

Dear Friends of Operation Shanti,

Individuals prosper when they have the capacity to help themselves and are provided the support that enables them to improve their lives and the lives of their children. Our efforts in the areas of medical, education, and housing are central to helping our individuals develop to their full potential. We were busy this past summer with our kids and moms in India. We'd like to share with you what we've been working on, to let you know how your contributions are being put to good use. Enjoy, and thank you for your continuing support.

Newcomers to Our Program

We work on the streets of Mysore to assist the people who have been in our program for two-and-a-half years, and to be there as a resource for newcomers looking for help and who have nowhere else to turn. This summer, we brought a few more into our Street People Program. Here are some of their stories.



Fatima and her family, including son Kaleem, daughter Muntaj, son-in-law Fairouz, and grand kids (Parveen, three years, and Imran, eighteen months), lived on the streets for years after Fatima's husband died. Fairouz works as a laborer and at night they slept near the Muslim temple for shelter. This summer, we helped them secure housing, helped Muntaj with a tubectomy, and enrolled Kaleem in boarding school.



Giriya, a young mother of son Surya, daughter Saumya and baby Darshan, begs for a living. She recently lost her house in a storm and was abandoned by her husband, not unusual for many street women. Recently, we helped mom secure a new house and assisted her with a tubectomy. Destitute, illiterate women in India who lose their husbands, like Giriya, often cannot earn an honest living and turn to prostitution as a way to survive. Now, Giriya can avoid that future, and with your support, she's able to create a better future for her kids.

Sadik, a fifteen-year-old boy, hangs out with his friends Leem and Nagraj. This summer, after they heard about our program, they started coming to see us every morning, for vitamins, a snack, and band-aids for their cuts and scrapes. Sadik's parents kicked him out of their house a couple of years ago, and he sleeps on the street with his friends. He earns money collecting used newspapers, cardboard boxes, and other similar materials, and makes four rupees (ten cents) per kilogram. Sadik is a great kid, well behaved and has had some schooling. Through our efforts and with your support, we believe that Sadik and the countless other street boys could greatly benefit from a city-based shelter for homeless kids.



Sadik at Yoga

Highlights



If we were to pick one of our moms for Mom of the Year award, we'd choose Kavita. All of our moms have shown great improvement in taking care of themselves and their kids, but Kavita has come a long way since we met her two years ago. Only 26, Kavita has had a difficult life. Her mom died when she was a child and her father kicked her out during her early teens, and she's had no proper guidance and support for most of her life. Kavita and her husband Rudra have a three-year-old boy who has several health challenges, due in part to mom's lack of education and mothering skills. In June this year, Kavita gave birth to another boy. We directed mom to proper counseling on taking care of her new baby and, with the generous support of her sponsor, she's getting the medicines she needs for her health situation. Today, baby Umesh is a healthy and thriving little one, and mom continues to demonstrate that she "gets it" by being attentive and by taking good care of both her boys.



This past May, the kids had the chance to make a video with two special visitors from the Reel Youth Film Festival project, a nonprofit based in Canada that showcases short films made by people 19 years and under. Mark and Erica from Reel Youth spent a week with our street kids, and had them film and talk about their lives. The film, "Goonda," is currently on tour with the Film Festival, and recently opening to a full house in Vancouver. Check back later on our website for more on how to view Goonda.

Sometimes it takes just one special person to change a destitute kid's life. Our kids are often viewed as hopeless and not worth helping because of their socioeconomic background. One of our fifth graders, Prema, is years behind in school because of her social status, lack of guidance and support, and a chronic ear infection. This summer, we were introduced to an amazing woman who immediately took Prema under her wing and has begun teaching her everything she should know---not just a formal education, but also valuable life lessons. We hope that you are as happy as we are to see Prema transform into a self-confident, happier and healthier nine-year-old, after just a few months with her tutor.



More Kids in Boarding School!



Pallavi 2006



Pallavi 2007

Left to right: Pallavi, Devaraj, Lokesh, Harish, Venkatesh, Kaleem, Parveen (visiting), Chumi, Nanjunda, Latta, Shweta, Pooja, Sharath. For more on each of the kids, and the kids who aren't able to attend school, please see our website.



This year, we admitted nine of our street kids to boarding school. JSS, a thousand-year-old charitable institution in India, runs the JSS Mahavidyapeetha school, specifically designed to give underprivileged children the chance for a good education. The kids, who we visit monthly with their moms, have all gained weight, are making new friends, and are now benefiting from a healthy environment in which to live and go to school.

How You Can Help

- We continue to raise funds for our Street People Program and our soon-to-be opened facility—Karunya Mane—a shelter for destitute kids and the elderly.
- If you are interested in sponsoring, see information on our Sponsor Program.
- With your support, we can help families like Kavita's and Girija's by providing basic yet life-saving medicines and much needed support.



- Give in other ways: host a luncheon, take up a collection at your school or workplace, write about us in your blog... be creative!
- To volunteer, contact us and tell us about your skills and interests.
- To all of you who have donated nonmonetary items, thank you again! We take art supplies, clothing, yoga mats, blankets, soap, furniture.

Make a Difference. Donate Today