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*"The real occupation is the occupation of the minds of children who are taught hatred."*  
– Walid Shoebat, former PLO terrorist



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## Palestinian Areas

### Trends

### Exploiting Youth for Terror

Compiled by Teach Kids Peace  
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As part of the practice of including children in violent activities and in terror-supporting operations, Palestinian youth are often sent to participate in demonstrations and in confrontations with the Israeli army (at times they are taken out of school and bussed in for this purpose).


Palestinian groups also use children for smuggling, digging tunnels, spying and intelligence-gathering. The terrorists exploit their innocent appearance, which allows them to pass more easily through IDF roadblocks and to approach soldiers and Israeli settlements, the fact that they are easy to influence and recruit because of their tender age and the intensive incitement to which they have been exposed, and the tendency of Israeli soldiers to refrain from harming children.

Accordingly, the PA has adopted a public relations strategy that emphasizes the role of children and youth in the Intifada, while exploiting the injuries caused by the IDF (unwittingly) or by Palestinian fire to children caught in the midst of the fighting. As part of this strategy, Israel is often presented on television as a "conqueror without restraints" who does not think twice about hurting children while, to strengthen the message, horrific pictures of dead and wounded children are shown in the background. Some of the children killed at the beginning of the Intifada have been turned into symbols of the Palestinian struggle, and books, articles, songs and movies have been devoted to them. Their deaths have been exploited for profit on the world public opinion market, to fan the flames of hatred and revenge and to cultivate the Palestinian street's consciousness of the violent struggle.


Palestinian Police commissioner Ghazi el-Jebali issued guidelines in 2002 stating that school children should not be sent to confrontation areas, in order not to endanger them. However, by not taking effective steps to keep children and youth out of the violence, the PA has ensured that these guidelines remain on paper only.

**ATTEMPTED ATTACKS BY PALESTINIAN CHILDREN (PARTIAL LIST):**


- **April 2005:** A 15-year-old Palestinian carrying five pipe bombs was arrested by soldiers at the Hawara checkpoint outside of Nablus when he attempted to detonate one of the bombs near them. Soldiers' suspicions were aroused when the youth reached the checkpoint wearing a coat despite the hot weather. The soldiers stopped him and asked him to remove his coat; he lit a match in an attempt to detonate one of the bombs but dropped it when a soldier aimed his weapon at him. Inside the coat soldiers found four other pipe bombs. (Jpost.com)
- **February 2005:** A 15-year-old Palestinian was arrested at the Hawara



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checkpoint outside of Nablus, after he tried to smuggle an explosive belt in his bag. A homemade weapon was also found in his bag, in addition to 20 bullets. The youth raised the suspicion of one of the soldiers. During a search of his belongings, a ready to be used bomb-belt was discovered.

• **March 2004:** A 14-year-old Palestinian was stopped before he could blow himself up at the Hawara checkpoint outside of Nablus. The quick thinking of paratroopers at the checkpoint stopped Husam Abdu, 14, who was wearing a belt of explosives containing eight kilograms of explosives, plus bolts and screws.



The boy was standing in line with other Palestinians, some 20 meters from the spot where they are checked by the soldiers. The soldiers noticed him suddenly pushing out of line and spotted a suspicious bulge under his clothes. They ordered him to stop. The soldiers took cover behind concrete barricades, pointed their guns at him, and told him to remove his shirt. The explosives belt was then visible. Many of the Palestinians waiting in line meanwhile fled the scene. A police remote-controlled robot was brought in, carrying large scissors. The soldiers then gave the boy instructions how to cut the belt off his body.

The boy, who had learning disabilities and was teased in school, said he wanted to be a hero. He said his terrorist handlers promised him that his mother would receive about \$20, and that the money was supposed to go to his mother. He was also promised to receive 72 virgins in paradise if he became a "jihad" martyr and died while killing Israelis.

• **March 2004:** An 11-year-old Palestinian boy, Abdullah Kuran, was stopped at the Hawara checkpoint with explosives stashed in several bags. He was supposed to pass through checkpoint and hand them to a woman waiting on the other side for five shekels. Unaware that one of the bags contained a 10-kilo bomb, he was stopped by soldiers who discovered it during a routine inspection.

A military policewoman at the checkpoint spotted wires protruding from the bag and stopped Abdullah. The explosive belt was packed with nuts and bolts, which militants use to make bombs deadlier, and connected to a cellular telephone. When Kuran's dispatchers saw he had been stopped, they attempted to detonate the bomb by cellphone — i.e. to use the youth as a homicide bomber, without his knowledge — but failed.

• **February 2004:** Three Palestinian boys, ages 13, 14 and 16, were arrested at the Jalameh roadblock. The three had in their possession makeshift firearms, and admitted their intent to carry out a suicide attack in Afula. They told investigators that they had been recruited by a local Islamic Jihad official, and left a letter requesting that no one mourn for them because they would become shaheeds. The boys were identified as Jaffer Hussein, 13, Tarek Abu Mahsen, 14, and Ibrahim Suafta, 16, all from the West Bank village of Tubas.

• **January 2003:** Two Palestinian brothers, aged 14 and 17, infiltrated the Israeli settlement of Netzarim armed with knives. The two were lightly wounded prior to their capture.

• **January 2003:** Three Palestinian youths aged 15 and 16 were shot by security forces who spotted them as they attempted to enter Elei Zahav. Security forces found knives on the bodies.

• **July 2002:** Two boys, both 11 years old and carrying knives, were apprehended by Israeli security forces near the Dugit outpost. They planned to plant a bomb in the area, and one of the youths stated that he wished to commit suicide and had hoped to be killed by IDF fire.

- **July 2002:** A 17-year-old boy from Jenin was arrested. He had agreed to carry out a suicide attack within Israel, and was given two options: either a suicide attack in a crowded area using an explosive charge, or to enter Israel with a weapon and open fire at a crowd of civilians. The youth said he preferred the shooting attack, so that his body remain whole for his arrival in heaven. The youth then videotaped himself reciting his last will and testament, holding a Koran and a rifle. The youth attempted twice, unsuccessfully, to enter Israel.

- **July 2002:** Israeli security forces arrested another 15-year-old Palestinian girl who admitted to having agreed to carry out a suicide attack in Israel.

- **June 2002:** A 15-year-old Palestinian girl, arrested for throwing a firebomb at IDF soldiers, admitted during interrogation that she had previously been recruited as a suicide terrorist.

- **May 2002:** A 16-year-old resident of the Askar refugee camp was arrested while traveling in a taxi and carrying an explosive charge. He said that at age 14 he was recruited by Hamas, and he agreed to carry out a suicide attack. On the day of his arrest, he had a haircut, put on the explosive charge, was videotaped reading his last will and testament. Two individuals transported him to Jenin in a taxi, where he was arrested by the IDF.

- **April 2002:** Three Palestinian children, students at a Gaza school, attempted to crawl under the perimeter fence and perpetrate a suicide attack on the Jewish community of Netzarim, only to be shot dead by guards. The three were Ismail Soubh Ibrahim Abu Nada, age 12, Wael Ghazi Moustafa Hamarna, age 13, and Yousef Bassam Yousef Zakout, age 14. The following day, the Hamas Internet site announced that the three, who were sent by the Hamas, each left behind a last will and testament stressing their desire to die a martyr's death.

- **April 2002:** Ahmed Salmi, 16 years old, a resident of Sheikh Radwan/Gaza, was killed by IDF forces near the Dugit outpost. Two pipe bombs, a bottle of gunpowder, and a map of the Gaza Strip on which Israeli towns were marked, were found on his body.

- **April 2002:** A 15-year-old Palestinian girl was arrested in Bethlehem, and confessed that she had been recruited into the Fatah's al-Aqsa Brigades by her uncle, a senior Tanzim activist and bomb manufacturer from Bethlehem. Her uncle promised to supply her with an explosive belt and asked her to recruit additional girls from her school to carry out terrorist attacks. The girl's younger sister discovered her plans and told their mother.

- **March 2002:** Bilal Wagia Kamel Walid-Ali, age 17 from Jenin, was arrested after attempting to perpetrate a suicide attack using a booby-trapped bird cage in the town of Karkur. On the day of the attack, Bilal was given a Kalashnikov rifle and was videotaped taking responsibility for the terrorist attack. He then dressed in an explosive charge and placed another charge in the birdcage. Bilal was then instructed to detonate both charges simultaneously once he arrived at his target area or in the event he was caught. Upon Bilal's arrival in Karkur, he was caught and arrested.

- **March 2002:** Ghassan Mahmoud Naif Steiti, age 17 from the Jenin refugee camp, was arrested in Ramallah. Terrorists from Jenin, with connections in Ramallah, proposed that he perpetrate a suicide attack. Ghassan was then videotaped reciting his last will and testament and taking responsibility for the attack on behalf of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Ghassan left in order to perpetrate the suicide attack in Tel-Aviv. On his way he noticed combat helicopters, was afraid that they were following him and postponed the attack. A few days later he attempted to travel to Tel-Aviv in order to carry out the attack, however the road was blocked and he returned to Ramallah. The third time he attempted to perpetrate the attack, he was stopped and arrested.

• **February 2002:** Nora Shalhoob, a 16-year-old Palestinian girl, was killed while charging a group of Israeli soldiers at a military checkpoint with a knife in her hand.

• **February 2002:** A 16-year-old Palestinian boy, resident of Tulkarem, was arrested on his way to carry out a suicide attack on behalf of the Hamas and Fatah. In addition, he mentioned that he had spoken before his entire school class, and announced that he was planning to carry out a terrorist attack and that he might not return. He requested that his classmates leave his seat empty and place flowers on his chair every day. Tanzim supplied him with the explosive charge and directed him to carry out the attack at a bus stop within Israel, between two buses, or to board a crowded bus and blow himself up. During the course of the arrest the youth attempted unsuccessfully to detonate the explosive charge.

• **February 2002:** Tawfiq Hashem Mahamid and Jalal Khalil Mahamid, both age 17 from Jenin, were killed as a result of an explosion in a vehicle near Mei Ami. The two were on their way to carry out a terrorist attack in a Tel Aviv nightclub, under the direction of Islamic Jihad.

• **August 2001:** A 15-year-old Palestinian boy was caught while attempting to carry out a suicide attack in the Beit Shean area. He said that he was a member of Islamic Jihad, all of whose members were prepared to commit suicide attacks. Another youth, also 16 years old, had recruited him to carry out the suicide attack.

• **July 2001:** Jihad Gawdat Mohammad Jarrar, was 17 years old when he was caught on his way to perpetrate a suicide attack in Afula on behalf of the Islamic Jihad. He was carrying a bag that contained an explosive charge, and was instructed to travel to Afula and detonate that explosive charge in a crowded area. He confessed that he started to think of carrying out terrorist attacks at the age of 12. At age 14 he manufactured an improvised rifle and purchased ammunition.

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