

# Suicide Cases Among Syrian Children Rising Sharply, Says Save the Children

Deaths by suicide increased by 86 percent in the last three months of 2020, according to the charity

By [Middle East Eye](#)

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*The number of children attempting or committing suicide in northwest Syria has risen sharply over the past year, with almost one in five of all recorded suicide cases involving adolescents, Save the Children [said](#) on Thursday.*

Deaths by suicide increased by 86 percent in the last three months of 2020 in comparison to the first three months of that year, the charity reported.

It added that a total of 246 people died by suicide during that period, while another 1,748 suicide attempts were recorded.

“After ten years of conflict, we are now seeing children resorting to taking their own lives,” said Sonia Khush, Save the Children’s Syria Response Director.

“It is incredibly sad that children are reaching a point where they see no other way out from a life where they cannot get an education, enough food or adequate shelter.”

Of those who attempted suicide, at least 42 were 15 years old or younger at the time of the attempt, while 18 percent were between the ages of 16 and 20.

“Almost 15 percent of adult patients have suicidal thoughts,” said a mental health worker with Save the Children’s partner organisation, Hurras Network, in North Idlib.

“Children meanwhile express [their emotional struggles] through behaviour. They become aggressive, isolated or vengeful.”

The majority of the deaths, 187, were recorded in people who had been displaced from their homes, the NGO said.

Northwest Syria is home to some two million displaced people, many of them twice or even

three times displaced from their homes over the course of the decade-long conflict.

## Mental health crisis

The war in Syria, now in its tenth year, has devastated much of the country. More than 388,000 people have been killed, [according](#) to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, and millions have been forced to live as refugees.

The northwest, which is the last rebel-held region of Syria, is where hundreds of thousands were forced to flee after other areas of the country were recaptured by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces.

The more than three million people living in the country's northwest face routine [aerial bombardment](#) by the Syrian government and [Russian forces](#).

The crowded and unsanitary conditions in displacement camps and the lack of infrastructure in the northwest of Syria are exacerbating mental health problems, Save the Children said.

The NGO also points to increased poverty, broken relationships, domestic violence, and child marriage as factors for the rising numbers of deaths by suicide, particularly in children.

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