



# Elah Center Annual Report 2024



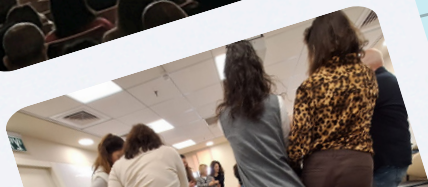
*Resilience Workshop*



*Team meeting*



*Art therapy*



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*Team-Building Day*

*Gardening Therapy*



*Support group*

# From the Chair

The year 2024 has underscored the profound importance of psychological support in sustaining both personal and collective resilience. The prolonged war, the many losses, the ongoing uncertainty, and the painful efforts to return the kidnapped have deeply affected much of the Israeli public. Navigating such a reality demands immense mental strength, and the Elah Center has stepped forward to provide the necessary support.

Throughout the year, our dedicated professional team has developed tailored responses for diverse populations and organizations seeking psychological care. The foundation's rapid and comprehensive mobilization is evident in several key areas: the expanded scope of individual therapy, the growing number of support groups responding to emerging needs, and deepening collaboration with organizations seeking assistance for their employees.

Support groups were established for partners of soldiers called up for duty, relatives of the Nova Festival victims, bereaved grandparents, and individuals who lost close friends in the war, to name just a few of the initiatives launched by our staff. We also provided lectures for professionals in education, healthcare, and social work, addressing topics such as traumatic loss, complex grief, collective trauma, resilience, and maintaining strength in times of crisis.

In parallel with our wartime efforts, we continued providing emotional support to healthcare workers through the national program for burnout prevention, initiated by the Ministry of Health. We offered assistance to disabled veterans and their families in cooperation with the Ministry of Defense and National Insurance. Our four Help Centers for families coping with sudden loss – due to murder, traffic accidents, or suicide – continued to operate as part of the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security's assistance program. We also extended care to senior citizens in partnership with the Ministry for Social Equality, and we sustained our valuable collaboration with the Joint Action Committee (JAC) and the Youth Movements Council.

This year, in partnership with two other organizations, we were honored to win a tender from the Holocaust Survivors' Rights Authority, granting us the privilege to continue providing mental health care to Holocaust survivors. We are committed to fulfilling this important mission with the utmost sensitivity and responsiveness to the evolving needs of our clients.

Continued on next page

# From the Chair

To manage the increasing number of referrals and the growing demand for mental health services, we opened a national call center in Beersheba. This new hub focuses on receiving and responding to inquiries, ensuring each request is handled professionally and compassionately, and matching clients with therapists based on their location.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the work of the Elah Center: our CEO, the management team, all staff members, both employees and freelancers, our dedicated volunteers, our donors, government partners, the many organizations with whom we cooperate, and, of course, the members of the executive board and audit committee who perform their tasks voluntarily.

Let us hope for quieter, safer days ahead. May we soon see the return of the kidnapped and the soldiers, and the healing and rehabilitation of all those impacted by the war. Even in the eye of the storm, the Elah Center remains steadfast, extending a hand to those in need of psychological care. We continue to hold on to the hope that better days lie ahead.

Yahel Shachar

# 2024 in Numbers

**7**

Clinics



**268,827**

Treatment Hours

**401**

Therapeutic  
and Social  
Groups

**12,353**

Clients

**629**

Freelancers



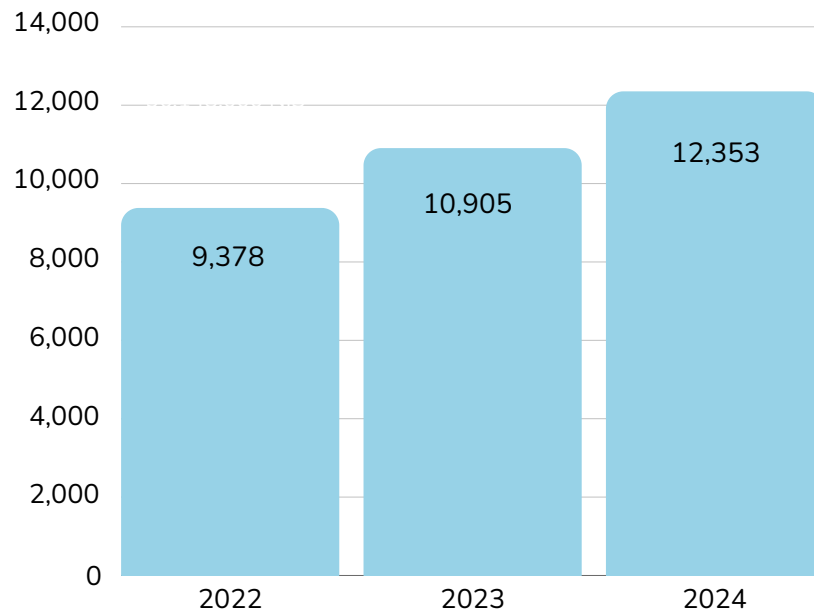
**118**

Volunteers

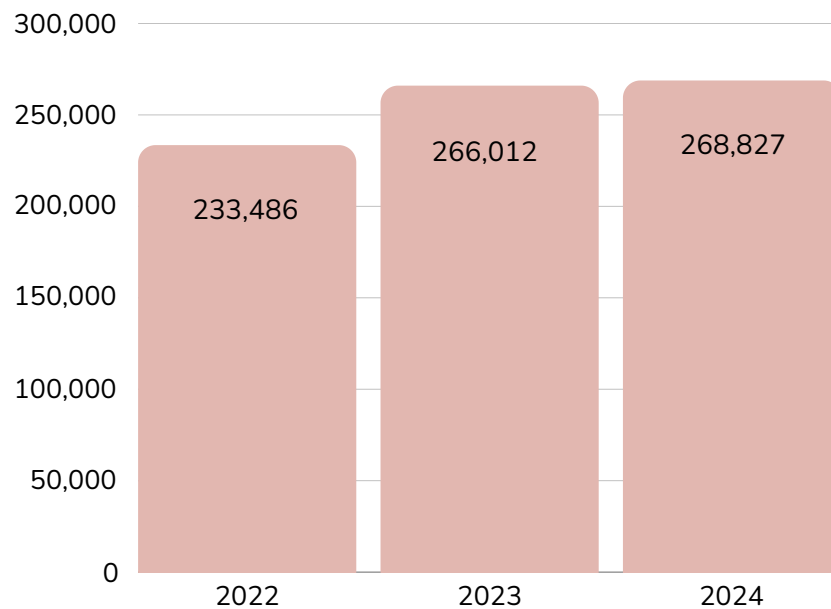
**73**

Employees

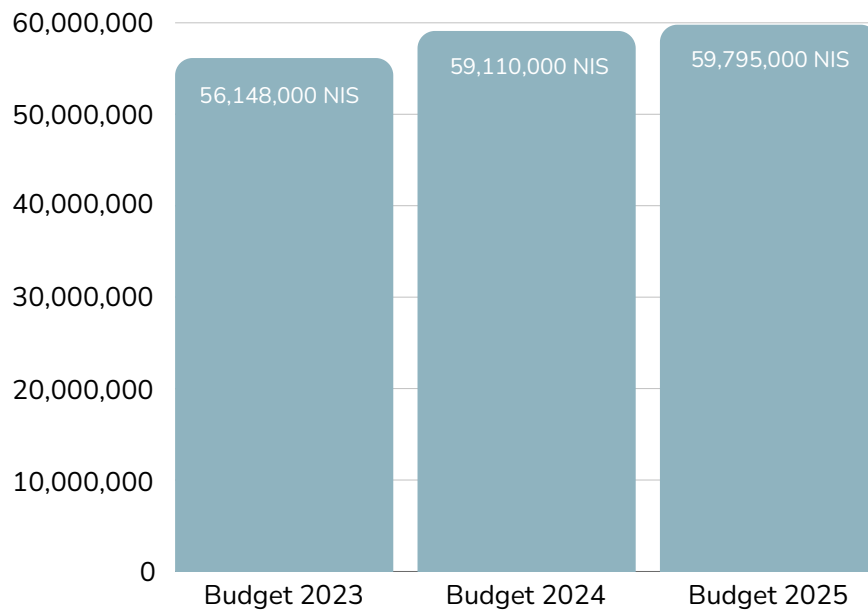
## Total number of clients



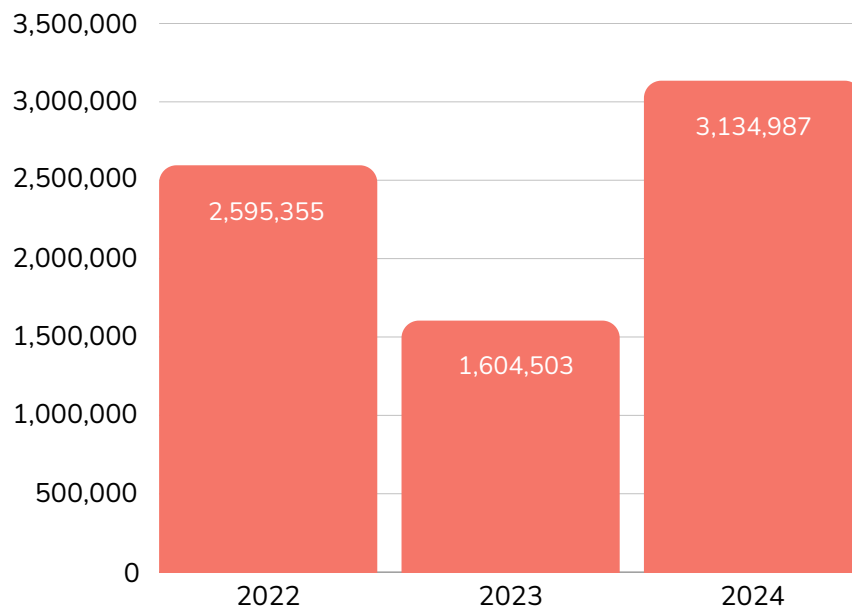
## Total hours of treatment



# Budget



# Subsidized Treatments



# Therapy

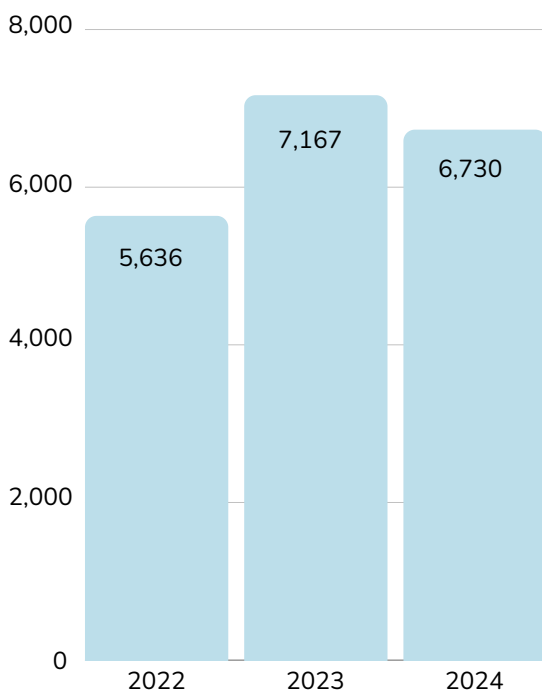
The Elah Center operates five regional, multidisciplinary therapeutic centers that provide individual, couple, family, and group therapy, as well as spiritual care. Our services are available to people of all ages and backgrounds who are coping with emotional crisis, hardship, or loss.

Therapy may be short- or long-term and can take place individually, with a partner or family members, or in groups with others facing similar experiences or circumstances.

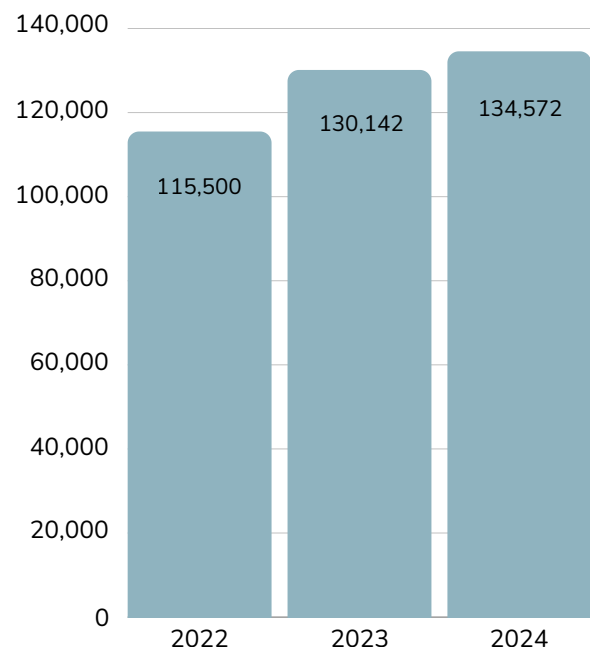
Our professional team of therapists is committed to ensuring complete confidentiality, reliability, and the highest standards of care, with deep sensitivity to each individual's cultural identity.

In addition to our core services, we are especially committed to supporting individuals who have experienced "unrecognized loss" – forms of grief that are not officially acknowledged by the state and for which no government-subsidized support is available.

### Clients in therapy



### Total hours of psychotherapy



# Governmental Agencies and Organizations

Over the years, we have collaborated with numerous companies that refer their employees to us for mental health support. Among the organizations, ministries and associations that collaborated with us during the year: Ministry of Health, National Insurance Institute, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Social Equality, Ministry of the Negev, Galilee and National Resilience, Israel Tax Authority, Israel Water Authority, State Comptroller's Office, Civil Service Commission, Israel Trauma Coalition, Bank of Israel, Israel Railways, Metropolitan Mass Transit System, Negev Nuclear Research Center, The Israel Electric Company, National Cyber Directorate, Israel Prison Service, Jewish Agency, Matav, Partner Left Behind Association, Municipalities and Regional Councils, Mishan and Joint Ashalim.

## Ministry for Social Equality – Senior Citizens

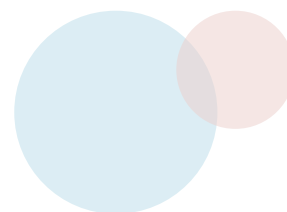
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry for Social Equality launched a project to provide short-term mental health support to senior citizens. The program aimed to prevent social isolation, address anxiety, strengthen mental resilience, and equip seniors with tools to navigate life's challenges.

Due to its success and the continued high demand, the program was extended into 2024. That year, we provided care to 563 senior citizens.

## Ministry of Defense – Bereaved Families, Wounded and Disabled IDF Personnel

The Elah Center serves as a provider for the Commemoration and Heritage Department and the Disabled Rehabilitation Department of the Ministry of Defense. We offer psychological support to bereaved families, as well as to wounded and disabled Israel Defense Forces (IDF) personnel referred to us.

In 2024, we treated 85 clients, providing a total of 2,447 hours of therapy. Of these clients 29 were referred by the department of Commemoration and Heritage, and 56 by the department of Disabled Rehabilitation.



# Students

In 2024, we provided psychological support to 187 university students, who received a total of 2,709 hours of therapy.

# Private Clients

The Elah Center offers support to anyone experiencing emotional distress or coping with loss. In 2024, we welcomed 389 private clients, who received a total of 7,239 hours of treatment.

*Team Day - The Dutch Team*



*MR Karin Elharrar's visit at the clinic in Tel Aviv*



*Office staff volunteering to pick clementines*



*Group therapy*

# Holocaust Survivors

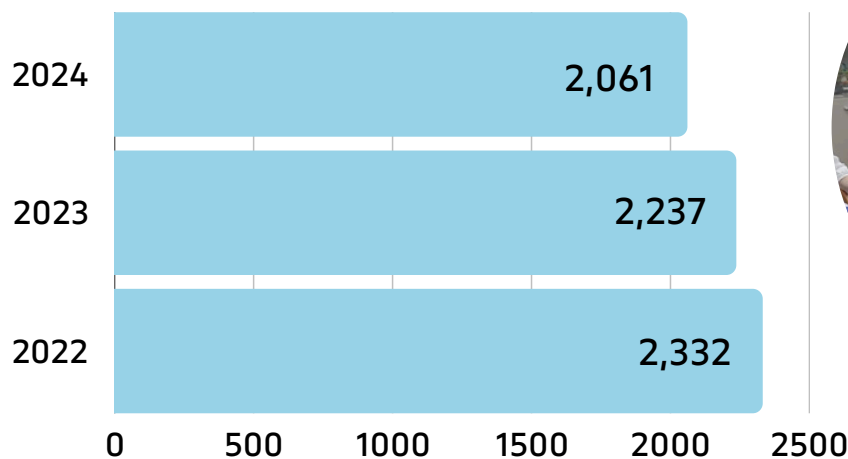
Since 2011, the Elah Center has been providing therapeutic services to Holocaust survivors, funded by the Authority for the Rights of Holocaust Survivors. In recent years, the need for emotional support among this population has grown significantly. As survivors age, their emotional resilience can weaken, and they often face additional challenges such as the loss of a spouse or close relatives, declining health, limited mobility, and social isolation.

The outbreak of the Iron Swords War further intensified emotional distress, triggering past traumas for many survivors. These realities deepen our social and moral responsibility to ensure that survivors continue to receive professional, compassionate, and tailored care.

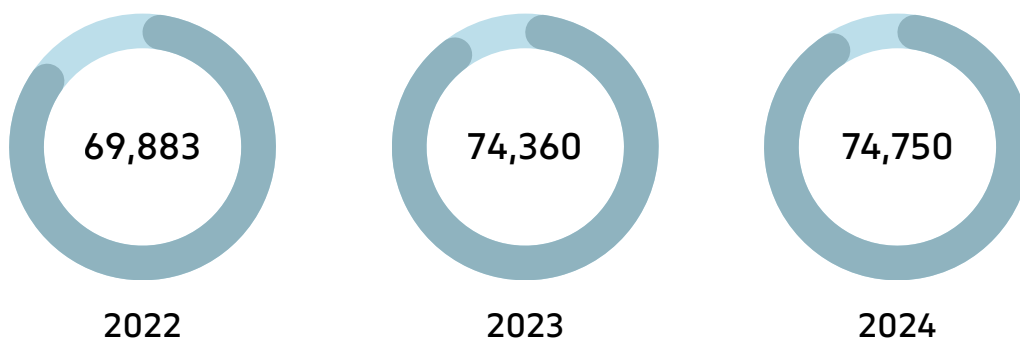
Due to mobility limitations, most survivors are treated in their homes. For those experiencing cognitive decline, we offer alternative therapeutic modalities such as art therapy, horticultural therapy, music therapy, and animal-assisted therapy.

We also run therapeutic and social support groups, which provide survivors with a space to share and connect with peers. These sessions aim to alleviate loneliness and promote emotional well-being. Services are delivered in nursing homes, day centers, and welfare offices across the country.

## Clients



## Hours of treatment



# Help Centers

## for Families coping with Traumatic Loss

The Ministry of Welfare and Social Security operates 8 regional Help Centers across the country for families who have experienced sudden loss due to criminal homicide, suicide, or traffic accidents. The Elah Center manages 4 of these centers, located in Haifa, Kfar Kana, Hadera, and Jerusalem.

### The services offered through these Help Centers include:

- Professional and volunteer-based support for families
- Individual, couple, and family therapy
- Support groups
- Spiritual care
- Group and community activities for family members
- Legal assistance and support (for families affected by homicide)

In 2024, the Help Centers operated by Elah received 402 new families, who experienced a traumatic loss.

Throughout the year, a total of 719 families or 5,436 family members made use of the Centers' services. In addition to 621 home visits conducted by our social workers, 929 family members received therapeutic support – either individually, as couples, or in family sessions – or sought assistance through spiritual care. Furthermore, 25 families were provided with legal support in the context of homicide cases.

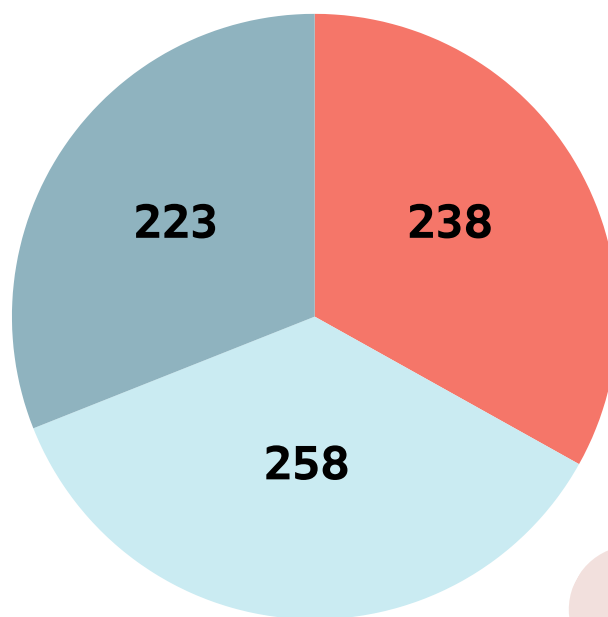





## Bereaved Families Referred by Path to Life

While the Elah Center operates Help Centers in Jerusalem, Hadera, Kfar Kana, and Haifa, the “Path to Life” association runs 4 additional Help Centers. Occasionally, “Path to Life” refers clients to the Elah Center for therapeutic treatment. In 2024, we received 87 such external clients.

In total 1,016 clients received 11,584 hours of therapy through the Help Centers.

### Cause of loss



-  Homicide
-  Traffic accidents
-  Suicide



*Team Meeting - Help Centers*

# Iron Swords War

In response to the ongoing conflict, our professional team continuously adapted activities to meet emerging needs, offering tailored support for different organizations and populations. Referrals came from entities such as the Coalition for Trauma, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Defense, and the National Insurance Institute.

Thanks to earmarked donations, we provided subsidized treatment to approximately **350 clients** and continue supporting families of the kidnapped. We established support groups for bereaved grandparents, wives of reserve soldiers, and families of Nova victims. Our team also delivered dozens of lectures on traumatic loss to social and medical professionals and conducted training for welfare workers in government ministries.

In total, we assisted approximately 2,500 people in connection with the Iron Swords War. Below is a selection of key initiatives:

## Support Groups

In response to the ongoing **Iron Swords War**, we launched **21 specialized support groups** tailored to populations affected by the conflict. These included families of the fallen, survivors of the Nova Festival, and others grappling with war-related trauma and grief. These groups provided much-needed psychological support, helping participants process their experiences and build resilience during one of the most difficult periods in recent memory.

## Circles of Kinship

In collaboration with the Jerusalem Municipality, the Elah Center helped launch the "We Are the Aunts and Uncles" project, offering meetings for extended family members – uncles, aunts, and cousins – of those who fell in the war. These meetings included lectures on coping with family loss, and facilitated discussion circles led by social workers from both the municipality and the Elah Center.

Due to enthusiastic feedback and growing demand, additional sessions were held for other kinship groups in Jerusalem. Similar "Circles of Kinship" are now offered in other cities and communities interested in supporting second- and third-degree relatives.



## Support for Second - and Third-Degree Family Members

Extended family members of missing, kidnapped, and released hostages are essential in sustaining the resilience of immediate families. Recognizing that these extended relatives often face their own struggles with little formal support, the Elah Center partnered with the Namal Mivtachim Center at the Mifrashim Institute to establish professional support groups that serve as vital anchors for these participants.

## Spiritual Guidance for Nova Survivors

The "Yuvalim" project offers individual and group spiritual care to Nova survivors and their families, provided by qualified spiritual counselors.



*Support Group for Soldiers' Grandparents*



*Support Group for Returning Reservists*



*The Renovated Clinic in Haifa*

# Crisis Intervention and Resilience

In times of war – and even in routine circumstances – resilience workshops are essential for safeguarding the mental well-being of employees. The emotional state of staff members directly impacts their performance and, in turn, the overall functioning of their organizations.

Ongoing anxiety, uncertainty, stress on the home front, traumatic incidents in the workplace, and demanding work routines can all erode mental health. Today, there is growing awareness of the importance of nurturing both individual resilience and the collective resilience of entire organizations.

Our crisis interventions and resilience workshops aim to reinforce employees' sense of self-worth and capability, foster team cohesion, and equip participants with tools to manage crises more effectively.

In **2024**, the Elah Center held **311 sessions**, including **211 emergency interventions** following traumatic workplace incidents, and **100 resilience workshops** for employees across various sectors. These sessions reached **hundreds of participants** nationwide.

## Resilience Workshops for Returnees from Reserve Duty

To support soldiers transitioning back to civilian life, we offer emotional support sessions led by professional therapists. These sessions help returning soldiers and their workplace peers create an inclusive environment that acknowledges the challenges of reintegration. For this purpose, "You've Come Home" cards were developed as effective facilitation tools during the workshops.



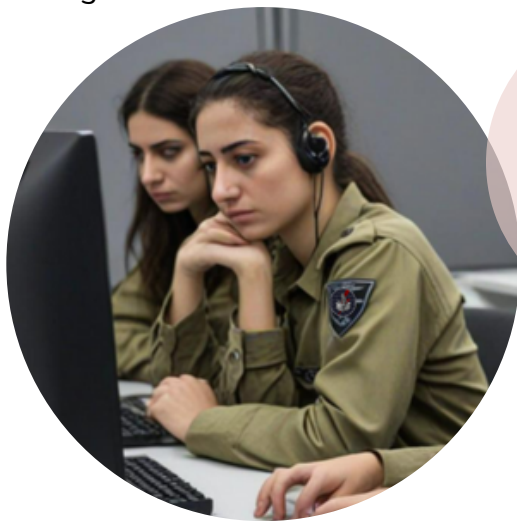
*"You've Come Home" cards*

## Resilience Workshops at the State Comptroller's Office

Workshops were conducted for women employees at the State Comptroller's Offices in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem. These sessions aimed to provide emotional support for women managing frontline roles at work and home, often while spouses were called to reserve duty.

## Workshops in the National Cyber Unit

We held resilience workshops for young women performing alternative service in the National Cyber Unit to help them emotionally process the ongoing impact of the conflict. Participants reported finding the sessions meaningful and left feeling strengthened.



## Training for Welfare Workers Civil Service Commission

Acknowledging the challenges faced by welfare workers during the war, the Elah Center collaborated with Joint Ashalim to deliver specialized training sessions focused on crisis management, trauma, loss, and bereavement. These sessions aimed to strengthen welfare workers' competence and resilience, enabling them to better support others while safeguarding their own well-being. Three follow-up seminar days were held at different locations.

## Cooperation with Council of Youth Movements

Immediately following October 7, 2023, the Council of Youth Movements partnered with the Joint Ashalim and the Elah Center to provide emotional support and guidance to youth leaders working with children, and adolescents affected by the conflict. Interventions included preparatory training before meetings with youth and families, as well as follow-up sessions to process feelings and challenges. Individual training was also provided in select cases.

# Training and Supervision

Thanks to the expertise and experience of our clinical staff, the Elah Center is frequently invited to train professionals and volunteers from other organizations on topics such as psychological support for Holocaust survivors, coping with bereavement and loss, and trauma-informed care.

In 2024, we provided 717 hours of professional training to colleagues and volunteers in the field.

The Elah Center is also recognized as a training institution for **BA and MA students** in the social sciences from **Tel Aviv University** and various psychotherapy programs at other academic institutions. Through our supervision and mentorship programs, we strive to pass on our knowledge and inspire a new generation of committed and skilled professionals.

In 2024, we mentored 24 students, who received a total of 184 hours of professional supervision.

## Lectures

The Elah Center's professional team regularly delivers lectures tailored to general audiences as well as specialized groups. These presentations draw upon years of therapeutic experience and academic research, and are continually updated to reflect both emerging findings and evolving societal needs.

In 2024, many lectures were adapted to address issues arising from the war, with topics including resilience in times of emergency, coping with trauma, and emergency response strategies.

Over the course of the year, our team gave 53 lectures, attended by a total of 2,453 participants.

## Lecture for German Youth Movements Council

The Elah Center was invited to lecture for representatives of the German Youth Movement Council – responsible for youth exchange programs between Israel and Germany – on the impact of the October 7 invasion and the ongoing war on Israeli youth. Lectures, delivered both in person and via Zoom, addressed collective trauma, with a focus on youth and evacuees.

# Group Work

## Therapeutic Center

In 2024, the Elah Center facilitated a wide range of support groups through our Therapeutic Centers, responding to the diverse and urgent needs of individuals affected by trauma, loss, and displacement. These included:

- Support groups for wives of reserve soldiers
- A support group for parents whose children passed away as a result of negligence
- Support groups for parents of Nova Festival victims
- Support groups for bereaved siblings of Nova victims
- Support groups for children of Nova victims
- Support groups for grandparents of fallen soldiers
- Support groups for individuals who lost close friends in the war
- A group for elderly individuals evacuated from their homes

In total, we operated 49 groups, with 1,137 participants, holding 330 meetings and providing 655 hours of therapeutic group activity.

## Senior Citizens

Beyond the framework of the Holocaust Survivors' Rights Authority, we also facilitated 6 groups for senior citizens in 2024. These groups offered a space for connection, emotional support, and shared experience. Across all groups, there were 55 participants and 60 meetings.

## Help Centers

Our Help Centers – designed to support families dealing with traumatic loss – facilitated **31** support groups in 2024. A total **391 meetings** were held, with a total of **268 participants**.

# Holocaust Survivors

## Therapeutic Groups

The Elah Center facilitates therapy groups for Holocaust survivors in a variety of settings, including nursing homes, day centers, and community clubs. In these groups, participants come together regularly to share life experiences and discuss topics such as aging, loss, and coping strategies. These groups are funded by the **Authority for the Rights of Holocaust Survivors**.

## Social Groups

In addition to therapeutic support, the Elah Center has developed a rich array of social groups specifically designed for Holocaust survivors. These groups provide a warm, inclusive, and creative environment where participants can share experiences, build connections, and combat loneliness and social isolation.

Our social groups incorporate a wide range of therapeutic and expressive modalities, including:

- Writing and storytelling
- Visual art
- Animal-assisted activities
- Therapeutic gardening
- Psychodrama and movement
- Mindfulness, meditation, qigong, and yoga

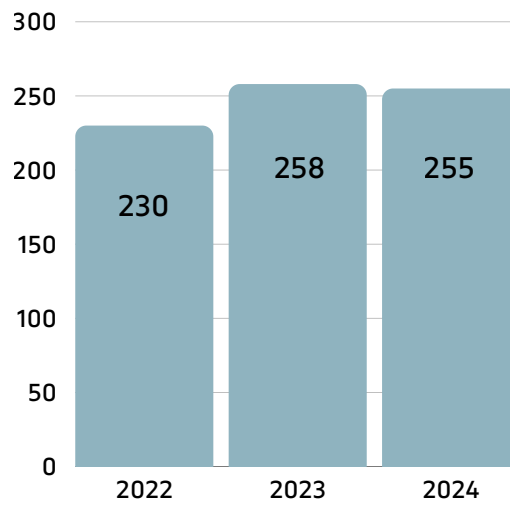
All activities are tailored to meet the specific needs and sensitivities of the survivor community.



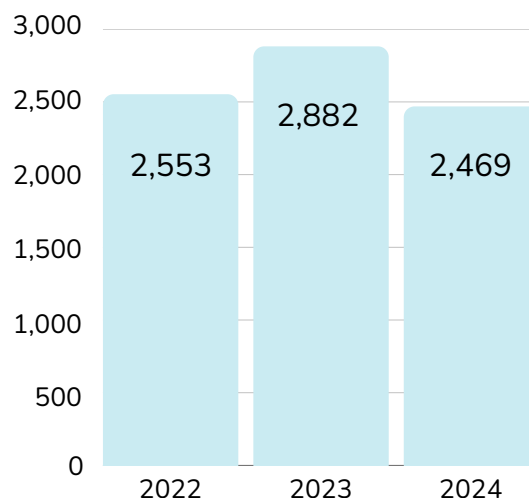
In **2024**, we operated a total of **255 therapeutic and social groups** for Holocaust survivors across the country.

## Groups for Holocaust survivors

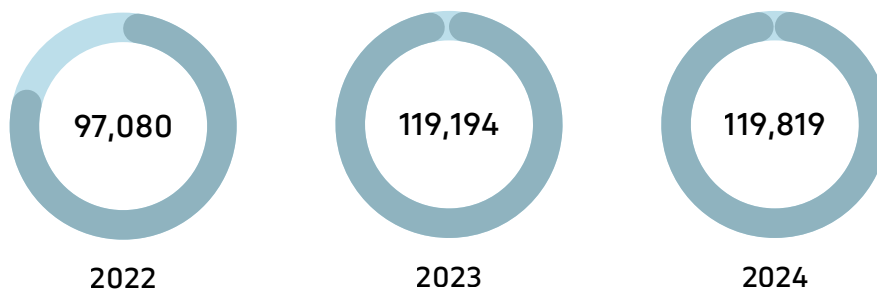
### Therapeutic and Social Groups



### Number of Group Participants



### Number of Hours Provided in Groups



# Dutch Community

The Elah Center was founded in 1979 by and for members of the Dutch community in Israel. Since then, this community has remained one of our key target groups. Our dedicated team of Dutch-speaking professionals continues to invest significant effort into supporting Dutch-Israeli community members, who are eligible for subsidized individual and group therapy, as well as a variety of support services.

In addition to therapeutic services, we coordinate a nationwide volunteer project, host regular regional social group meetings, and organize national events for the community. These activities are partially funded by the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs.

In **2024**, approximately **800 clients** of Dutch descent received support through our community-based services.

## Individual, Couple, and Family Therapy

In 2024, members of the Dutch community received subsidized therapy sessions in either Dutch or Hebrew. Our services reached a diverse population, including Holocaust survivors, spouses of survivors, second- and third-generation descendants, Dutch immigrants with no Holocaust background, and children up to the age of 18. In some cases, psychiatric consultation was also provided.

A central theme in this year's therapy sessions was the impact of the Iron Swords War, which reawakened Holocaust trauma and created emotional strain in relationships with family members living in the Netherlands.

Over the course of the year, **252 clients** received a total of **5,502 hours** of therapy.



In memory of October 7th, the Dutch Embassy held an event in November 2024 on trauma and the use of psychedelic (mind-altering) substances.

The event was attended by the Elah Center and "Lev Batuach" organization, which are collaborating to provide tailored treatment for survivors and their families.

## Social Groups

With the help of volunteers, Elah Center social workers facilitated social groups throughout Israel. These groups provide participants with opportunities to build social networks, engage in meaningful group activities, and offer mutual support.

In 2024, a new group for young Dutch women was launched in Tel Aviv. In total, 15 groups were active across the country, holding 106 meetings and delivering 3,491 hours of group activity. These were attended by 287 participants.

## Emergency Interventions

Following the events of October 7, 2023, the Elah Center conducted 5 emergency interventions for various groups within the Dutch community. Approximately 50 individuals participated in these sessions, which provided immediate emotional support during a time of acute distress.

## Emergency Fund

In response to the same events, the Dutch Immigrant Organization (IOH) established an emergency fund to support individuals financially affected by the war. The Elah Center assisted applicants by preparing the required social reports needed to qualify for financial aid. In 2024, approximately 15 reports were submitted.

## Volunteer Network

Elah Center volunteers play a vital role in supporting both the organization and the Dutch community. Some volunteers make home visits to elderly individuals, assist with daily tasks, or accompany them to medical appointments. Others help organize social activities or manage our mobile libraries, which supply books in Dutch.

All volunteers receive individual and group supervision from a designated social worker and participate in lectures on various aspects of volunteering. In 2024, we supervised and supported 72 volunteers.



## Writing Together

Launched in **2023**, Writing Together is a unique project designed to support and mentor Dutch Holocaust survivors who wish to research and document their wartime experiences. In **2024**, **11 participants** took part in the program.

## Holocaust Memorial Day

As an organization committed to supporting Holocaust survivors, the Elah Center annually honors **National Holocaust Remembrance Day**. In **2024**, we held a commemorative ceremony for the Dutch community at the **ANU – Museum of the Jewish People** in Tel Aviv. The event was also **live-streamed on social media**.

The theme of this year's ceremony was **“Dialogue Between Wars.”** Holocaust survivors and their descendants reflected on how the **Iron Swords War** affected their understanding of the Holocaust, and how the Holocaust shaped their perception of current events. The live event was attended by **200 participants**, with an additional **200 viewers** joining online from Israel and abroad.

## Friends of Elah (STEN)

With the support of our partner organization in the Netherlands, **Friends of Elah (STEN)**, we maintained close contact with Dutch partners, volunteers, donors, and supporting funds. Throughout 2024, we published articles in Dutch media and distributed a **monthly digital newsletter** in Dutch to keep our community informed and engaged.



*Holocaust Remembrance Day Ceremony*



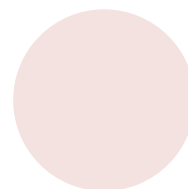
*The Monthly Newsletter*



# Thank you very much for your support

The Public Committee for Determining the Designations of Estates for the Benefit of the State | The National Insurance Institute | The Holocaust Survivor's Rights Authority | The Ministry of Health | Tel Aviv Municipality | Dutch Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport | The Sephardic Foundation on Aging | The Asor Foundation | The Class Action Fund | Discount Bank | Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah | Stiftung Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft[Ma1] | Rotary International | and many private donors from the Netherlands, abroad and Israel | Machseh Lajesoumiem  
And many other private donors from the Netherlands and Israel.

**We thank all our volunteers for their commitment and support.**



*Training for the coordinators of the "Amitim" program*



*Team Day - Elah Center*



*Elah Center at the Ministry of Health Conference*

# Support our projects

As a non-profit organization, Elah is dependent upon donations. Your donations will enable us to provide subsidized mental health care to people who are not eligible for treatment funding from other sources.

The Elah Center is recognized by the Israeli and Dutch tax authorities for tax-deductible donations. Tax deductible donations from the USA, UK, or Canada can be made through our page at Jgive. USA donors can also donate through PEF Israel Endowment Funds.

## Donations

Call the Elah office at +972-3-6910921

Or

Visit [our website](#) and press "Donate"

Or

Go directly to [our donation page](#) at Jgive

Or

Transfer your gift to: Bank Hapoalim, branch 730, account number 225221

IBAN: IL 500 12 780 000 0000 225 221 Swift code: POALILIT

## Donations from the Netherlands

Go to [our donation page](#) at GEEF

Or

Transfer your gift to IBAN No. NL75ABNA0550509615, Stichting Elah Nederland, Amsterdam

Elah Center for Coping with Loss (Registered Association 580040947)

Yigal Alon 157, office 941

Tel Aviv 6744365

Tel: 03-6910921

Fax: 03-6951574

Email: [info@elah.org.il](mailto:info@elah.org.il)

Website: [www.elah.org.il](http://www.elah.org.il)



*Thank you for your donation*

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Eli Cohen CPA, member

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Schiff-Hazenpertz Management and Consulting Services Ltd.

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ANBI number: 8142 78 103

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