



Child Haven International



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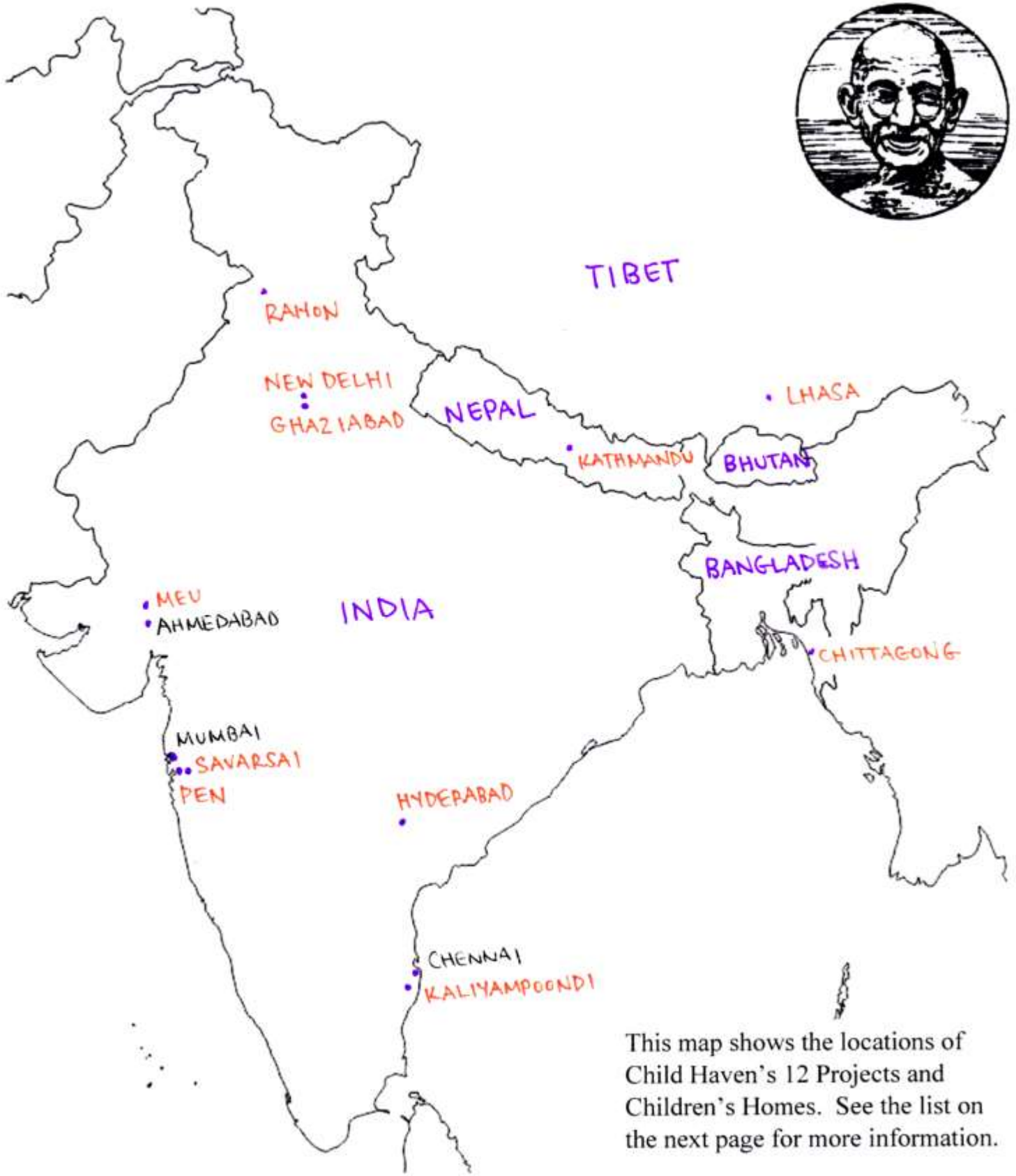
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March 2025



Kaliyampoondi – Some of our young scholars pose for the paparazzi as they gather for the walk down the road to school.

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This map shows the locations of Child Haven's 12 Projects and Children's Homes. See the list on the next page for more information.



Kaliyampoondi – Nothing like a good head scratch to trigger extra brain power! Lalin, holding the book in the head scratching pose, is 10 years old and in Grade 5. His younger brother Samen (not shown), is 8 and in the 3rd Grade. Child Haven makes every effort to keep siblings together! His class is having a study break on the basketball court along with other classes. Tutors, either staff from our Home, older students, or people hired from the community help each grade group do their work.

Child Haven Homes

Meu, Gujarat, India, 93 children 8 women, Language: Gujarati

Hyderabad, Telangana, India, 170 children 14 women, Language: Telugu

Kaliyampoondi, Tamil Nadu, India, 280 children 35 women, 35 Seniors, Language: Tamil

Maitreya Foundation, New Delhi, India, 24 children 1 woman, Language: Tibetan & Hindi

Savarsai, Maharashtra, India, 77 children 4 women, Language: Marathi

Tribal Home, City of Pen, near Savarsai Home, 63 children, Marathi plus Tribal languages

Kathmandu, Nepal, 203 children 22 women, Language: Nepali

Chittagong, Bangladesh, 70 children 15 women, Language: Bengali

(Hundreds of other children are sponsored for education, but are not living in one of our Homes.)

Women's Programs Child Haven Sponsors

Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, education in tailoring for 50 women at a time; Beauty and Wellness Course. Language: Hindi

Rahon, Punjab, education in tailoring for 50 women at a time. Language: Punjabi - Currently on hold

Kathmandu, Nepal, education in tailoring for women. Language: Nepali



Kaliyampoondi –

Sangeetha, left, is currently in her first year of pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Tamil. She is a full orphan and is being cared by her aunt (to her right). When she was in grade 9, her aunt, being very concerned about her future, arranged a marriage for her during a holiday visit home. When the Home heard about this, they were able to convince Sangeetha's aunt that Child Haven would provide for her until she completed her studies and that she would then be able to support herself and her family if needed. With that understanding, her aunt called off the marriage and she and Sangeetha are living together as Sangeetha completes her studies.



Vinotha Rajini, left, is studying for a Bachelor of Commerce Degree and is in her second year. Her mother, to her left, is a single parent. After her husband passed away many years ago, she found a very part-time job as a sweeper in the local government school which our children attend. It was there that she learned about Child Haven and was relieved to have a way to support her daughter's education. She is known as a very strong woman in the local community.



Kaliyampoondi – To the great good fortune of our children, there are many local supporters who have taken them into their hearts. Among them, in the photo to the bottom right, are Rajaprabakaran, his wife Thiripurasundari and their son, Arun. Their foundation, the Amirthakadeswara Annapoorani Charitable Trust, regularly provides special meals, such as the one the children are enjoying here. The ingredients are paid for by the trust and our incredible cooks then create the delectable meals.



The trust also sponsors the education of some of our deserving scholars including Logesh, in black in the picture to the right. He was able to get a seat in Anna University, one of the best universities in southern India, where he is in the third year of a Bachelor's Degree in Industrial Engineering. To his right is Sarogini, the Manager of our Home. She and our other staff keep in close touch with Logesh and all our college students to be sure they are receiving the support and encouragement they need!



It is heart-warming that members of the local communities in which our Homes are located, are inspired to support the work we are doing together to raise and uplift the amazing children in our care.



Kathmandu – It's all smiles when the rising college students recently graduating from grade 12 share their exciting plans to make their mark on the world. Pictured here are the students visiting Child Haven staff to receive support and guidance as they begin their higher studies.

Sani, far left in the light blue shirt, came to the Home at the age of six after losing her father. She has five siblings, two of whom, Jeet Bahadur and Chhini, are also living at the Home and studying in grade 9. Sani is now pursuing Excel and Accounting training at Broadway Infosys, a certified IT learning center in Kathmandu. Sitting next to Sani in the brown shirt is Oshin. She came to the home at eight years old after her mother passed away. Oshin is now pursuing a Diploma in Hair, Makeup, and Nails Care at Aaska Glamour Academy, aspiring to bring glamour and elegance to future clients as a beautician. Flashing two peace signs in the navy shirt is Subina. She is the daughter of staff member Mina who works in the Home as a loving caregiver. Subina is at a thrilling juncture of her life as she decides what to study next. Sanjaya, in the light blue shirt, can be found in the center of the group. He joined the home at five years old after losing his father, and his mother remarried. Sanjaya is now pursuing a Diploma in Cooking at Rokpa Vocational Training Centre.

To the right of Sanjaya, is Bibek. He joined the home at four years old after his father passed away due to typhoid fever. He has two older sisters whose education was also supported by the Home. Bibek is now enrolled in a Diploma in Automobile (4-wheeler) training at Aviotrace Nepal School of Technology. Sitting second to the right in black is Bhumika. She is the daughter of the Home's intrepid kitchen supervisor, Ratna. Bhumika is now impressively pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology at Golden Gate International College. Finally, sitting on the far right is Salim. He came to the home as an infant, only 52 days old after his mother passed away shortly after his birth. His dream is to become an artist and is currently studying Fine Arts at Sirjana College of Fine Arts.

It is truly a beautiful sight to see these young adults pursue a diversity of careers, each finding their own, unique voice and talents to make the world a better place. We can't wait to hear what comes next!



Kathmandu – It's all hands on deck when it's time to make momos, a special treat at this Home! These pictures are from Robin Colyer, top left in the blue hat, taken while she was recently serving as a volunteer/intern at the Home with her husband Peter Hamilton, (see the next article). Staff and children work together to create the 1,200 momos needed to feed everyone (shown above right getting ready for steaming).

Above left, Suraj, our Co-Manager works with Lok Bahadur, age 6, directly across from him, and other younger children in front of the kitchen who are just learning to take their coveted place at the momo making tables inside. Below momo being voraciously consumed by all.



Kathmandu - Report from Volunteer Interns Robin Colyer and Peter Hamilton

Hi there. Peter and Robin here, writing a short piece on our recent 7-week experience as interns in the CHI home in Kathmandu, Nepal. We are a retired couple living in Victoria, BC. This was our second internship experience, having spent 3 months in Kaliyampoondi, India, 5 years ago. CHI expects that one's first internship will last at least 3 months, and we fully understand why. That first experience in Kaliyampoondi was certainly a culture shock, and it took us the better part of a month to get our bodies and minds acclimatized, and to find the first strings to hold onto about our role there. It moved very naturally from there. What we understood then, and again with the internship in Kathmandu, is that our role as significant and unconditionally loving adults, was the first, and most important, to establish. The subsequent roles of a yoga teacher, basketball coach, English mentor, storyteller, homework helper, vegetable peeler/momo maker and Canadian geography teacher developed naturally.



*Robin Colyer and
Peter Hamilton*

This recent internship at the Kathmandu home was similar and different at the same time. Kaliyampoondi is a very large home (approximately 300 children) in a rural setting, while the Kathmandu home is relatively small (approximately 70 children) in an urban setting. As in Kaliyampoondi, we felt immediately welcomed and part of the family as soon as we emerged from the airport. The people who work at the CHI homes, very often graduates of the home themselves, have a sixth sense about looking out for interns. It seems to come to them naturally to watch out for us, to be careful to allow time and space for exploration, while at the same time understanding the limits and gently letting us know what they are. This may be in relation to our roles, their own expectations or safety concerns about our independent travel. In both places, we felt secure, guided and respected.

In Kathmandu, we were following in a well-established role of significant adult in the home and educational consultant at the affiliated Green Tara School. Hats off to Dyane Lynch and others that preceded us. The Green Tara School was built by CHI and is school to all of the home's 70 K -10 students, as well as about 300 students from the surrounding community. CHI also supports the school's graduates throughout their college studies, as it does in all of their 9 homes. We fell



Children and Staff on an Excursion

into a routine of attending the school's daily opening rituals (including public speaking in English), assisting with teaching the English curriculum to the grade 5,6 and 7's, and composing and rehearsing with the 2 students who were up for their public speaking gig the next morning. After school closure, it was back to the home for free play, homework time, supper and the comforts of bed by 8:30 pm. It was a wonderful routine, greeting all the school's students each morning, through to rinsing dishes and saying goodnight to the home's children every evening. Weekends (Saturday only, the children attend school 6 days a week) were another story – a wonderful mix of music and dance lessons, doing laundry, going for breathtaking-view walks with the children, getting to know the staff and many unexpected surprises.



Children performing Traditional Nepali Songs for Tihar

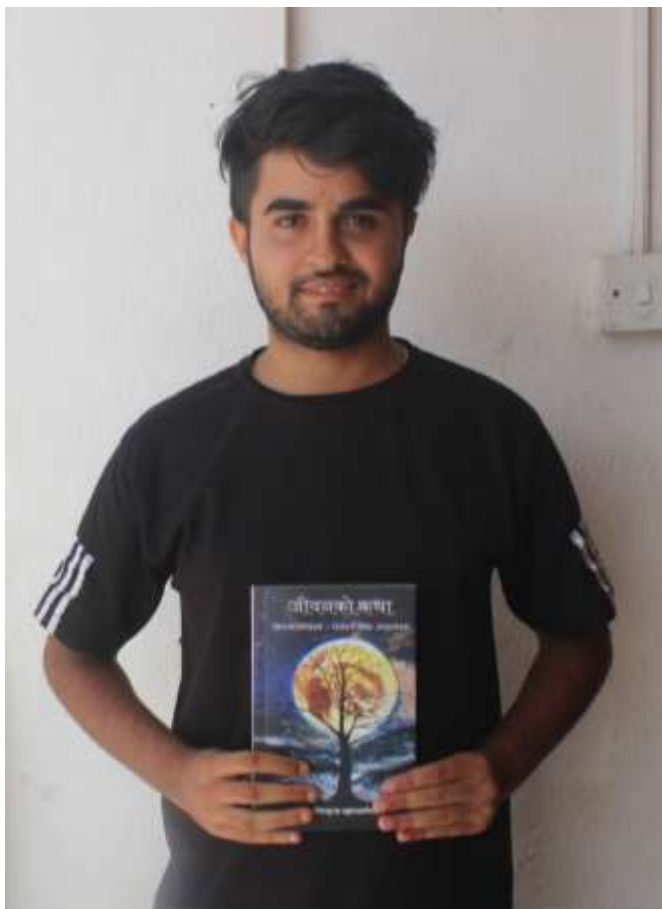
We were very fortunate on this trip to have landed during the annual school holiday of Dewali and Tihar. Most of the home's children had gone home to their families for the break, but about 20 call the CHI home their only one. The Tihar festival lasts 5 days and nights, and is highlighted by these 20 children travelling on 2 nights to neighbours and supporters to present traditional music and dance, in very authentic clothing and with authentic musical instruments. We travelled to at least 10 different places all over Kathmandu, all in our first few days there. It was an incredible cultural, geographical and CHI family extravaganza that really cemented our arrival into their midst. Again, we felt completely part of the family, as videos of us dancing and singing will attest to.

We were also very fortunate to have been guided on 2 expeditions, one a Himalayan trek and the other a cultural/spiritual/geographical tour of Nepal, by a graduate of the home who is on his way to becoming a certified Nepalese trekking guide. In both our internship experiences, we have come away with a unique first-hand understanding of the culture, history and geography of Southern India and Nepal.

All this to say: Go For It! Especially any young people reading this. Most of the current CHI interns are of a mature age, for many understandable reasons, but this is also not a recipe for sustainability. The experience can be amazing for all ages, the sense of contribution is uplifting and the learning is soul-broadening. If you approach the possibility with an open mind and heart, assume that you will learn more than you impart and understand that you will be well taken care of, you will be off to a great start.

We have space for volunteers who will pay their own travel and commit three to six months interning in India, Nepal, or Bangladesh. Please contact our office @ 613-527-2829 if you'd like to talk it over. There is a temporary hold on Volunteer Visas from Canada to India, but we hope that will be resolved soon.

A \$50 fee covers processing costs and your attendance at a two-day Orientation in Maxville. We are also thinking about holding an orientation on the west coast if interest exists. An additional \$200 donation to partially cover overseas room and board is also asked of Interns. You can check out our Intern Brochure on our website, childhaven.ca



Kathmandu – Dhruva Pradhan, the Co-Manager of our Home sends this article about Bheshraj Sapkota, pictured on the left and his debut book, "*The Story of Life*".

Bheshraj is from the Nepali village of Okhaldhunga, nestled in the hilly region of Province No. 1 and part of the Sagarmatha Zone, which serves as the backdrop for his early life and struggles in the book.

Currently a Grade 11 Humanities student sponsored by Child Haven, Bheshraj is known for his melodious singing performances, as shown in the picture below, and captivating poetry recitation. His artistic talents and heartfelt storytelling have already earned him admiration within his community and beyond.

Bheshraj began writing his first book after completing Grade 10, pouring his heart into "*The Story of Life*". This deeply personal narrative recounts the struggles of his family to meet basic needs, the hardships he endured under the mistreatment of the eldest wife of an elder uncle, and the profound challenges of a difficult childhood. Through perseverance and the unwavering love of his maternal grandmother, who brought him to

Kathmandu after years of hardship, Bheshraj found a path to hope and opportunity.

In the book, Bheshraj also expresses immense gratitude to Child Haven Nepal and the dedicated staff and teachers of the Green Tara Child Haven School. Their support played a pivotal role in uplifting him, not only academically but also in nurturing his passion for singing and personal growth.

"*The Story of Life*" is more than an autobiography; it is a testament to resilience, the power of kindness, and the transformative impact of education and community. Bheshraj's voice, both in his music and his writing, inspires readers to overcome adversity and cherish the acts of compassion that shape our lives.





Kathmandu – Ram Kumar Dhimal, above, playing the harmonium while teaching a song to our children, has been teaching enchanting Nepali songs to the children at our Home for the past 14 years.

To the left he helps Ayusha with some tricky guitar chords. To his right, Basun Dolma plays along on the “madal,” a traditional Nepali drum which many of our children play well, thanks in part to Ram’s generous tutelage.

Bonnie Lore by Fred Cappuccino, her long-suffering husband

I was imagining that at the august age of 99, I'd be able to sit back on my laurels, be waited on hand and foot, and be appreciated for the veritable pearls of wisdom tumbling forth from amongst my accumulated stores. As usual, Bonnie has other ideas. Now that her travels to visit our Child Haven Homes are over zoom, she has much more opportunity to monitor and manage her trusted servant, (that would be me). And of course, she does have considerable management experience to apply in this regard. After all she raised twenty-one children and then put together (with the help of all of you) an organization that has provided loving care for thousands of children, provided vocational training for thousands more low-income women and I could go on.



So, you can get the idea of what a force of nature I sit across from in the living room everyday and how carefully her experienced and watchful eye provides feedback and direction from her couch to my laurel-covered throne beside her.

Have no fear dear reader that a single vitamin on my list goes untaken to say nothing of those "tasty" Ensure cans. I am assigned to hold the remote when we watch the news or other media, but of course I have a lot of support in deciding which buttons to push on said remote. I also receive a great deal of assistance in being certain that I do not tell the same story twice, even though some stories bear repeating and improve with multiple tellings! Like the one recounting the words of that great American philosopher William Claude Fields, also known as W. C. Fields, who famously said that *"The best cure for insomnia is to get a lot of sleep."* He also warned that; *"Beds are dangerous. More people die in bed than anywhere else."* Luckily, I have assembled a plethora of these witticisms, so that when Bonnie objects to my sharing his



pearls too many times I can recount how he also intoned, (too late for me I might add), that one should *"Never try to impress a woman, because if you do she'll expect you to keep up the standard for the rest of your life."* I have no idea which of my maneuvers impressed Bonnie to marry me some 71 years ago, and it certainly has been a challenge to keep up with her. Yes, it has been a wild ride, but one I wouldn't have traded for any other. I learned a long time ago that the best response to her direction was to laugh and love her more every day.

PATRONS OF CHILD HAVEN:

PATRONS IN CANADA:

Margaret Atwood, author
Dr Brien Benoit, Neurosurgeon
Peter Downie, educator
Dr Gary Geddes, poet
Jan Jeffers, former publisher
Donna Morrison-Reed, Unitarian minister
Mark Morrison-Reed, Unitarian minister
The late Ramma Kamra, Ottawa writer
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Using our secure online application, you can set up a withdrawal from your bank account through a simple electronic funds transfer. The Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) Agreement form is available through our web site under "direct deposit." Call us at 613-527-2829 if you need help.

DONATING THROUGH UNITED WAY

To give through United Way, just designate your donation to 'Child Haven International' and include our Registered Charity # Canada 11885 1922 RR0001. USA 22-2637689. Receipts are issued by United Way.

We are also able to receive **gifts of stocks and securities.** (providing donors better tax advantages than donating cash).

Another way to offer your support is by **leaving Child Haven a bequest in your will.** There is a brochure on several ways to do this on our web site under "Donating"

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Social Worker, Christine Johnston, MSW
Office Manager, Steven Bayne
Book-Keeper, Cheryl Ladouceur
Coordinator of India Children and Women's support, Ganesh Kumar
Technical Support, Kerry Keogan
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Decal of Gandhi, P V Anthony,
Mother & Child logo, Eugene Fern
Sketch of Bonnie and Fred, Andrina Cox
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Erudite, Elegant and Educational Newsletter
Editor Emeritus, Fred Cappuccino
Editor, Robin Cappuccino



An Interview with Sathish Kumar and Sandhiya Sankar by Avani Pisapati

You may recognize the familiar face of Sathish Kumar, shown on the right. Sathish came to the Kaliyampoondi Child Haven Home when he was 6 years old, brought by his single mother who was a farmworker and unable to provide enough for him and his sister, Bakkiyalakshmi. Today, he is 25 years old, living in Chennai with a recently acquired law degree, earning enough money to pay for his own hostel, food, and needs.



In one generation, there has been a transformation in Sathish's family. While his mother struggled to read and write and provide enough for her children, Sathish has different concerns. Sathish thinks about how he can help Child Haven alumni and whether to further his studies in mathematics. (Yes, he's a mathematician too!) His mother, like many agricultural workers, accomplished difficult labor to try to meet the needs of her family; but because of the undervaluing of physical labor, this hard work couldn't provide her with enough. Sathish, on the other hand, had the privilege to go to college, work a well-paying job, and look beyond daily survival. This intergenerational change is a story common to many Child Haven children. But what is especially unique is that Sathish understands that this change does not make him better than his mother or other poor people. He recognizes that certain groups in India have been affected by systems of oppression, and that he was just lucky enough to receive what he refers to as the "weapon of education".

Earlier this year, I sat down with Sathish and another brilliant Child Haven alumni, Sandhiya Sankar, pictured to the left below with her two sons Milan and Mithun, to talk about it all. They shared how the caste system and patriarchy still create inequalities and how they are working to overcome this. Sandhiya came to Child Haven when she was 15 years old after her father abandoned her family and mother suddenly passed away from health issues. She appreciated the difference Child Haven made in her life so much that she started working for Child Haven and supporting other destitute children. She remarked that if oppressed caste people try to enter upper class work, many dominant-caste people disapprove of them changing their occupation. Some people even fear the working class getting educated because then elites would lose access to cheap labor. All this inequality has led to, in Sandhiya's words, "rich people getting richer and poor people getting poorer."

Sathish has experienced these sentiments firsthand. Some people believed that he should continue doing agricultural work like his mother and not go into law. Some influential people discouraged Sathish from giving free tutoring to poor people. One of his friends, who was the son of the panchayat president, was even blocked from entering a road for dominant-caste people. It made his friend so sad that he dropped out of the 10th grade and didn't complete his education. In fact, it was this event that inspired Sathish to take up law and be of service to society.



Beyond spreading awareness, Sandhiya and Sathish are working in their own way to make sure that these atrocities don't affect future generations. Sathish is very vocal about young girls receiving adequate educational opportunities. He is also working with Child Haven staff to make sure that alumni have the proper resources in professional life and studies, as many of them are the first in their family to be formally educated. He also hopes to use his law degree to serve voiceless people. Sandhiya is working to help Child Haven children process discrimination and exemplify the "oath" that Child Haven has taught her: "That everyone is our brother and sister." We are so fortunate to know Sathish and Sandhiya and witness them making genuine social change in our Child Haven family and greater world.



Meu – On a recent trip I, Avani, went to meet the family of one of *Meu*'s newest brothers, Aaryan, pictured above center in the yellow shirt. Aaryan is here surrounded by his neighbor, father, uncle, aunt, and cousin in the bucolic village of Saldi, Gujarat. He came to Child Haven about a year ago after his mother left his family, making it difficult for his father Jagaji, pictured above in white, and relatives to raise him. Jagaji and his brother Ranjitji, pictured above in the blue shirt, both rely on irregular, daily-wage agricultural labor to make ends meet. They neither make enough money from this work nor have enough time to provide Aaryan with food, education, and a regular schedule.

The living conditions of Jagaji's dwelling are difficult. His home does not have electricity, a shower, or a bathroom, and he lacks a transportation vehicle. His brother's home is rather crammed, with 6 people sharing a 2-bedroom house. Plus, the local government only allows 1 hour of water access a day to meet all their needs. These challenges ultimately led everyone to bring Aaryan to Child Haven and ask if he could join the Home, when he was 9 years old.

Aaryan's family has already noticed the differences that this decision has brought about over the past year. Everyone sees that Aaryan's physique has improved, he has a brightness in his face, and he is very well-mannered. They are also very appreciative that Aaryan is now able to get a formal education.

Jagaji's favorite quality about Aaryan is that he is always happy, and he hopes that he can achieve whatever he wishes to in life. It is truly exciting to think about the future holds for this family and the rest of the world now that Aaryan can thrive. Thank you to all those who trust Child Haven with the precious privilege of providing food, housing, and care to those that need it most and witnessing children like Aaryan blossom into whatever they are meant to be.



Tribal Home – To the far left, Sonakshi, is 12 years old. According to the Home staff, who provided these bios, “she is a bright and enthusiastic student currently in the 7th Grade.

Sonakshi has a deep love of outdoor games and is particularly skilled in playing Langdi, a traditional Indian game that combines elements of tag and hopscotch. She also enjoys dancing, drawing, and studying. Her family consists of her parents, and two sisters. Her parents work as laborers to support their family and provide for their children’s needs. As they move from place to place every season in search of work, Sonakshi stays in the Home so that she can attend school.

Next to her, Ankita is 11-years-old and a talented student currently studying in the 6th Grade. Ankita has a deep passion for dancing and dreams of building a career in the field. Along with dancing, she enjoys playing outdoor games and finds joy in helping others.

Her family consists of six members—her grandparents, mother, one sister, one brother, and herself. Ankita’s family struggles with financial hardships, and their livelihood depends on daily wage labor to make ends meet.



Ashish, far left, is 12 and in 7th Grade. He has a strong passion for playing cricket and enjoys making new friends. Known for his kind and affectionate nature, he gets along well with everyone around him.

His family consists of his mother and his brother. Ashish’s family faces significant financial hardships, as his father is no longer with them. The entire responsibility of the family rests on his mother, who works in a company to provide for their needs.

Vijay Ravi, left, is 13 and in 8th Grade. He also has a deep passion for cricket and enjoys making new friends. His parents come from a financially struggling background and are grateful Vijay Ravi has a safe and secure Home from which their son can thrive and attend school.”



Hyderabad – Nandini, above, is 18 and studying Math, Physics and Chemistry in the second year of her Intermediate college studies. She is commuting to college from the Home and helps in many ways with the younger children. Here she is helping to heat water for the girl's showers on a cold morning. In the new Home, now under construction, there will be solar hot water heaters that will make warm water a much easier process!

At this Home, they make their own Mehndi! Leaves are collected from the henna plant in the courtyard. Then they are mixed with a little bit of water ground into a paste. The paste is applied in intricate designs on hands and feet. When it dries, it is washed off leaving a brownish tattoo of sorts which can last for a few days. Commercial brands of Mehndi often contain harsh chemicals, so having the ability to make our own is terrific! Below left, Sanjana, 14, in Grade 8, Srivani, 15, in Grade 9, Sravanthi, also 15 and in Grade 9 and Bhargavi with the beguiling smile, 11 and in the Fifth Grade, gather leaves.



Below right, Girl's Care-giver Umadevi grinds the leaves in a food processor with help from Sanjana again and Ananya who is 12 and in Grade 5.

Below some of our children's hands decorated with our own Mehndi. We will have to be sure to transplant this important bush to our new Home!

Umadevi photos





Hyderabad – The second floor of the girls’ dormitory is home to many unique sisters, each of them a unique and special gift to our Child Haven (and human) family as they blossom and grow. Krishnaveni, pictured on the left, is one of those girls, brimming with playfulness, humor, and courageousness. She is from the Kalimandir section of Hyderabad and came to the Child Haven Home when she was 10 years old. She came after her mother mysteriously passed away and her father was unable to take care of her and her two brothers, Durgesh and Kutumbu. She is now 15 years old and studying in the 7th grade. Her brother Durgesh also came with her.

Her English teacher praises her for how much her English is improving, and she especially enjoys practicing her skills with English-speaking visitors to the Home. Her favorite meal prepared by the Child Haven staff is unsurprisingly dosa, and her favorite activities are watching TV and spending time with her many Child Haven brothers and sisters. Her most-liked subject at school is math, and she dreams of becoming a software engineer one day.

Krishnaveni remembers crying a lot and struggling with her new environment when she first came to Child Haven. She also remembers using a few bad words and not always respecting her care-givers. But with time, she began to experience joy and learned how to act kindly with everyone she encounters. Now she knows how to be just the right amount of naughty by bringing humor and fun everywhere she goes! Ok, maybe every once in a while, she forgets and lets out a yell, but no one’s counting.

Another special resident of the second floor is Pragathi, pictured to the right. Pragathi came to the Home with her brother Shiva Sai when she was 12 years old after her mother also passed away and father struggled with alcoholism. She remembers having good feelings at Child Haven when she came and lots of fun at a science fair that she attended early on.

Her favorite Child Haven meals are aloo and paneer, (potatoes and cheese) and her favorite book is the *Ramayana* because she admires Rama’s bravery, honesty, and commitment to promises. But Pragathi is not only interested in Hindu traditions. She also has enjoyed attending church on occasion and genuinely feels as though all religions should be treated equally.

Pragathi is now 14 years old and studying in the 10th grade. She too dreams of becoming a software engineer and has even started taking typing classes to prepare her for that future. Luckily, Pragathi is quite a bright student. She enjoys studying even during the summer holiday, and it makes her genuinely happy to get good grades! It is truly a joy to have Krishnaveni and Pragathi as part of our family, and we will be excited to watch them discover and change the world around them, as software engineers or anything else they choose to be.



Shanti, Child Haven Wonder Woman - By Avani Pisapati



At first glance, you may think that Shanti, the Accountant at the Child Haven Hyderabad Home, pictured to the left, is rather serious and reserved. But you may not know that behind her concerned look is an extraordinary woman who has traversed and overcome many challenges to find happiness and a home for herself. Shanti has been a part of the Home for about three decades, first arriving there when she was 7 years old (she estimates, because she doesn't have a birth certificate); but her story begins even before this.

Before Shanti joined Child Haven, she remembers being about 5 or 6 years old and living with her sister and brother-in-law. Unfortunately, her brother-in-law beat her terribly, and this made her very sad. Out of desperation, she shared this pain with her mother, who was living in a different home, and begged her to take her with her. But for some reason, her mother refused, and Shanti was unable to find refuge anywhere. Eventually, Shanti was so distraught that she ran away from her sister's home.

The first place she found after being on the run was a tea shop. The tea shop clerk noticed that she needed a home and approached a doctor he knew about the situation. This doctor knew of another person that was looking for a servant and suggested that Shanti live with them. So, Shanti, trusting that these respectable adults would help her, went to go live in this person's house and work for them. She did so for about 6 months; but once again, she experienced torture and despair under their care, this time because she was exploited for her free labor. So, Shanti ran away for a second time.

While Shanti was roaming the roads, she embarked upon a rickshaw. The rickshaw driver asked her where she would like to go, and she didn't know what else to do but point at different locations as they were driving along. After some time, the rickshaw driver realized that Shanti was lost and took her to the police station. A kind police officer gave shelter to Shanti for a few days and then decided that she would be in good hands if she lived at Child Haven. So, this man finally brought her to the Hyderabad Home, and the rest is history.

To this day, Shanti doesn't remember the faces of her sister, mother, father, or brother-in-law and has been unable to make contact with anyone from her family. Despite this, she has courageously embraced the loved ones she has found in her life and forged a beautiful path for herself. She completed her Bachelor's Degree in Commerce and provided diligent service as caregiver, matron, assistant manager, and accountant at the Home. She even taught herself how to manage accounts without having gone to school for it. She is also married and has two lovely children of her own, Varnika, who is 7 years old and in Grade 1, and Kartik, who is 9 years old and in Grade 4.

Shanti's difficulties as a young girl make her especially poised to understand what other Child Haven children have gone through. She says that because she remembers begging for food as a child, she will never forget the value of food for people who need it. Thank you, Shanti, for bringing so much wisdom and love to our Child Haven family.



Maitreya Home – Tenzin, left, came at 11 years old. His father became a single parent when his mother died of tuberculosis and typhoid when he was 3 or 4. Tenzin’s father is a Tibetan refugee, who came to India when he was 10 or 11 after the Chinese invaded Tibet. His father came with his parents. One of his father’s friends told him about the Maitreya Home. Tenzin’s father was a cook, but he couldn’t afford education. Tenzin has 2 sisters. His father was able to educate one of his sisters, and the other one did not want to go to school.

With Child Haven’s support, Tenzin has just passed the 12th Grade in the arts. His studies were difficult in the beginning he says, but they became easier over time. Tenzin is now thinking about doing a computer course.

Good luck Tenzin with whatever you do!

Child Haven Support Groups for Fundraising Events 2025

Fundraiser	Location	Contact
Sat, May 3	Calgary, AB	Salimah Jina 403-991-4696
Sat, May 17	Vancouver, BC	Yamini Gandesha 604-999-2549, Katherine Doyle 604-220-9324
Sun, May 18	Victoria, BC	Robin Colyer 819-432-5997 & Peter Hamilton 819-432-5997
Sat, June 7	Ottawa, ON	Lynda Inkster 613-824-1720, Parin Bhimani 613-422-1573
Sat, Oct 25	Montreal/ Lennoxville	Sheila Laursen 514-697-4195
	Edmonton, AB	Sylvia Krogh 780-454-6216
	Hardwick, VT, USA	Robin Cappuccino 802-533-2296, Deborah Hartt 802-472-5284
	Mississauga, ON	Shyam Sheth & Leena Motwani 647-876-8488, Tushar Mehta 416-839-1938
	Hamilton, ON	Ginny Megin 905-332-6474, Valerie Dougherty 905-465-1911
	Comox/Courtenay, BC	Heather Holm 250-338-2181
	Qualicum/Parksville, BC	Cilla Lewenhaupt 250-752-0968
	Kingston, ON	Jackie Morgan Rush & Andrew Rush 613-542-6992 or 343-333-1974
	Perth, ON	Lori Taylor 613-803-1184, Tracey Parker 613-267-4305
	Glengarry, ON	Alyson Graham 613-525-0796, Julie Slater 613-525-1104
	Burlington, VT, USA	Elango Dev 615-440-7913
	Lennoxville, QC	Phyllis Baxter 819-364-8273
	Lincoln MA USA	Christine Damon 781-879-5870
	Canmore, AB	Simon Bryant 403-609-8125
	Carleton Place, ON	Jane Hamilton-Eaton 613-853-7959
	Winnipeg, MB	Zobida Ambtman 204-489-7630
	Cornwall, ON	Elaine MacDonald 613-330-3117, elainemacdonald11@gmail.com
	Kitchener/Waterloo, ON	Sydney Cook 226-929-4275

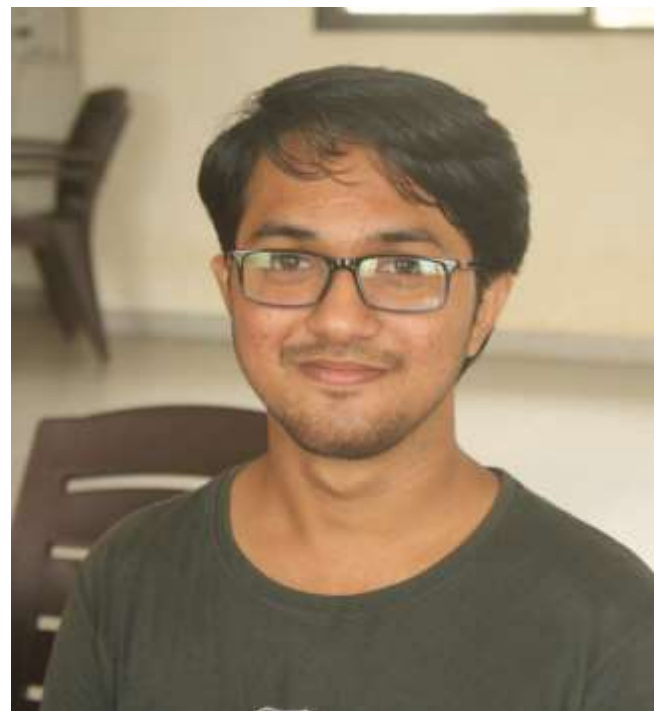


Hyderabad – Now that the Homemade mango pickles are used up and limes are in season, our talented staff do the needful! Lime pickles are made by the bucket full! They should last for several months. In the picture below, Anjama, Vani and Padmamma stuff the limes with salt and turmeric and then they are placed in buckets. There the juices and spice will meld and the fermenting magic happens! Magic that will delight our children for many a meal served with rice, curries, chapatis and all the other epicurean treats in-store on their menu.





Savarsai – It's hard to believe that the wide-eyed high school students who courageously shared their future dreams a few years ago are now realizing their wishes by embarking upon their college education. Pictured above left, is Deepali, who has just begun a 5-year Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Legislative Law at at Changu Kana Thakur College in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Above right is Dhiraj who has just begun a 2-year electrician course at the Government Industrial Training Institute in Pen, Maharashtra. Below are Vaibhav (left) and Hemant (right), both determined to complete their 3-year degrees in civil engineering! Vaibhav is still deciding on which college to attend, and Hemant has chosen Dattameghe College of Engineering in Mumbai, Maharashtra. All expenses for these courses, including tuition, food, and lodging will be covered by Child Haven, and regular check-ins and support are provided by local staff throughout their education. Best of luck to everyone and congratulations on making the difficult decision of what to study!





Kalyampooni – Our girls know how to shine!

Seenu Photo

*Let me light my lamp, says the star,
And never debate if it will dispel the dark.*

Rabindranath Tagore



Chittagong – This Home has so many spectacular local fruits to choose from in every season of the year! They are a key to our children’s good health! Above left, Bibi Aysha, age 10, Doha Shing Marma, age 7, and Ismat, age 8, choose the most beautiful tangelos. To the right above, Momo Marma, age 9 and Hlameu Marma, age 7, do the same.

As their names indicate, Doha Shing, Momo and Hlameu are members of the Marma community, the second largest ethnic community in the Chittagong Hill tracts. Their cultural heritage is from Burma which they fled in the 17th century to escape persecution there. They are primarily Buddhist and work as subsistence farmers and are renowned for their basketry and weaving skills. We are fortunate that they are part of our Child Haven family!

For donations, please make cheques out to CHILD HAVEN, and mail this information slip to CHILD HAVEN, 19014 Conc. 7, Maxville, ON K0C 1T0 (or to Box 5099, Massena, NY 13662-5099, USA.) Donations to Child Haven are tax receiptable in Canada, India and the USA. General Full sponsorship is \$30/month or \$360/year.

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