

Rabbi Curt Landry Says COVID, Gaza Attacks Have Devastated Already-Hurting Israeli Teens

You're seen the horrific photos and read the heartbreaking news stories: Israel remains under attack. But what most of us don't know, Rabbi Curt Landry says, is the impact the continued attacks by Hamas in the Gaza Strip are having on the lives of vulnerable children and young adults in Israel.

"It's extremely successful," Landry says of the program that works with 12,000 children and teens in foster care, which he and his wife, Christie, began at the behest of former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "But right now, because of COVID and because of the Gaza war, it's an extremely stressful situation," he tells Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network.

Their program works with children from birth through 18, Landry, who grew up as an orphan, says. "And then after a few years, we started a program with them called 'Bridge to Independence. ... in my own life, I know it's critical between 18 and 25. That age, that's when you make decisions.'" The safe houses the ministry provides allow the teens to work and to fulfill their military requirement but also to have needed accountability, he says.

"The reason I do that is because at strategic times in my life, if I would not have had adults who really saw the potential in me ... I could have gone either way," Landry says. He points out that research shows that since the pandemic, teen suicide has now become the No. 1 cause of death among teens, up 300% because of emotional and social withdrawal.

Landry says his ministry had planned to start another house until the safe house director made a special request—and he

agrees with her suggestion. “I’m going to hire professional counselors,” he says. “I would like professional psychologists and counselors to work with these kids. Because we’re at that window right now where they’re just now starting to go back to work. They were locked down for a year;, they lost their jobs. We financially helped them during that time ... But emotionally, that isolation was causing a lot of oppression and depression. And so now I need to get them out of that.”

Landry adds, “When the Scripture says, ‘Pray for the peace of Israel,’ it’s great to pray, and we should pray. But also Jesus said, ‘When you do it unto the least of these My brethren, you do it unto Me.’ ... The mental illness that comes in with this depression is no different than COVID, and it’s no different than cancer or anything else. And it can be curse, but they do need the right counseling.”

For more details of how the dual problems of the pandemic and the war on Israel are hurting already-vulnerable teens, listen to the entire episode of *Greenelines* at this link. Make sure to subscribe to *Greenelines* on your favorite podcast platform for more inspiring stories like this one. And if the Lord moves your heart to help Landry with this special project of providing counselors for these hurting teens, go to and join in this vital ministry. {eo}

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