

# Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM



Mayolita Gaines holds a memorial poster of her daughter Harmony Washington on her balcony in Waukegan. The poster was made by Harmony's sister Nia after Harmony's suicide at age 10. Looking on are Harmony's siblings Quenta, 9, and Lacole, 7. **STACEY WESCOTT/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## UNTIMELY GRIEF

As suicide deaths become more common among young kids in Illinois, a Waukegan mom mourns her 10-year-old daughter

By **Rebecca Johnson** | Chicago Tribune

On her drive to work, Mayolita Gaines pulls up on her phone a playlist of music that's dominated by one artist. Songs by rapper Rod Wave pour out of her car's speakers, including "Come See Me," the one that's most meaningful to the mom of seven.

Gaines' daughter, Harmony Rose Washington, died by suicide in Waukegan seven months ago, just days after her 10th birthday. The girl was a huge fan of Wave, so much so that she forced her siblings to memorize his lyrics prior to attending his Chicago concert last November.

Before the concert started, Harmony wasn't in the best mood, but when he performed "Come See Me," Gaines said her daughter jumped out of her seat and started singing along. It's the song Gaines said she returns to when

she wants to remember happy moments.

"The way I recorded her was like a scene from a movie, where she was so excited," Gaines, 36, recalled. "When he started singing the song, she just screamed. You can hear the love and happiness coming out of her screams when he walked out on stage."

After losing her daughter, Gaines said she's felt sadness, grief and, at times, guilt. Gaines isn't alone in her experience. Suicide among young people is a "challenging and prevalent problem," with Black and LGBTQ+ kids, who are at disproportionate risk nationally and in Chicago, according to Dr. Aron Janssen, a vice chair at the psychiatry and behavioral health department

at Lurie Children's Hospital.

In Illinois, Janssen said suicide is the second-leading cause of death among kids aged 10 to 14, and the third-leading cause of death for young people aged 10 to 24. In the past decade, Janssen said the number of suicide attempts and deaths by suicide have increased among young kids. What was once a "very rare event historically," is becoming more common, he added.

"We don't really have a great understanding of why that is," Janssen said. "I think partially it's that a lot of the interventions and processes that we have in place to screen for suicide have historically been built for older adolescents

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## Hezbollah hits back, firing rockets

All-out war with Israelis appears to be only steps away

By **Natalie Melzer** and **Kareem Chehayeb**  
Associated Press

NAHARIYA, Israel — Hezbollah fired over 100 rockets early Sunday across northern Israel, with some landing near Haifa, as Israel launched hundreds of strikes on Lebanon. A Hezbollah leader declared an "open-ended battle" was underway as both sides appeared to be spiraling closer toward all-out war.

The overnight rocket barrage was in response to Israeli attacks in Lebanon that have killed dozens, including a veteran Hezbollah commander, and an unprecedented attack targeting the group's communications devices. Air raid sirens across northern Israel sent hundreds of thousands of people scrambling into shelters.

One rocket struck near a residential building in Kiryat Bialik, a city near Haifa, wounding at least three people and setting buildings and cars ablaze. Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service said four people were wounded.

Avi Vazana raced to a shelter with his wife and 9-month-old child before he heard the rocket hitting. Then he went back outside to see if anyone was hurt.

"I ran without shoes, without a shirt, only with pants. I ran to this house when everything was still on fire to try to find if there are other people," he said.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said three people were killed and four wounded in Israeli strikes near the border, without saying whether they were civilians or combatants.

Late Sunday night, Hezbollah announced a series of strikes on military sites in northern Israel

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### INSIDE

#### Haitians denounce Trump comments

Several dozen Haitians and allies gathered on Federal Plaza in Chicago on Sunday afternoon to rally against former President Donald Trump's unfounded claim that Haitians had eaten pets in Ohio. **Chicagoland**

#### Candidates score low as Christians

Only 14% of U.S. adults in a new survey say the word "Christian" describes Vice President Kamala Harris or former President Donald Trump "extremely" or "very" well. **Nation & World**

#### Riot Fest draws crowds to its usual location

The three-day festival of punk, hip-hop and alternative music took place in Chicago's Douglass Park over the weekend after almost moving out to the suburbs. **Arts & Living**



EILEEN T. MESLAR/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

#### Bears blame 'missed opportunities' in loss

Mistakes doomed the Bears on Sunday at Lucas Oil Stadium, and the Colts pulled off a 21-16 victory. Quarterback Caleb Williams, above, totaled 363 passing yards and threw two touchdown passes but committed two interceptions. **Chicago Sports**



Jackson Pedron, 41, from Venezuela, stands near a migrant shelter where he lives with his family in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago on Sept. 13. **ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

## Couple find joy amid hardship

After a treacherous, monthslong journey from Venezuela to Chicago, migrant amputee marries longtime love: 'She's my life. My everything.'

By **Nell Salzman**  
Chicago Tribune

On a sunny day in Little Village in September, Jackson Pedron and his wife, Carolina Hidalgo, stood next to each other and prayed, as they have done thousands of times before.

They raised up their hands. Under a large white tent in a park-

ing lot, heat radiated from the concrete. A pastor for New Life Centers stood at the front of the church gathering and reminded people in the crowd to treasure where they came from. "Your culture is a gift from God," he said.

Pedron and his wife have known each other for 24 years but didn't get married until they walked to Chicago from Venezu-

ela with their four children in the fall of last year. They had planned to for years, but never actually went through with it until they made it here safely.

Pedron lost his leg a quarter century ago in Caracas after a group of men shot him. Unable to get proper treatment, about a

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