



A joint project of
Defense for Children International – Palestine
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Factsheet: Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system

Approximately 2.9 million Palestinians live in the occupied West Bank, of which around 43 percent are children under the age of 18.

Palestinian children in the West Bank, like adults, face arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment under an Israeli military detention system that denies them basic rights.

Military law has applied to Palestinians in the West Bank since 1967, when Israel occupied the territory following the Six Day War. Jewish settlers, however, who reside within the bounds of the West Bank, in violation of international law, are subject to the Israeli civilian legal framework. Accordingly, Israel operates two separate legal systems in the same territory. Palestinian children who live in Jerusalem generally fall under Israeli civilian law.

Israel has the dubious distinction of being the only country in the world that automatically and systematically prosecutes children in military courts that lack fundamental fair trial rights and protections. Israel prosecutes between 500 and 700 Palestinian children in military courts each year.

Children typically arrive to interrogation bound, blindfolded, frightened, and sleep deprived.

Children often give confessions after verbal abuse, threats, physical and psychological violence that in some cases amounts to torture.

Israeli military law provides no right to legal counsel during interrogation, and Israeli military court judges seldom exclude confessions obtained by coercion or torture.

Of nearly 600 Palestinian children detained by Israeli forces from the occupied West Bank and prosecuted in Israeli military courts between 2012 and 2016, DCIP found that:

- **72 percent** experienced **physical violence** following arrest
- **95 percent** were **handtied**
- **85 percent** were **blindfolded**
- **45 percent** were detained from their **homes in the middle of the night**
- **66 percent** faced **verbal abuse, humiliation, or intimidation**
- **96 percent** were interrogated **without the presence of a family member**
- **25 percent** were subject to **stress positions**
- **38 percent** signed **documents in Hebrew**, a language most Palestinian children don't understand

The No Way to Treat a Child campaign seeks to challenge and end Israel's military occupation of Palestinians by exposing widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in the Israeli military detention system. It is a project of [Defense for Children International - Palestine](http://www.dci-palestine.org) and the [American Friends Service Committee](http://www.afsc.org).

Learn more at: www.nowaytotreatachild.org | www.dci-palestine.org | www.afsc.org

Since 2000, an estimated 10,000 Palestinian children have been detained by Israeli forces from the occupied West Bank and held in the Israeli military detention system.

Israel in 1991 ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which requires that children should only be deprived of their liberty as a measure of last resort, must not be unlawfully or arbitrarily detained, and must not be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

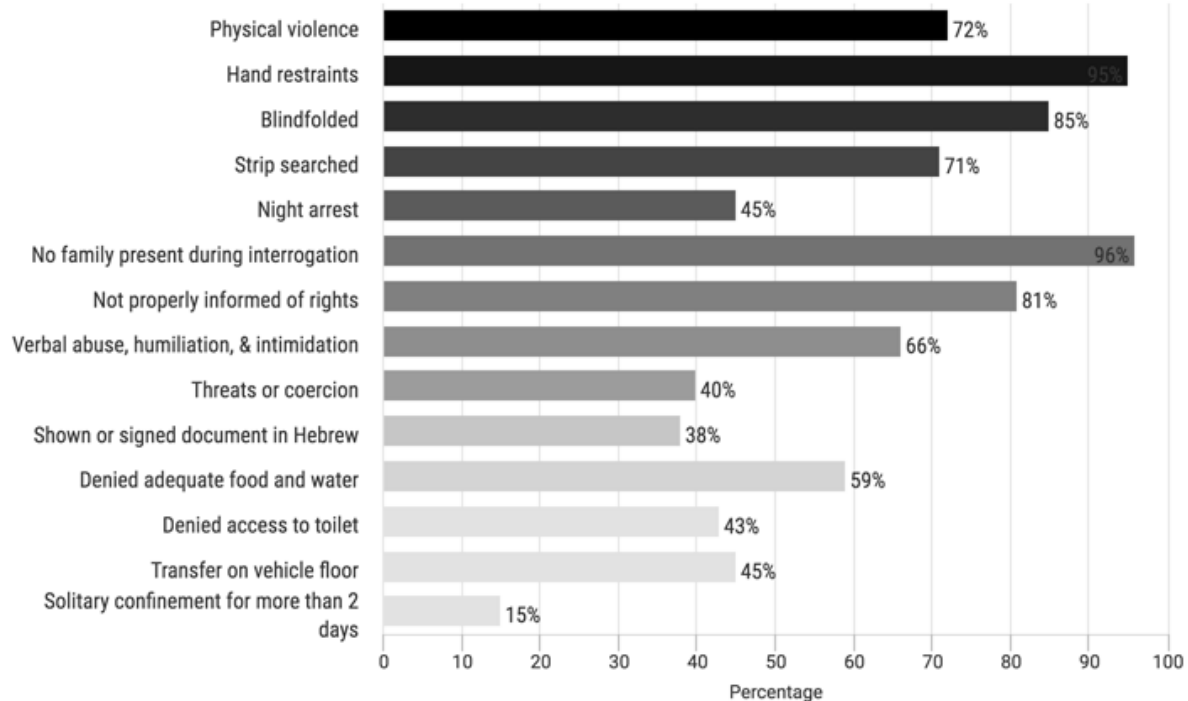
Despite sustained engagement by UNICEF and repeated calls to end night arrests and ill treatment and torture of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention, Israeli authorities have persistently failed to implement practical changes to stop violence against child detainees.

Reforms undertaken by Israeli military authorities so far have tended to be cosmetic in nature rather than substantively addressing physical violence and torture by Israeli military and police forces.

» For more information, go to www.nowaytotreatachild.org or www.dci-palestine.org.

Ill-treatment of Palestinian child detainees by Israeli forces

Israel prosecutes between 500 and 700 Palestinian children in a military court system each year that lacks basic fair trial guarantees and is notorious for widespread, systematic, and institutionalized ill-treatment of Palestinian child detainees. Defense for Children International - Palestine (DCIP) collected 590 sworn affidavits from Palestinian children detained by Israeli forces from the occupied West Bank between 2012 and 2016. The data below shows the types of ill-treatment reported by these children.



Source: Defense for Children International - Palestine (DCIP)