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ELEM's report: a 50% increase in homeless youth

13% of the youth ELEM assisted suffered from starvation. A four times increase in reports of youth suffering from anxiety and depression. Between the months of March - May ELEM was also contacted by 59 single mothers at high risk between the ages of 18-22, who found themselves experiencing poverty due to the Corona crisis.

Written by Sachar Ilan

The number of homeless youth grew by 47% during the Corona crisis, according to a report posted this morning (Monday) By ELEM, the NGO that assists at-risk youth and homeless youth.

The report shows that the number of homeless youth ELEM assisted has risen from 170 between the months of March – May 2019, to 250 during the same months this year, in light of the Corona. ELEM served 4,800 youths during these months, 13% of which suffered from starvation (625 youths.) 232 youth attempted self-harm.

43% of the youth (2,060) reported facing emotional crisis, anxiety and depression, that's 4 times more than the same time last year when 500 youths reported these issues. 7% of the youth (335) reported being physically and verbally abused at home, 70% more than last year (190.) 4% (160) experienced sexual violence, two times more than in 2019 when 80 victims of sexual violence were reported.

In addition, ELEM was contacted during this period by 59 single mothers at high risk, between the ages of 18-22, whom, due to the crisis, found themselves facing poverty and lack of means and support. They were assisted by ELEM.

ELEM's president, Nava Barak, handed the report to President Ruvi Rivlin yesterday and said that "Within the great hardship of the Corona period, weakened demographics, that are marginalized as it is, became even more marginalized. Many at-risk youth throughout Israel, suffered during the Corona crisis more than ever. Distress has grown deeper, to the point of intense emergencies."

President Rivlin said that “the Corona crisis has hit the entire world, but at this time, those who are marginalized became even more so. For the at-risk youth, the shutting down of the welfare and educational establishments meant an escalation to their dangerous situations, sometimes to the point of a life or death situations.”