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## **ELEM Report Reveals: An Increase in Domestic and Street Violence Amongst Youth**

The masks are off, but the damages of COVID among at-risk youth are still present, according to ELEM's 2021 report presented to Israeli President Isaac Herzog. The annual report data is based on information collected from all youth treated by ELEM.

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Due to COVID, there has been a worsening in risk situations among the youth ELEM is helping. This includes a significant increase in reports of violence, depression and anxiety, self-harm, and eating disorders. This information emerges from ELEM's 2021 report, which was presented (Sunday) to the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog.

The data of ELEM's annual report is based on information collected from all the youth, young men, and women the organization assisted during 2021 and was presented to the President by ELEM Israel's President, Nava Barak, and CEO, Dana Avraham, who said at the event: "The COVID pandemic might be fading away from our daily lives, but nowadays we are witnessing its ongoing damages. Only through collaborative work between all systems, welfare, education, and health, can we provide the youth with the best assistance."

Among the youth whom ELEM helped in 2021 - 2,126 teenagers, young men, and women reported violence outside the home, 1.7 times more than in 2020 and 3.6 times more than in 2019. 1,893 suffered from domestic violence, 1.2 times more than in 2020 and 2.5 times more than in 2019. 1,682 reported that they suffered from sexual violence, a 2.3 times increase compared to 2019. 1,177 were victims of cyberbullying; 2.3 times rise compared to 2019.

Additional disturbing data emerging from the report also indicates an increase in mental distress among adolescents and children at risk. For example, about 4,000 reported suffering from depression and anxiety, which is 1.9 times more reports than in 2019. 3,446 suffered from loneliness (1.4 times more), 1,432 tried to harm themselves, a 1.2 times increase compared to 2020 and 1.5 times more compared to 2019. 950 dealt with eating disorders, 1.3 times more than in 2020 and 2.2 times more than in 2019. Even in cases of addiction, there was a 1.3-1.5-times increase in alcohol and drug use compared to 2019 before COVID.

Nava Barak, President of ELEM Israel, emphasized: "The lockdowns, the isolation, and disconnect from frameworks during COVID have led to an exacerbation in youth risk situations and distress. After two years of COVID, life is back to normal. Still, we are witnessing an entire generation of children and youth being pushed aside, suffering from the difficult mental, emotional, and social repercussions. We continue to work for them in all areas and will not leave any boy or girl to face this alone."

Every year, ELEM assists 13,000 youths and young people in 92 different programs in 42 cities and towns throughout the country.