

## **ONE THIRD OF STUDENTS FEEL HOLOCAUST FABRICATED OR EXAGGERATED**

*New Survey Finds 40% Get Information About Holocaust on Social Media*

**(TORONTO) January 26, 2022** - A new survey of almost 3,600 North American students has revealed shortcomings in Holocaust education, finding that social media is a significant source of information for the students — 33% of whom questioned whether the Holocaust even happened.

The study was commissioned by Canadian charity Liberation75 and led by Dr. Alexis M. Lerner of Western University. Students in Grades 6 to 12 were surveyed twice — once before a two-day virtual conference focused on Holocaust education, and once after — to assess what they know and think about the Holocaust and antisemitism. Students from Canadian classrooms made up 78.6% of respondents.

These recent findings, combined with the growing influence of “fake news,” underscore the importance of requiring fact-based instruction about the Holocaust in schools. **No Canadian province or territory mandates Holocaust education as part of their secondary school curriculum.** In the United States, 22 states require Holocaust education as part of their secondary school curriculum.

“It’s terribly concerning to see so many young people questioning the very existence of the Holocaust and getting their information about the Holocaust from social media,” said Marilyn Sinclair, Founder of Liberation75, an Ontario-based charitable organization committed to Holocaust education and remembrance. “We are calling on provincial and territorial governments across Canada to mandate teaching of the Holocaust and antisemitism within curricula to ensure our youth know about the dangers of what happens when hate goes unchecked and we don’t stand up for each other.”

More survey findings:

- 32.9% feel the Holocaust was exaggerated or fabricated, or were unsure if it actually happened
- Just 54% knew how many Jews were killed
- 42% of students said they have unequivocally witnessed an antisemitic event, even though the vast majority of study participants self-identified as non-Jewish. In addition to the traditional antisemitic tropes, examples included hearing jokes about Jewish people being put into ovens, celebrations of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting, and hateful comments on social media or gaming platforms.
- After experiencing the educational treatment, students were 9% more likely to intervene if they observed an antisemitic event occurring.

The survey also showed a desire among students for more facts, with **92% wanting to know more about the Holocaust.**

“Our study shows that providing Holocaust literacy to our students has the potential to prevent bullying, discrimination, and intergroup conflicts. It’s up to us to give our youth the tools to build a strong, peaceful and educated society,” said Sinclair.

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**Full study results: [www.liberation75.org/survey](http://www.liberation75.org/survey)**