



AS IT IS

Turkish Children Learn to Deal with Deadly Quake

4 hours ago

The 7.8-**magnitude** earthquake and aftershocks that struck Turkey and Syria last week killed more than 40,000 people. They also injured at least 100,000 others.

Millions now need humanitarian aid after being left homeless and without basic life needs.

Busra Civelek is a teacher in Turkey. She looks after 22 children on a passenger boat in the port of Iskenderun. The ship has been turned into a temporary classroom, shelter and health center.

Civelek said the children have been learning to deal with what happened. Civelek explained that the children play 'earthquake' with building blocks.

"They talk about the earthquake. They build blocks and say... 'is this okay for earthquakes?' and 'is it **stable**?'," Civelek said. They also play with toy fire engines. "They say... 'We have to go to the earthquake (area) quickly'," she added.

Hasibe Ebru is a **psychiatrist** who is working on the passenger boat. She said survivors on the boat are crying a lot and are having trouble sleeping.

"I am telling (the quake survivors) that what they have been experiencing is normal and these **symptoms** will **gradually** decrease in a safe environment," she said.

"This really calms them down," she added.

The long-term mental health effects can only be understood with time as people deal with **trauma** in different ways, Ebru said.

Some of the earthquake survivors were rescued from the **rubble** only to learn that family members had died or are missing. Others found the busy neighborhoods they called home had been totally flattened.

Late Wednesday, two women were rescued from the rubble in Turkey's southern city of Kahramanmaras. And in the city of Antakya, a mother and two children were rescued.

Aleyna Olmez is a 17-year-old girl who was rescued from a collapsed building in Kahramanmaras on Thursday – 10 days after the quake. She told reporters from her hospital bed that she was well. She said she tried to pass the time by **distracting** herself until her rescue.

“I had nothing with me,” she said.

I'm Ashley Thompson.

Hai Do adapted this story for Learning English based on reporting from Reuters and The Associated Press.

Words in This Story

magnitude - n. the number that shows the power of an earthquake

stable - adj. not easily moved or collapsed

psychiatrist - n. a medical doctor that deals with mental or emotional disorders

symptom - n. a change in the body or mind

gradually - adv. happening in a slow way

trauma - n. a very difficult or unpleasant experience

rubble - n. broken pieces of stone, brick, ... from a collapsed building

distract - v. take attention away from something
