All children have dreams, whether they were born in Jordan, Liberia, Haiti, Mexico, Turkey, India, or elsewhere. Every child dreams of a place in this world, where they can live up to their potential, regardless of conditions. The “dream kids” pictured here are, or have been, engaged in child labor. They all have a dream, and hope for a better future. Through the Promising Futures Project Save the Children seeks to help the children pursue their dreams.

About photographer Chris de Bode

Chris de Bode (1965) has been a professional photographer since 1988. He has won several international prizes with his work. His photos have been published in renowned magazines and newspapers, such as the National Geographic, Time Magazine and FOAM.

Chris: “With my pictures I tell stories. I aim to touch the audience by translating the emotion of the moment into a single shot. Creating the dream pictures has had a big impact on me. Every dream is so personal and special that I have made it my personal mission to capture the dream of each child in the most beautiful way possible. I hope that we thus help to make the dream come true.”

The Dream Pictures are part of the Promising Futures project, aimed at the reduction of child labor in Jordan through education and sustainable livelihoods. The project is carried out in partnership with the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development. Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Labor.
Ahmad (17) left school two years ago after he was blamed for an incident that he was not involved in. His father did not encourage him to enroll at a different school, but urged him to start working. He found a job at a computer shop, but stopped working when a friend brought him in touch with the SSC.

Ahmad: “I dream of being a singer. Especially opera music makes me feel calm and very peaceful. I just close my eyes and surrender to the music. I want to give the same feeling to others.”

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Labor
Mufid (14) lives at the far end of East Amman. He did not feel happy at school and dropped out at the age of 12 to work, like his older brother. He is now a student at the SSC and a member of the Municipal Children’s Council.

Mufid: “I dream of becoming a chef. I want to own a five star restaurant in a big city in Europe. I love to cook and create my own dishes.”
Mahmoud (17) lives in Amman with his parents and 9 siblings. After his father had a brain stroke, he was forced to leave school at the age of 14 and earn the family’s income with his elder brother.

Mahmoud: “I was devastated when I had to leave school. I dream of having as much knowledge as possible. Knowing things is the key to everything. I could have a decent living and say yes to whatever comes along. It is such a big difference: without education you don’t have a chance in live.”
Hiba (17) had to leave school six years ago, when her parents separated. After they got back together, her parents seemed to forget that Hiba had to go back and study. Each morning, when her sisters left for school, Hiba stayed behind, crying. According to her mother, her place in life is in the kitchen.

Hiba: “I dream of being a supermodel. I want everybody to recognize me as the gorgeous model with beautiful clothes. I want to be seen in the spotlight instead of being hidden in the shade.”

Her friend Do’a (17) shares a similar story. Family circumstances made her quit school at the age of 12. She recently took up studying again, after she heard about the SSC. Do’a: “The center is a godsend…sent especially for me!”

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Labor.
Hamdan (16) has not been to school in two years. He had a million different jobs: from tailor to working at the farmer’s market. He now goes to the SCC, but after school he still works. His family cannot live without his contribution.

Hamdan: “Football is my passion, but I dream of becoming a professional rapper. When I didn’t go to school, I would create raps with my friends after work. Rap is cool and I want to be cool too!”

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Labor.
Batool (14) felt insecure at school. The teachers picked on her and her grades dropped. When she failed the 6th grade her father told her to stay home.

Batool: “I watch a TV show about a heart surgeon every week. He cures all his patients. I dream of being him, because my aunt has a heart problem too. I want to make her healthy again, just like the TV actor.”

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Labor
Bara’ah (16) lives in Amman. She is the oldest of 7 – her youngest sister is one year old. She dropped out of school at the age of 14. The principal refused to take her back after she was cured from a contagious disease. When asked to think of a life without domestic work she smiles secretly.

Bara’ah: “I dream of a world filled with flowers. In my dreams I wear a dress made of pink and red rose petals and I walk through a valley of flowers. The roses smell deliciously and make me feel so happy”.

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Labor

Save the Children