

Your support helps us overcome the unexpected.



Life is Full of the Unexpected

Read about how your donations are being put to work for our long-term programs and for our new recipients, a poverty-stricken family who found themselves in an unexpected tragic situation, and Padma, a homeless woman who now lives in a house!

Strength through Tragedy

Rarely do we encounter a story as tragic as Sitaram's. Please take a minute to read the details of Sitaram and his family, who have faced challenges this year that few of us can imagine.

We Met Them in June 2015

Poondev and Rani Devi are laborers who migrated from Bihar, a poor state in northern India, to work in Karnataka. As many laborers do, they lived with their two younger sons in a temporary room on the construction site at which they worked. In January, their eldest son, Sitaram (age 15), came from Bihar to visit.

One night, Sitaram turned on his charging mobile phone to listen to some songs. The voltage in these makeshift housing arrangements are typically unstable, likely from a cobbled-together electrical connection. Whatever the reason, the mobile phone exploded when Sitaram pressed the "on" button. The explosion



Sitaram loves animals and volunteers at our neighbors, the animal shelter

devastated his facial structure, leaving him in an immediate life-or-death situation.

After his first set of surgeries and four months in a hospital, Sitaram was discharged but the family had nowhere to go and no money. When we met the family in June, Poondev (father) and Rani Devi (mother) had sold their possessions just to be able to feed their sons. The family was living on the street near our Project Street location in the city. Soon after we met them, Sitaram's grandmother in Bihar died.

Then, in late July, mom Rani was diagnosed with leukemia. Sitaram and his family came to stay at our home, Rani is on treatment, and she and Poondev help out with our kids and with work around the home. We admitted Sitaram's two younger brothers to a very good English medium school, and Sitaram receives tutoring at Karunya Mane and treatment for PTSD from an excellent child psychiatrist in Mysore.

For more on the story:

[India Today](#)

[Times of India](#)

Sitaram's upcoming surgeries are being covered by the government hospital in Mysore. He needs extensive reconstructive work to restore his nose, teeth, lips, and tongue. His mouth is so damaged that he can't control his saliva, and he eats lying down. Because he has no teeth, his mom feeds him food that has been blended or chopped into tiny pieces.

Sitaram is a strong boy, physically and mentally. The explosion and subsequent treatment (he lost 25% of his body weight in four months) should have killed him, but today he helps out at Karunya Mane and plays cricket like a fiend with our older boys. Sitaram laughs a lot, claims to understand English perfectly (not yet!), and plays tricks on others. He's also very interested in continuing his education.

We are asking for your assistance in raising \$8,000 (5 lakhs rupees) to place in a long-term account for Sitaram. The principle won't be touched and the interest will supplement any future income that Sitaram earns to help him with housing, provisions, and medical care when he is an adult. Interest rates are attractive in India, so he can live off the funds for a long time. To donate to this special cause, please indicate that the funds are for Sitaram. You may make your donation [here](#).



Cleaning the bird cage



Rani, Silta, and Poondev in Aug. 2015

To date, we have raised approximately \$3,600 for Sitaram's future. Any funds raised for Sitaram over and above the stated target of \$8,000 will be put toward our charitable efforts in Mysore.

Donate \$25 or More in November and December and Get an Operation Shanti 2016 Calendar -- Featuring Our Kids!



Receive a 2016 calendar featuring our kids by making a donation of \$25 or more in November and December 2015.

These calendars make great holiday gift items!

To donate, tap [here](#).

Our Girls Rock!

Shanti has lived at Karunya Mane since 2008. She has been an average to below-average student for many years and seemed to lack focus and the burning desire to learn -- although she attended school diligently.

However, this past year, on her final exam in 7th grade, Shanti's grades jumped up, from low Bs to As and A+s! We were



pleasantly surprised.

Shanti then repeated the same outstanding performance on the first unit test in 8th grade this past July (school starts in June in south India). We have also noticed that Shanti is more self-confident and sure of herself, and we're so glad for her that she's maintaining her improved performance in school.



Manjula, who began her PUC (11th grade) science program in June in English medium -- it was her decision to make the big jump from Kannada medium to English medium -- is doing very well in her new school, and was one of the top performers on her first unit test.

Manjula works hard in school, starting with two hours of special tutoring every morning from 5:30 to 7:30. She then finishes her morning chores, has breakfast, and gets ready for school. After a full day of school and one hour of tutoring after school, she has her dinner, hangs out with her friends at Karunya Mane, and then starts her homework.



Manjula and her tutor, Savita Miss

Manjula is our third oldest girl and she and her older sister Suma, who is in 12th grade pursuing a commerce degree, have set an example for our other girls. Before Manjula's accomplishments in school, none of the girls considered pursuing a science degree. Arts and commerce are the easier paths to take, and are the defaults for kids like ours from poor socio-economic backgrounds.

Science is what the middle- and upper-class kids study, and they aim to become doctors or engineers. Several of our girls are now talking about going the science route after 10th grade.

These changes in attitudes and beliefs are what we strive to achieve with our kids, particularly our girls.

\$25 Sponsors an HIV+ Child for a Month for Life-saving Medication

Significant progress has been made in India on reducing the instances of HIV infections. Generally, the kids we help in our Project Food and More look healthier and some are even starting college!

However, recent Indian government cuts in the budget for HIV treatment and prevention put the progress to date at risk -- and this in a country in which 90% of those infected do not know that they are infected.

This budgetary reduction is translating into detrimental effects, such as salaried workers at HIV centers not being paid, outreach and prevention programs being slashed, and shortages of HIV diagnostic kits.

How can you help?

As a new initiative, we are assisting our PFM kids with second-line antiretroviral medication. The first-line therapy -- provided free by the government -- has stopped working for these kids. Sadly, the second-line therapy is not free so we are covering the cost of this medication -- about Rs.1,500 or \$25 per month -- because their guardians can't afford it. Without their ART, these kids face a significantly shortened lifespan.

Currently, we provide second-line ART to seven kids and one destitute woman, and we expect this number to grow as more children require the next stage of



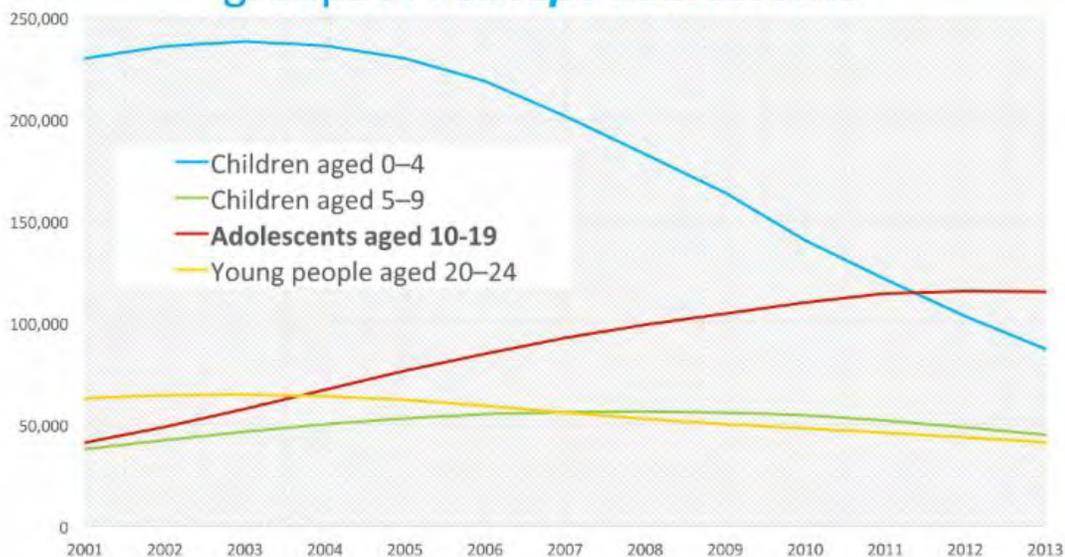
The mother of one of our younger kids in our PFM program. Mom and dad, daily laborers in the slum, are frequently too sick to work and their daughter, age 5, is on antiretroviral medication.

their treatment.

If you'd like to sponsor a PFM child's supply of second-line antiretrovirals for \$25 a month, you may make a donation [here](#).

According to UNICEF, in low- and middle-income countries (including India), less than 1 in 4 children living with HIV/AIDS received antiretroviral treatment in 2013, and AIDS-related deaths are declining rapidly for all age groups, **except for adolescents**.

AIDS-related deaths are declining rapidly for all age groups . . . *except adolescents*



Estimated number of AIDS-related deaths among children aged 0-9, adolescents aged 10-19 and young people aged 20-24, 2001-2013

Source: UNICEF analysis of UNAIDS 2013 HIV and AIDS estimates, July 2014.

Spread the Word

We recently came across some really great videos on the TeachAIDS website. The videos deliver basic information on HIV and AIDS to students, workers, educators, employees, and people living in rural and urban communities.

The great thing about these videos is that they are easy for anyone to understand and are available in a variety of local languages.

Click here to access these free, very informative videos:

[HIV learning videos from TeachAIDS](#)

Reading, Jogging, and Performing in School!

Here are just a few bits of news on what's going on with the kids at Karunya Mane.

The kids really enjoy their little library and having immediate access to books. They like to read during their free time or right before tutoring while waiting for their teachers. Favorites are big encyclopedia-like picture books and, of course, the Chhota Bheem series.



Library at Karunya Mane

Although he doesn't know we know, Surya (our 6th grade genius) sneaks a Chhota Bheem comic storybook in his schoolbag to share with his friends at school!

The kids jog every morning right after waking up at 5:00 a.m. and before taking their morning bath. Earlier this year, one of the older boys dug a jogging path around the garden, and the kids do five laps for some cardio. We wanted to introduce a cardiovascular activity into their daily lives and hope that the habit stays with them for their lifetimes.

Four of our ninth graders received special attention at the beginning of this school year (in June). Prema was elected class monitor, Mamatha and Prajwal earned 1st ranking after the first unit test, and Pavan earned a 2nd ranking.



The jogging path

Second graders Umesh and Nagaratna got 100% on their first unit test. In third grade, little Vishnu got 91% and Yashavantha got 98%. The little ones are so mischievous and energetic all the time, at least some of that is translating into good school performance at a young age!



Mamatha and Prema



Pavan and Prajwal

At their new English medium school, Manu and Chinmaye were asked to perform at the school day event in September, a day-long program of performances from students. Our kids are often asked to perform at their school day events, probably because they love to sing and dance and show off!

Chinmaye, who underwent an operation this past June for a small growth on her mandible, has fully recovered and is doing very well.



Fourth grader Manu (center)



First grader Chinmaye (left)

Coming to Mysore?

If you're coming to Mysore soon and can carry a play ball for us (from the U.S.), we'd really appreciate it! The balls are the size of a regular soccer ball or volleyball but can't be deflated (part of their charm given the rough terrain that the kids play on). We need some help transporting these play balls to Mysore so the kids and their friends can enjoy



them.

Shoot us an email at info@operation-shanti.org if you can help out! Thanks!

Project Street: Padma has a House!

Padma has a house! Padma is a new addition to our Project Street program. She was brought to us by another of our street moms, and was sleeping on the streets or outside her sister's house because she was not allowed inside. Padma is battling two serious health conditions, but is improving a lot and taking her medication without fail. Thanks to your support, she's now living in a house that we rented for her in her neighborhood.



More Project Street News

We are sad to report that Mahadeva Nayak, the elderly destitute man whom we were helping, died recently. We are continuing to support his mother, who now has no one.

Ranga, the young man admitted to the tuberculosis hospital, also passed away recently. Although he was getting treatment, his body could no longer sustain the damage from the disease.

High Quality Cloth Pads from The Pad Station in Suisun City, California!

Earlier this year, a friend of ours offered to make a few cloth sanitary pads for our girls and women in Mysore. She makes them for another organization but wanted to improve on the quality -- and did she! Our girls have been using the cloth pads for several months now and love them. They are more comfortable than the disposable plastic-lined pads, are easily washed and dried, and save on the cost of purchasing pads.



Next step: our girls will introducing our street and slum women to these cloth pads! Stay tuned!



Our Ambassadors In Action Again!

A big thanks to Kavitha Mahtre, our new ambassador based in Bangalore, who is the driving force behind #GoKavitha, an effort to raise funds for Operation Shanti in conjunction with her next marathon! Thanks Kavitha for your continued support of our charity work.

We welcome Madhusudan Pattanaik as an Operation Shanti ambassador. Madhusudan has been helping us since he first met our kids years ago at a local hospital in Mysore (the kids were getting their physical exams). He was curious about their lives at our children's home and, since then, has made several contributions to our efforts, even after moving from Mysore to Bangalore for his career. Madhusudan spreads the word about our work and assists with local fundraising in India. A lifelong supporter and participant in charitable activities throughout India, we appreciate Madhusudan's continuing efforts to help our kids improve their day-to-day lives.



Most Recent Annual Report

Our most recent annual report (2014-15) and IRS 990 (2014) are available on our website. To view these documents, please tap here: [990 and annual](#).

Operation Shanti believes:

Everyone should have the opportunity to live to their potential.

Every day we provide essential human services--food, shelter, educational and medical assistance--because only after their basic needs are met can the destitute begin to help themselves.

[Visit Our Website](#)

Thank you for reading our newsletter! Please send any questions, concerns or feedback to info@operation-shanti.org.

Peace,
Operation Shanti

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