



PORTRAITS OF  
**PROMISE**

ORPHAN'S PROMISE NEWSLETTER | SEPTEMBER 2023

# Discovering an Artist

A lot of times, the stories we hear about helping at-risk communities and vulnerable kids focus on survival. However, in the long run, we want kids to not just survive but also thrive. Come with us to a small village in India and meet Nikhil, an 11-year-old boy who is flourishing because partners like you took the time to care about him and his family.

**These are the stories.  
These are the souls.  
These are the portraits of the  
lives we're changing.**





## NIKHIL AND HIS FAMILY

Nikhil has kind eyes and a gentle smile. He's a quiet child who has already seen and experienced a lot of difficulty in his 11 years.

He lives in the Mainath district of India in a small village with his parents, grandmother, and two younger siblings.

All six of them live in a one-room home called a kuccha house. Kuccha houses aren't permanent structures. They're made from mud or unburnt bricks, with roofs fashioned from sticks, straw, or bamboo.

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***UNICEF reports that “out of the 6 million children who are still out of school a majority are from marginalized communities including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and religious minority groups.”<sup>1</sup>***



## A LONELY SURVIVAL

India sadly continues to maintain its caste system. This system divides its population into different groups. The caste a person is born into dictates the education they have access to, the kinds of jobs they can have, and social interactions they are allowed to pursue (including marriage). Approximately half of the population in Nikhil's village was born in the lower castes and does not have any standing in the community. Life is difficult in this area, and most people have to beg on the streets. Others earn a living by working as laborers on the farms of wealthy families. Many cannot even provide two meals a day for their children.

Nikhil's dad is the breadwinner for his family. He works at a brass factory, and his job involves working in poor conditions for long hours with little pay.<sup>2</sup> He makes about \$225–\$240 per year. The daily pressure of trying to provide for everyone in such difficult circumstances took a toll on Nikhil's father. He turned to alcohol to cope, which led to violent outbursts.

In these conditions, Nikhil's family struggled. Nikhil and his siblings also found themselves isolated from their community. Other kids didn't want to

play with them. Their parents desperately wanted to have enough food for their children, but it was hard to make enough money to feed them.

**Orphan's Promise recognized the need in this community and started a School of Life (SOL) program in the Mainath village. We also partner with a local SOL center to provide nutritious meals to kids in need. The SOL center started to closely monitor the health of children by maintaining a record of their Body Mass Index (BMI).**

The center organized regular physical and dental health checkups with medical professionals for all the children. When Nikhil came for his appointment, the healthcare worker realized his BMI was significantly lower than it should be for a child his age.

## UNLOCKING AN ARTIST

The project coordinator met with Nikhil's parents and explained how important it was for Nikhil to receive better nutrition. A doctor prepared a nutrition plan for Nikhil and, with the help of Orphan's Promise, he had access to healthy food like eggs, milk, lentils, wheat bread, and vegetables.

Our goal in partnering with vulnerable kids is always to help empower their parents to build a strong, resilient family. Helping Nikhil also meant addressing the issues beyond nutrition that were affecting him and his siblings.

With the help of counselors at the center, Nikhil's dad is on the path to recovery. Now that Nikhil and his siblings have access to education and healthy, consistent meals, their life at home is more stable.



## INCREASE YOUR GENEROSITY!

The most effective way to give and maximize your gift is to give a recurring monthly gift. If you'd like to become a monthly partner with Orphan's Promise, please fill out the enclosed "You Pledge, We Pledge" form and return it in the Business Reply Envelope. We'll count on you to ensure our commitment to these children is fulfilled!

**If you'd like to give a special gift to Orphan's Promise, there are four easy ways you can give:**

Give online by visiting **OrphansPromise.org/Promise**

**Text PROMISE to 71777** and give from your mobile phone

**Call 1-800-818-4016** to give by phone

You can **mail a check** made out to Orphan's Promise to:

Orphan's Promise  
977 Centerville Turnpike  
Virginia Beach, VA 23463

**Thanks for your generosity.  
We look forward to making a difference together.**



It has been wonderful to watch Nikhil flourish. Nikhil is quiet and takes his time getting to know people. He smiles a lot, and he loves playing cricket and flying kites. Not only is he growing physically stronger, but he is also becoming more confident, doing well in school, and exploring his passion for art. He especially wanted to thank Orphan's Promise partners like you for helping him with his studies and giving him delicious meals. He is very grateful for the art books the center provided. His favorite thing to do is sit outside and paint, and he recently won an award for his excellent drawing!

When we asked about his dreams for the future, Nikhil said he wanted to be a police officer someday. He also wanted a bike so that he could get to school easier. Before, he would have to catch a ride with his friend. If there were days his friend couldn't go, Nikhil had to walk about two miles there and two miles back. But thanks to Orphan's Promise partners, Nikhil now has a bike of his own!

Nirupam Jha, our Orphan's Promise Regional Coordinator, shared: *"Proper nutrition for a child links to a healthier life and adulthood. When children have a well-balanced diet and are feeling healthy, they will have more energy to learn, play, move, grow, and experience all life has to offer. We are thankful to all our donors for their continuous support for the children that we serve."*

**Thank you for making it possible for Nikhil to dream about his future. Instead of worrying where his next meal is coming from, he now has the opportunity to grow into the person God made him to be. It is beautiful to see how we can come alongside a family like this and help them unlock their God-given potential. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Jesus to kids in need like Nikhil.**

1. "Key Data," UNICEF India, accessed June 13, 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/india/key-data>.

2. Sharma, Sudhansh, and Deepali Wallia. "A Survey on the Socio-Economic Conditions of Labour in Brassware Industry of U.P. With Special Reference to District Mirzapur." *International Journal of Trade & Commerce-IIARTC* 8, no. 1 (January–June 2019): 130–137. <https://sgsrjournals>.

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give us a call: 1-800-818-4016

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