

# Healing Childhoods: Mental Health Interventions for Children Affected by War, Emergencies and Displacement

We are pleased to invite you to the Center for Crisis Psychology (CCP) Conference 2026 — a collaborative initiative between the Center for Crisis Psychology, University of Bergen, and the Children and War Foundation.

Millions of children grow up in the midst of war and armed conflict. The psychosocial consequences are profound, and the need for effective support is urgent. This one-day conference brings together leading experts, practitioners, and humanitarians to explore how we can better understand and support children affected by war, displacement, and disaster.

Through presentations and discussions, we aim to strengthen knowledge, inspire action, and foster collaboration across sectors. The insights gained are not only vital for children living in conflict zones, but also for improving psychosocial support for refugee children who may carry the burdens of war with them after settling in Norway and other countries.

## Highlights include:

- Insights into the psychological impact of war on children
- Evidence-based intervention models
- Regional experiences from some of the most war-affected areas in the world,
- Contributions from SOS Children's Villages, UNICEF, Africa CDC, and academic institutions
- A closing panel on challenges and opportunities in the field

**Please note that the conference will be held in person only at the University of Bergen, with no streaming or recordings. The language of the conference will be English.**

**Date:** June 8, 2026

**Location:** Studentsenteret, Parkveien 1, Bergen, Norway

**Time:** 08:30–17:00

**Charge:** Free of charge for all participants.

Please note that **lunch and refreshments during breaks are not included**, and attendees will need to purchase their own food and beverages.

Join us for a meaningful day of learning, dialogue, and connection!

## Programme

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### **Part 1: Moderator Professor May Aasebø Hauken, Center for Crisis Psychology, UiB**

#### **Welcome and Introduction**

Professor May Aasebø Hauken, Center for Crisis Psychology (CCP), UiB

08:30 –

09:00 *Musical Performance*

Greetings by: Center for Crisis Psychology, Children and War Foundation, SOS Children's Villages, Norway

#### **09:00 – The Psychological Impact of War on Children**

09:25 Dr Unni Heltne, Center for Crisis Psychology, UiB

#### **09:30 – Mental health and psychosocial support before, during and after emergencies on the African continent**

09:55

Dr Mohammed Abdulaziz, Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC)

#### **10:00 – Guidelines and Best Practice for Psychosocial Support to Children in War and Emergencies**

10:25

Dr Ragnhild Dybdahl, Center for Crisis Psychology (CCP), UiB/Norwegian Institute for Public Health

10:30 –

11:00 **Coffee break**

#### **11:00 – Psychological interventions for children affected by war: What do we know?**

11:25

Professor Richard Meiser- Stedman, King's College, London

#### **Psychosocial Support to Children in Sudan**

11:30–

11:55

Professor Shahla Eltayeb, Dean of research and Innovation Naif Arab University (NAUSS) & Ahfad University Trauma Center - Sudan

#### **12:00 – Example of a viable low threshold intervention for children affected by war; The development, history and work of Children and War foundation**

12:25

Professor Patrick Smith, King's College, London

12:30 –

13:30 **Lunch**

### **PART 2 Moderator: Inger Hygen, chair of Children and War Foundation**

#### **13:30 – Psychosocial Support for Children in Gaza, experiences from implementing**

13:55 **Teaching Recovery Techniques (TRT)**

Dr Johanna Cunningham, UNICEF Middle East

14:00– **Researching children and war – how should it be done?**

14:25 Professor Tim Dalgleish, University of Cambridge

14:25 –  
15:00 **Coffee Break**

**Panel Discussion: Challenges and Opportunities in Supporting Children Affected by War**

15:00 – Participants: Dr Pieter Ventevogel, UNHCR; Johanna Cunningham, UNICEF, Gaza; Dr  
15:40 Mohammed Abdulaziz, Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC); Dr  
Ashley Nemiro, WHO; Moderator: Ragnhild Dybdahl

15:45 – **Book launch: Resilience in the Shadows by Eltayeb, S., Heltne, U.M. & Dybdahl, R. (Eds)**  
16:05 Moderator: Dr Prudence Atukunda Friberg, Center for Crisis Psychology, UiB

16:10 – **Closing remarks**

16:15 Professor May Aasebø Hauken, Center for Crisis Psychology, UiB

16:15 –  
17:00 **Networking and Informal Discussions**