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“The situation is becoming increasingly worse.” The NGOs’ crisis.

The current crisis, which forces us to remain at home, hurts more than just families, individuals, and companies. It also harms the NGOs that on a day-to-day basis depend on donations from all around the world. The decrease in donations on the one hand, combined with the increase of pleas for help on the other, create an impossible situation for the NGOs that aren’t able to help the families and individuals who need them.

Written by Yuval Gamliel.

For them, home isn’t the safe space

ELEM, an NGO which assists at-risk youth, often doing so at youth centers and youth homeless shelters, has reported that shutting down the education establishments, in addition to the instructions to stay at home, meant, for many youth, going back to the bad place where they’ve experienced, on more than one occasion, sexual, physical, and excessive verbal abuse.

“We had to cancel our flag-themed fundraising campaign which we hold every year just before Passover, and it’s a tough blow to our budget, because this money is used to give the youth food, shelter, medical assistance, therapy, and more,” says Roy Homri, one of ELEM’s managers.

He adds, “the situation of the youth we work with is dire. We keep hearing that we have to stay at home because it’s the safest place, but for the youth we work with home is the least safe place.”

“I’ve seen reports of kids from the ultra-orthodox demographic who break into synagogues because they have nowhere to sleep, and schools that have been broken into by kids from problematic households, because it’s forbidden to be out, yet home is not a good place for them. There are also stories of youth who experienced sexual abuse in the past by a member of their families, we helped them move out to boarding schools, and now they were forced back into the homes with the people who hurt them.”

“Every household is experiencing an immense amount of pressure at this time, which means that in dangerous households all this pressure is being directed towards the youth, and they become a punching bag, and the target of humiliation.”

“For many of these youth school isn’t just an educational establishment, it’s also where they receive a hot meal, emotional support from a guidance counselor, and therapy from the social worker. Now schools are shut down, and they’re forced to stay home, where they experience daily abuse.”

“I feel that it is important to battle the Coronavirus, but that this war caused the state to abandon youth in general, and more specifically at-risk youth, and the consequences can be brutal.”

[This is an excerpt about ELEM’s work from a full article about the NGOs’ crisis]