



Dear Operation Shanti,

Haven't the past 10 years just flown by?

We started our work 10 years ago on the streets of Mysore, with our first group of kids who lived there with their moms. Most of these kids are still with us at [Karunya Mane](#) and are enjoying a childhood and their teenage years away from home. Our oldest kids have completed high school and are deciding on the next steps in their lives.

Making such choices can be both exciting and daunting -- no one else in their families has ever had the choice of going to college or vocational school; becoming a teacher, policeman, accountant, or driver; or trying to be better examples than they had. They have younger siblings, cousins, and little friends at KM who are watching them grow up. On the streets, they had no such choices laid out for them -- and for some of the individuals whom we help today on the streets, they are living and dying on that painful path.

In this newsletter, we touch on some of the hardships that remain for the destitute in India, hardships that are too great for one organization to overcome but that tell us that we must continue to do what we can do for those we help, one at a time, whether through our [Project Food & More](#) program or [Project Street](#), or at our children's home. Every human life is precious and we do our best to live that belief everyday through our work.

We'll also update you on our kids' latest accomplishments. They and their moms have been working hard to improve their lives and are passing some critical milestones, particularly in their education.

There's never a dull moment when we're working with our kids and moms -- the poorest in their society -- and we look forward to

another 10+ years with them and other similar kids and women who need assistance to get on their feet, helping them change and live their own, hopefully improved, lives.

Fortunately, the mother and little brother of our Bhuvan, who is from Nepal, are safe and unharmed in their village. Our thoughts go out to those who have lost loved ones in the tragic earthquake that hit the country. We hope that the recovery is swift and efficient.

Thank you for your continuing support.

## REPORT CARDS 2014-2015



The school year ended in March and, with final grades in hand, we are pleased -- and a bit relieved -- to report that the kids did well in school.

The year was a bit of a challenge because the government's education department completely changed the curriculum, causing confusion even among schoolteachers. We were told that this year was a "transition" year to the new curriculum and teaching method (Educomp SmartClass) and that next year will be smoother. Let's hope so!

Nevertheless, most of our kids did well despite the adjustment to a new curriculum. Our primary and middle school students averaged 80% and our 8th

graders averaged 76%. Our 9th grader had a difficult year but passed and will receive one-on-one tutoring in 10th grade to help him pass the very important public examination at the end of the coming year.

Our youngest ones in kindergarten, Chinmaye, Venkatesh, and Jeevan got perfect scores! Guided by their fabulous tutor, Mamatha Miss, our five 4th-grade girls again excelled in all of their subjects, with a 92% average. Even Swarana, a self-proclaimed lover of Kannada (the local language) and not English, scored 96% in English.

## PROJECT HOME: SUMMER SCHOOL

## TWO NEW AMBASSADORS

### Dedicated and Experienced

We're pleased to name two additional Operation Shanti Ambassadors. These women have been involved with Operation Shanti for years and about their support for our work in a quiet, effective, and thoughtful manner.

Jo-Anne Aeria  
Kavitha Mahtre

Please see more information on our Ambassadors at [our website](#).

## COMING TO MYSORE CARRY A PLAYBALL FOR US?

Sixty-one playballs to transport to Mysore



The One World Play Project recently ran a campaign for Operation Shanti and we received 61 indestructible



Summer vacation in Mysore is in April and May of every year. As the kids get older, school subjects naturally become more difficult and schoolwork becomes more demanding. This year, during the two-month school break, we are holding summer school classes at Karunya Mane to give the kids -- particularly the older ones -- a chance to focus on their weaker subjects. For many of our kids, this subject is mathematics, and everyone needs extra help with English and Hindi.

Teachers with a specialty in a certain subject are helping the kids in their weak areas. Classes are held Monday through Friday from 2 to 6 pm. The little ones take a fun English class on M-W-F and get to nap and play otherwise. The older kids are busy brushing up on math, science, and social studies, in addition to their languages.

Thanks to our donors for providing us with the funds that we need to be able to conduct summer school and engage additional teacher time to bolster our kids' education, concentration, and learning habits. Our kids have always been eager students -- making our job easier because we have not had to deal with a child who simply does not want to learn or attend school -- but their difficult upbringing and the lack of proper nutrition and support early in life means that they have a lot of catching up to do to overcome these shortcomings to the greatest extent possible.

Your support is making this possible in the form of good food, excellent medical care, and a comprehensive educational program.



## PROJECT STREET: LINGERING PROBLEMS OF THE DESTITUTE

### Tuberculosis

World TB Day falls on March 24 each year, and numerous articles and publications have reported on the status of the disease in India:

balls! These balls are great -- don't need inflating and they last on tough terrain at our children's

The playballs have been delivered to our San Francisco address and we need people to carry one or two (or more?) with them when traveling to Mysore or Bangalore. Or, if your company frequently ships things to India (Bangalore, in particular), they can lend a helping hand.

Contact us at [info@operation-shanti.org](mailto:info@operation-shanti.org) for more information.

## SEARCHING FOR LAND

We have begun to search for a plot of land of our own (our current site is leased), which will allow us to establish a children's home for our kids in a place they can truly call their home.

Purchasing land in India is a complex and intricate, and time-consuming process. We are taking our time to ensure we find a site that best fits the needs of our kids, with careful consideration of feasibility, location, accessibility, and size.

We'll have updates for you as the process continues.



## SPONSOR AN OPERATION SHANTI

We are looking for sponsors for the education of our kids at our children's home.

- more than 2.3 million annual cases
- 40% of the entire population (480 million) carry the bacteria
- 300,000 annual deaths
- conflicting headlines ("Indian doctors find success in tackling the 'invisible burden' of tuberculosis," Reuters, March 24; "Missing the big picture in TB control," The Hindu, March 24)
- accounts for 1/10th of the diseases faced by children
- grossly deficient and obsolete diagnostic tools



**Mani**

During the past 10 years, we have seen the effects of TB on the women and children that we help -- the children have recovered because their mothers or we ensured compliance with their medication, two mothers recovered because of compliance, while a number of men and women -- most of them also alcoholics -- died because of lack of compliance.

Chengdu\* was a young street man whom our street mothers brought to us for help. Chengdu, who did not drink, was diagnosed with TB and we admitted him to a private, caring clinic and then to the TB hospital in Mysore, where he stayed for about a month. After he was discharged, he continued his medication for another two or three weeks (typical course is six months) but then disappeared. We couldn't find him, until this past November, when he resurfaced, still sick because he had stopped his treatment. But it was too late -- red tape, gross malnutrition, unreasonable hospital rules, apathy, and no support system -- he passed away in March.

In early March, we admitted another young man from the street, Ranga\*, to the TB hospital; so far, he's hanging in there.

### Alcoholism

Mani\* was a woman living on the street whom we had known for the past ten years and assisted several times with medical treatment. She was a chronic alcoholic and died this past March, not from TB but from the effects of long-term alcoholism combined with her living conditions.

Among the poor, alcoholism is a significant problem. Sometimes we admit the alcoholic to a local rehab center, other times they refuse any type of positive assistance and we must walk away. Most poor women in slums and villages give their earnings to their husbands who -- if an alcoholic -- abuse their wife if not given her earnings. We exercise judgment and discretion when faced with a destitute individual who is also an alcoholic -- a sad but necessary situation.

*\* Names were changed to protect the privacy of the individuals.*

## PROJECT FOOD & MORE: 2ND LINE THERAPY

Project Food & More continues its assistance to poverty-stricken HIV+ individuals with monthly care packages and funds to cover medical expenses. Currently, PFM helps 62 kids.



**Little Dhanalakshmi as a warrior for her school's "fancy dress"**

To sponsor a child, or to give 1 sponsorship, is \$33/month for months or \$400 (Rs.20,000) a time donation.

For more information on spon Operation Shanti child, click [h](#)

## MOTHER'S DAY IS SUNDAY, MAY 10



**Deepika, Chinmaye and Than mom**

As Mother's Day approaches, a gift to your mom that support Operation Shanti at the same time. Amazon donates a perce your purchases to your select charity. You can support Oper Shanti on Amazon.com at this

[Support Operation Shanti on /](#)

Recently, we've begun helping the kids in PFM who need second-line anti-retroviral therapy because the first-line treatment is failing them.

First-line treatment is free; however, free second-line treatment has yet to reach Mysore, so recipients must either go to Bangalore (a full day's trip or longer) to get their meds, or pay Rs.1,500 (\$25) a month for the pills -- an amount that they are unable to afford.



Until the free treatment is available in Mysore, your support is allowing us to obtain the second-line treatment for the kids in PFM who need it.

To read more or donate to PFM, please click [here](#). Thank you for helping our orphaned HIV+ kids and destitute adults extend their lifespans.

## UPDATE ON THE KIDS' SCHOOLS

We are careful about the schools that we select for our kids to attend because the schools need to understand their backgrounds but at the same time treat them fairly and with no favoritism or discrimination. So far, we've been pleased with our schools and are excited about some of the changes on the way.

### A Great Private School Expands

The top-tier private school that a few of our kids have been attending for the past five years has completed its beautiful new building -- and it sure is incredible! All of the kids are excited to begin using their new classrooms in June 2015, the start of the next school year.



### Special Needs Schooling

After completing her first year at her new school -- an open school for special needs kids -- Latha is enjoying herself and making new friends. The school's caring and open-minded attitude is a relief, as we now have a good relationship with a safe school for kids who need just a little more care during school hours. Latha enjoys her new school so much that we decided to admit one more girl there, Anusha.

Anusha lived with us during 2009-2011, then



moved to another children's home for special needs kids, because at the time no school near us would admit her. However, mom couldn't visit Anusha much because the new home is two hours away in a remote village.

This January, we took Anusha back at Karunya Mane and enrolled her in Latha's school. Anusha and Latha also get special tutoring every afternoon from an open-minded, flexible teacher. We thank their school and tutor for having the

patience and strength to educate our two girls who need just a little more help.

Latha's school is run as a non-profit organization. They admit children from all socio-economic backgrounds, and some are from single parent families. Next school year, and for as many years as we are able to, we have offered to help two of their poorest students with school fees, which are approximately \$375 (Rs.24,000). If you'd like to help with this effort, you may do so [here](#).



## INSIGHTS FROM A VISITOR

A young woman, Caroline Schlater, came to Mysore for the first time this past March to visit with her dad, who was practicing yoga at one of the popular yoga schools catering to westerners, and to experience India. Caroline and Stan visited our kids on a Sunday afternoon, and everyone had a great time.

Caroline wrote about her time with the kids at Karunya Mane:

"Meeting and playing with the children was an incredible experience I will never forget. From the moment we walked in they were smiling from ear-to-ear, eager to introduce themselves and show us around their home. All of the children were so gentle and kind. They took the time to ask us our names and birthdays, our favorite colors, where we were from, and much more. They excitedly showed us and explained some of the things they had been working on: school, artwork, karate, dancing, and yoga! As I connected with these children my heart was suddenly overwhelmed with gratitude.

To see these hopeful, enthusiastic, and loving children, even given some of their unfortunate circumstances, shows the strength and importance of the connection between this community and operation. I feel so grateful to have the life that I have been given, and also feel blessed for the ability to be able to travel the world to broaden my perspectives on life and bring that into my teachings. Even though this country is filled with poverty, corruption, and sadness there is also beauty and faith unlike anything I have ever witnessed."

For the full article, please click [here](#).

For information on visiting our kids, including visiting times and rules, please see our visitor policy [here](#).

## 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.

info@operation-shanti.org  
www.operationshanti.org

Stay I



Thank you for reading our newsletter! Please send any questions, concerns or feedback to [info@operation-shanti.org](mailto:info@operation-shanti.org)

Peace,  
Operation Shanti

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