

May 2023



Project Play is a grassroots NGO that aims to provide safe spaces for displaced children in northern France.

89
Children
69
In GS
20
In MA

We work with children in the informal living site in Grande-Synthe (GS), as well as in independently run safe houses and day centres (maisons accueillantes - MA).

This month, we worked with 89 children. We expect the total number of children living in informal sites in northern France to be higher.

Eviction

At the beginning of the month, the French state sent **~200 police officers, military personnel and 'cleaning' crews** to the informal living site near Dunkirk, embarking on a full day eviction to **systematically destroy the site and people's belongings - starting with a Mosque** that had been created.

These **violent operations** are mentally and physically traumatic for all those forced to endure them, including children and families.

Environment

This month, we've been forced to set up our play sessions between an **active train line and a busy road**. Although we are vigilant in trying to create a safe space for children to play, the lack of space and shelter provided by the state on top of regular evictions and 'securitisation' action makes this challenging.

All children have the right to play, and no child should be **forced to endure the dangerous living conditions** created by hostile border policies.

Access to Water

The French state, funded in their hostile policies by the UK, **fail to provide access to food or water** to people on the move in northern France. As such, people are forced to rely on NGOs and, with limited resources and funding, it can be challenging to ensure adequate supplies.

This month, children **regularly asked for water**, and told us that they **felt thirsty**. On two occasions, children asked to take a cup of water from the tank we bring to session to their families.

Lack of Safe Routes

This month, a number of children spoke to us about the journeys they are forced to undertake. A family of children described having **tried to cross nearly ten times, and had been stopped by police who were violent towards them**.

Safe routes to the UK are increasingly inaccessible for those who need them, as governments chose to pursue ineffective hostile policies that force people to **undertake increasingly dangerous and traumatic journeys in the search of safety**.



www.project-play.org

Contact us:
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No childhood should look like this.

Project Play is a registered French Charity, No: W594012083. We also operate under Donate4Refugees, Charity No: 1168435.