

המועצה הלאומית לשלום הילד  
Israel National Council for the Child  
المجلس الوطني لسلامة الطفل



# Israel National Council for the Child

The Statistical Yearbook "Children in Israel" 2023

Data about children during the 2023 Israel - Hamas War\*

Compiled Data\*\*

\*The 2023 Israel - Hamas War refers to what is called in Hebrew "Iron Swords War" as appears in the References

\*\* For complete details and additional data, please refer to the National Council for the Child yearbook's full version.

# Data Concerning the 2023 Israel – Hamas War

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1. **38** children **were murdered** during the October 7<sup>th</sup> massacre, 3 of them were between the ages of 0-3 and 4 children aged 3-6.<sup>(1)</sup>
2. **42** children (0-18) **were abducted to the Gaza Strip** on October 7<sup>th</sup> by the terrorist organization Hamas, and other terrorist organizations. 9 of the children were aged 0-5.<sup>a</sup> **To date, two children are still being held captive in the Gaza Strip**, both under the age of 5: Ariel Bibas and Kfir Bibas. 15 of the children who were abducted, **have parents who are still held captive.**<sup>(2)</sup>
3. **19,407** children have been recognized by the National Insurance Institute as having suffered physical or mental injury in the hostilities that occurred since the October 7<sup>th</sup> massacre up until February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 37% of them (7,257 children) are under the age of 6.<sup>(3)</sup>
4. The October 7<sup>th</sup> massacre left **20** children orphaned and another **96** with only one parent.<sup>(4)</sup>
5. As of the end of December 2023, **~48,000** school age children **were evacuated from their communities** by virtue of a government decision. Of these, 2/3 are from the South of Israel. Of the total number of children, **17,725** are preschoolers (up to the age of 6). There are also many children in families who have evacuated independently.<sup>(5)</sup>
6. As of the end of December 2023, of evacuee students, **~21,100** were living in **Yahad Centers** (hotels and evacuee centers). **~17,100** others had known addresses in other communities. **~1,900** children were reported as staying abroad, and the whereabouts and schools of an additional **~7,900** students were **unknown to the Ministry of Education**. Evacuee students are supposed to study either in schools in other communities or in dedicated schools opened in the evacuee centers or in its vicinity. However, as of the end of December 2023, **the data regarding the placement of all the children is still incomplete.**<sup>(6)</sup>
7. In a representative national survey of parents to children aged 2-12, **~84% of parents reported their children suffered from emotional distress; ~64% reported that their children have fears, and ~62% of parents reported that their children suffered from anxiety.**<sup>(7)</sup>
8. According to a representative national survey, **32%** of the parents of children aged 0-6

reported that their children received only a **small portion of the required medical and psychological care** during the war. As for the emotional effects on children, **43%** of parents to children of the same ages, reported that their children easily panicked when they heard sudden noises, **36%** reported that their children struggled with saying goodbye, and **34%** reported that their children had difficulties falling asleep.<sup>(8)</sup>

9. During October-December 2023, there was a **28%** decrease in the number of **suicide attempts** by children aged 0-17 compared to the number of cases in the same months in 2022 (**215** compared to **298** cases). **~85%** of suicide attempts in 2023, were made by girls.<sup>(9)</sup>
10. From the data received from Maccabi HMO, regarding teenage members aged 12-17, during the period of **October-December 2023**, there was an increase of **~78%** in the rate of boys diagnosed as suffering from stress, compared to the corresponding months of the previous year and an increase of **~69%** among girls. Furthermore, there was a **~20%** increase in both boys and girls diagnosed as suffering from anxiety.<sup>(10)</sup>
11. The Ministry of Education's helpline, established during the 2023 Israel - Hamas War, received **4,753** calls during October-December 2023. Most of the calls were received in the first month of the war, especially in the first three days. **51%** of the recorded calls to the helpline were made by the parents and **20%** of the calls were made by the students themselves. **50%** of the calls received on the Ministry of Education helpline were for emotional assistance, and **35%** were for instructions and information.<sup>(11)</sup>
12. Compared to the corresponding months of last year, **during October-December 2023** there was an increase of **~28%** in calls to the **118 Hotline concerning violence, sexual abuse, and child neglect**. There was an increase of **~37%** in calls to the **118 Hotline concerning domestic violence against children** (195 calls during October-December 2022, compared to 268 calls in the corresponding months of 2023).<sup>(12)</sup>
13. During October-December 2023, **13** investigative cases were opened against adults for committing criminal offenses against minors in evacuee centers, of which **12** cases were

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<sup>a</sup> The data relates to children aged birth to 18 (and not birth to 17, inclusive, as is customary in the rest of the yearbook data) and it refers to children's ages at the time of receipt of the data from the Hostages and Missing Families Forum, on **January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024**, rather than at the time of their abduction.

opened for violent offenses, and one case was opened for a sexual offense.<sup>(13)</sup>

## Preparedness of the Education System on the Eve of the 2023 Israel - Hamas War

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1. As of August 2023, **~29%** of the positions for educational psychologists in the education system were unstaffed (a total of 986 positions were vacant). In the Southern region, **~36%** of educational psychologist positions in schools were unstaffed.<sup>(14)</sup>
2. **~26%** of all the educational institutions in Israel, supervised by the Ministry of Education, **are not protected according to code** (this relates to sheltered and protected spaces that are providing less protection than what is required by standard procedures). **~15%** of the educational institutions **are completely unprotected**.<sup>(15)</sup>
3. **In the Southern and Northern regions, ~20%** of the educational institutions' **protection is not up to code**, and **~10%** of the educational institutions are completely unprotected. **~26%** of schools in the **Bedouin communities in the Negev**, are completely unprotected.<sup>(16)</sup>

## References

- <sup>1)</sup> The National Public Diplomacy Directorate, Data summary "Iron Swords," Day 94 of the War, 2024.
- <sup>2)</sup> Hostages and Missing Families Forum, January 29, 2024.
- <sup>3)</sup> National Insurance Institute, 2024.
- <sup>4)</sup> Labor and Welfare Committee meeting (protocol #104), Tuesday, October 31, 2023.
- <sup>5)</sup> Knesset Research and Information Center report, "Educational Services for Students Evacuated from their Homes during the 'Iron Swords' War", December 31, 2023.
- <sup>6)</sup> Knesset Research and Information Center report, "Educational Services for Students Evacuated from their Homes during the 'Iron Swords' War", December 31, 2023.
- <sup>7)</sup> Goshen Association – Community Health and Well Being, "The Emotional State of Boys, Girls and their Parents during the War – Preliminary Findings," December, 2023.
- <sup>8)</sup> Taub Center report, "Emotional and Behavioral Difficulties among Preschool School Children and their Parents: Current Situation in Light of the War," February, 2024.
- <sup>9)</sup> Ministry of Health, 2024.
- <sup>10)</sup> Maccabi HMO, 2024.
- <sup>11)</sup> Ministry of Education helpline, December 31, 2023.
- <sup>12)</sup> Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs, Commissioner for Freedom of Information, 2024.
- <sup>13)</sup> Israel Police, Strategy Department, Information Production and Measurement Section, 2024.
- <sup>14)</sup> Knesset Research and Information Center, "Routine and Emergency Educational Psychology," October 30, 2023.
- <sup>15)</sup> Knesset Research and Information Center, "Gaps in Protection for Educational Institutions in light of the 'Iron Swords' War," October 30, 2023.
- <sup>16)</sup> Knesset Research and Information Center, "Preliminary Information on the Preparedness of Bedouin Communities in the Negev for Incoming Missiles," December 5, 2023.