-Section** (يربوا بعزكن) which was held on the 28th of February 2020. All proceeds of the event went to support our organization. Several of the stars of the movie attended the event and everyone congratulated them on a lovely movie!



3- Lockdown activities:

During the lockdown, we wanted to keep our students engaged with their artistic activities.

For weeks, we asked each group of students to send us photos and videos of them practicing their skills at home. Despite the difficult times, the students were excited to share their skills with us and our followers.



4- Launch of **Soup Kitchen Project**:

In March 2020, everything came to a screeching halt! We had to stop all our activities and quarantine at home, like everyone else in Lebanon. But at Ayadina, we were not about to abandon our dear senior members.

After quarantining during the month of March, we decided to go back to work in April. We had to find a new way to support our seniors. In light of the terrible financial crisis that has hit Lebanon, and with the COVID-19 crisis closing down many establishments in the country, many of the seniors' children lost their jobs. Hence, they were no longer capable to fully support their elderly parents who are in need of food and medication.

Therefore, we decided to launch the Soup Kitchen project. Initially, we started by collecting donated food parcels and distributing them to the seniors. After a few weeks, we shifted gears: we started to cook healthy nutritious to-go meals at our center a couple of times per week. The seniors came to our center and collected these meals themselves. We had to make sure that the seniors were no longer socializing in abundance with health precautions imposed by the ongoing COVID pandemic.

Our Soup Kitchen has been a source of great joy for our team and the different chefs and volunteers who have helped out over the past months. We were supported by numerous donors and different organizations that donated food, money, equipment, and time.

We are hoping that at some point in 2021, we will be able to welcome our seniors at our center again, where they can socialize, laugh, sing, play games, and enjoy some healthy warm food together. Until then, we will continue to offer weekly hot meals to our dear seniors, and to support them in any way possible.



5- Cooperation with Himaya

At the beginning of 2020, we had the pleasure of launching a cooperation with the organization Himaya. Throughout the year, Himaya offered groups of our students and of our parents psychosocial support sessions that focused on many major issues: sexual harassment, domestic abuse, gender equality, stress management, self-image and self-confidence.

Following the 4th of August blast in Beirut, many of our students were severely traumatized and were exhibiting symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Himaya trainers addressed this matter and discussed means of coping with the trauma with the kids and the parents.

The wonderful thing about the sessions with Himaya is the way with which they incorporate art and music in the activities. Our students specifically enjoyed being able to pick up their musical instruments and their coloring pencils again! The children were really creative and interactive; they wrote a beautiful song regarding all the challenges of the year. In 2021 we will continue after the lockdown the work on the song and try to film it to deliver its powerful message to the community.

During lockdown, Himaya continued to provide support to the families who were quarantining at home. They provided the families with a number of activities to do at home, and they were providing online sessions.



6- Surviving August 4th blast:

Like many other establishments in Beirut, our center was quite damaged as a result of the 4th of August explosion.

But what truly broke our hearts was the fact that two of our dear students were severely injured during the explosion. We picked up the pieces of broken glass; we felt more resilient than ever to stand by the people of Beirut. It was overwhelming to see the pouring support and donations that the residents of the city received.

We were also happy to go visit Adam and Grace at home and make sure that they were doing better.



7- Celebrating Berbara with the Children :

Seeing as this year we did not have the chance to see our students in their cute costumes at our center, we asked them to share pictures! We were delighted to see them being creative in their outfits and to see the joy in their eyes! Here is one of our most talented ballerinas, Maria, in her quirky costume, showcasing her impressive flexibility



8- Mother's Competition:

In December 2020, and in celebration of the Arabic Language day (18th of December), we decided to launch a competition for the mothers of our students entitled : "Journal of a Mother in the Times of Corona" (يوميات أم في زمن الكورونا).

We invited the mothers to share with us in writing their daily struggles, challenges, and successes in time of the COVID pandemic and all the complications that came along with it.

We were pleasantly surprised by the honesty, the passion, and the courage of the women who participated. They proved to us once again that they are the rocks and the beating hearts of our society, giving selflessly and generously to their families on a daily basis. We welcomed the

winners at our center and distributed prizes. We discussed with them possibilities of future activities at the center.

Mr. Henri Zogheib was kind enough to write an article about our competition and to publish the writings of the two winners. You can find the article [here](#) on the Lebanon Tabloid website.



9- Final thoughts:

We at Ayadina, along with the rest of the world, are glad to put the year 2020 behind us. We look forward to a more prosperous and productive 2021. We look forward to hearing music at our center, to hearing the stomping of the feet of young dancers, and the laughs of our senior members socializing.

We invite you to support our organization by visiting our website in order to make a direct donation to our bank account in Lebanon: <https://www.ayadinaassociation.org/support-ayadina/>

For further information about how to support Ayadina's Soup Kitchen Project or the Arts Education Program, please do not hesitate to contact us either via email info@ayadinaassociation.org or on the phone (+9611266611).

