

Parenting Resources: Israel and Gaza

This is what we have sent as of November 16, 2023. It is repeated so you can access any of the information we have shared. It will be updated regularly.

- **[This is Perfect Jewish Parents: Israel at War](#)**
_The events of October 7 and the ongoing war with Hamas have flooded our communities with grief, sorrow, and anger. In a series of special episodes of [Perfect Jewish Parents](#), hosts Masua Sagiv and Joshua Ladon explore the core questions and values these difficult moments illuminate so that parents, caregivers, and educators can navigate complex conversations with young people and meet this important moment. From the [Shalom Hartman Institute](#).
- **[Building an 'Iron Dome' of global Jewish resilience](#)**
Jewish resilience is practiced in a crisis through the narrative we tell ourselves about where we come from, what we believe and do, and why. We can write a new global narrative of resilience that encompasses the past and imagines a better future as a joint effort between Israeli and world Jewry. From [eJewishPhilanthropy.com](#)
- **[I work in Jewish sales: Our post-Oct 7 product has changed](#)**
Rabbi Eve Rudin Kleinman is an educator and friend at Larchmont Temple in Westchester. She is talking to us - the parents, teachers and leaders of Jewish Educational programs. Let's have a conversation about this. Do you agree? Do you have some ideas? From [The Times of Israel](#).
- **adapting: Educating and Parenting in a Time of War**
adapting is a regular Jewish education podcast. In this conversation, David Bryfman (president of the Jewish Education Project) and Rabbi Dr. Josh Ladon (Director of Education for the Shalom Hartman INstitute of North America) unpack their experiences as both educators and parents in helping educators

and children grapple with a multitude of feelings. They emphasize that when dealing with war, one cannot deal with it in isolation, and to prioritize mental health by looking after one another in the field—from other teachers to kids—and ourselves.

[Click here to listen.](#)

- **TRUVIE: Responding to Crisis in Israel**

This is a growing resource from the Jewish Education Project. How do we talk to our kids about tragic events? How can we respond to their difficult questions about what they see and hear in the news? This is an evolving collection of resources in response to the horrific violence in Israel in October, 2023. We will update this space with resources for parents and families to help them engage appropriately with what is happening. [Click here.](#)

- **How to Talk to Kids About What's Happening in Israel**

The unfolding tragedy in Israel is hard to comprehend, but every child deserves an age-appropriate and honest conversation. Professor of Jewish Education Sivan Zakai wrote an excellent and short article to help you. [Click here.](#)

- **We can help.**

No doubt you have seen a variety of responses in the US to the situation in news reports. Should you or your children encounter antisemitic acts or words, please contact me or Rabbi Moss as well as the ADL. We are happy to help you interact with school leadership on these issues should that be warranted.

- **Social Media Alert**

I want to reiterate the warning I shared last week about the possibility of horrific videos that may make their way onto social media sites. So far, there have only been a few. There are also impassioned videos from Israelis who have been directly affected - and some of our kids might find those disturbing as well. I am all in favor of being disturbed and becoming motivated to speak out. At the same time, not every child or even pre-teen is ready for those videos. Please talk with your kids and think about limiting some of their social media inputs.

Resources for talking with my kids about the war

I (Ira) have always believed that when a child is ready to ask a question, we as teachers and parents need to be ready to respond. We do not have all of the answers, nor can we have them all. We can make sure they feel their agency. We can be a calm presence for them, not hiding our fear and anxiety, but not leading with it. We can share that we are sad. And we can affirm what I believe kids already know - that it is realistic to be hopeful for the future.

HUC-JIR Professor Sivan Zakai said today:

The magic of childhood is not that children are blissfully unaware. The magic of childhood is that even when children are aware, they can imagine and dream and hope for and work towards a better tomorrow. And that is what we have to make sure that we let children do, even if we feel bleak. Even if we feel dark, even if our souls are crushed and crying.

We have to let children be hopeful. And find rays of light and often that means taking action and if you might ask what action is appropriate. I would say, I mean, we can list things. We can talk about places we can give our money and people we can write cards for and other ways we can support but actually so can children they are capable, they are brilliant, they are. Amazing and if we give them the opportunity if we say what did you want to do in this moment?

To bring light into a dark world. Our children will be able to answer that. And if they can't, we can think about it with them.

How to Talk to Children About the Conflict in Israel

This page is from the Union of Reform Judaism and is not specifically about the current war in Gaza and Israel. Rather it provides some thoughtful guidance to help you formulate your own approach. It discusses each age group from young children through teenagers.

<https://reformjudaism.org/how-talk-children-about-conflict-israel>

Israel: A Guide for Parents

This was prepared by the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland during the Gaza War in 2014. Much of it is still very relevant today.

https://jeccrespondingtocrisis.weebly.com/uploads/1/0/6/1/10614651/israel_parents_2015.pdf

Helping Kids Cope in a Time of Crisis and Fear: Advice for Teachers and Parents

This was written following 9/11 and still provides some very good advice.

<https://www.teachervision.com/counseling-students/helping-kids-cope-time-crisis-fear>

Places to send money if that is your choice

The shortage of emergency personnel and first responders is being felt. Many of the victims were first responders, including police personnel, firefighters, and paramedics. Local organizations in border area have been severely damaged and depleted of key human resources.

Our own Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven has an emergency fund to make it simple for members of our community to get money directly to those organizations.

<https://www.jewishnewhaven.org/ways-to-give/new-have-stands-with-israel-fund>

You may want to get more granular with your kids about where to donate. The Jewish Funders Network is an organization of people

serious about Philanthropy. They have developed a list of organizations that do both short term emergency work and also engage in the long term effort to address problems - which is a great place to begin. That list is at https://www.jfunders.org/israel_crisis

Please note that Israeli schools are recommending that parents have their pre-teens and teens delete their social media accounts. It is expected that the various platforms are about to be flooded with incredibly graphic and violent images from the war. There are also many sources of these images on line and on mainstream news outlets.

What happened and is happening now?

Where can I learn more?

There are many sources of information. Each brings its own point of view. We each make our own decisions about the depth of knowledge we feel we need or have the bandwidth to maintain. If you want to be truly well-informed, we recommend following at least one news source that comes from a perspective at least somewhat different from your own.

News Sources

The Times of Israel is a pretty good news site. It tends toward the middle of the political spectrum with opinion pieces from a wide range of opinions. They define themselves as independent, with no allegiance or bias to one particular political. <https://www.timesofisrael.com/>

Ha'aretz is Israel's oldest newspaper and tends toward a liberal outlook. Many have seen it as the analog to the New York Times. <https://www.haaretz.com/>

Y-Net News is the online version of the newspaper Yediot Achronot. It tends to have a center-right orientation. Which is to say their editorials have generally opposed Prime Minister Netanyahu, and a few years ago supported Tzipi Livni who once led the center leaning members of Likud. An attempt by Netanyahu to get the publisher to embrace him has led to one of the corruption charges he is facing. <https://www.ynetnews.com/>

Israel Hayom (Today) is a newspaper that was originally developed by the late American Jewish billionaire Sheldon Adelson. It is the most widely distributed paper in Israel - in part because it has always be free of charge. From its inception it has been highly supportive of Prime Minister Netanyahu, and it leans decidedly to the right politically. <https://www.israelhayom.com/>

Al Jazeera is the best known English language news source originating in the Arab World. It provides a radically different take on events this week, but is not seen as a radical publication in comparison to most Arabic language news sources. <https://www.aljazeera.com/>

BICOM - the British Israel Communications and Reseach Center is an organization in Britain dedicated to telling the current story of the State of Israel. It does have a point of view, but at the end of the day, they are focused an an Israel that thrives. <https://www.bicom.org.uk/>

Timeline

On Shabbat morning at 6:35 a.m. (Israel Time) air raid sirens throughout Israel signaled the initial launch of what would become thousands of missiles toward populated areas of Israel. You can read a time line of the events at the [New York Times website](#).

Background on how Gaza got to this point and where we might go

In June of 2021, former Israel Ambassador to the United States and expert on Israel and Foreign Affairs, Michael Oren wrote an essay for Mosaic Magazinecalled “How Gaza Became Israel's Unsolvable Problem.” That led to a symposium of articles by six other people and more. If you go to the Oren essay, you will be able to find links to all of the others. <https://mosaicmagazine.com/essay/israel-zionism/2021/06/how-gaza-became-israels-unsolvable-problem>