



ISSOP

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY for
SOCIAL PEDIATRICS and CHILD HEALTH

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As pediatricians we watch in horror recent attacks in Israel and Gaza. Thus far, over 1000 civilians have been injured and more than 200 killed—including dozens of children—the vast majority in the occupied Palestinian territory.

Children are physically and mentally vulnerable in times of armed conflict, being both more likely than adults to sustain severe head trauma and more vulnerable to potentially traumatic events. It is critically important that the following be implemented immediately:

- Both Israel and armed groups must refrain from the ongoing indiscriminate attacks that have taken the lives of children. The large number of civilians that have died as a result of attacks, particularly on the Palestinian side, raise suspicion that attacks are carried out against civilian targets, in violation of international law.
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care, including the most sophisticated trauma care and evacuation protocols for injured children to nearby level one trauma facilities.
- When appropriate medical treatment is not available in Gaza, children should be evacuated as soon as possible and permitted safe and speedy access by the Israeli authorities to trauma facilities in Israel and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.
- Children evacuated from Gaza to the West Bank or Israel must be permitted to be accompanied by their parents.
- Allow humanitarian aid, including fuel necessary for powering hospitals and homes, and the running of sanitation infrastructure, to enter Gaza.
- Ensure all injured children have access to long-term physical and mental health care, and their families are supported after the current escalation conflict to ensure receipt of these services.
- Stop all attacks on healthcare workers, and health facilities and health infrastructures—a clear violation of the principle of medical neutrality.
- Ensure all relevant duty bearers in the region prioritize the needs of children and reach a ceasefire immediately.
- Respect the neutrality of medical teams and medical facilities.
- National medical associations representing healthcare workers must act according to medical ethics and speak out about government action that results in harm to the life, health, and well-being of children, both Palestinian and Israeli.

We call attention to the ISSOP Beirut Declaration (<https://www.issop.org/cmdownloads/beirut-declaration-on-prohibition-of-harm-to-children-in-armed-conflict/>), a framework for mitigating the impact of armed conflict on children. Enough is enough. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Goldhagen, M.D., MPH, President
ISSOP Committee to End Violence Against Children

The International Society for Social Pediatrics and Child Health is a global organization of child health professionals committed to advancing the rights of children to optimal health and well-being.