



Fact Sheet: Domestic Violence in South Asian Communities

Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Nepali, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan

July 2012

1. Demographics

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, there are:

- ◆ 3,183,063 multi-race, multi-ethnic and single-race Asian Indians, of which 2,843,391 are single-race.¹
- ◆ 147,300 multi-race, multi-ethnic and single-race Bangladeshis, of which 128,792 are single-race.²
- ◆ 409,163 multi-race, multi-ethnic and single-race Pakistanis, of which 363,699 are single-race.³

According to the Census Bureau's 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates:

- ◆ Of the 335,210 Gujarati speakers in the U.S., 64.9% (217,500) speak English 'very well' and 35.1% (117,710) speak 'less than very well'.
- ◆ Of the 582,975 Hindi speakers in the U.S., 79.2% (461,737) speak English 'very well' and 20.8% (121,238) speak 'less than very well'.
- ◆ Of the 363,621 Urdu speakers in the U.S., 70.1% (254,942) speak English 'very well' and 29.9% (108,679) speak 'less than very well'.

2. Statistics

In a review of news reports of murder and attempted murder in the U.S. and Canada from 1981-2000:

- ◆ 63 separate reports of murder and attempted murder of South Asian women in the U.S. Although the majority of victims were women, the women's children and relatives were also killed in these domestic-violence related homicides, some of which were murder-suicides.

Das Dasgupta S. Broken Promises: Domestic Violence Murders and Attempted Murders in the U.S. and Canadian South Asian Communities. *Breaking the Silence*, Ed. Sandhya Nankani. U.S.: Xlibris Corp., 2000: 27-46.

¹ This represents a 67.6% increase (+1,283,464) in the number of single-race, multi-race and multi-ethnic Asian Indians and a 69.4% increase (+1,164,626) of single-race Asian Indians from 2000 to 2010.

² This represents a 156.6% increase (+89,888) in the number of single-race, multi-race and multi-ethnic Bangladeshis and a 212.0% increase (+87,512) of single-race Bangladeshis from 2000 to 2010.

³ This represents a 100.3% increase (+204,854) in the number of single-race, multi-race and multi-ethnic Pakistanis and a 136.9% increase (+210,166) of single-race Pakistanis from 2000 to 2010.

A study of Asian individuals through self-administered questionnaires at ethnic fairs and community events in Boston found:

- ◆ 79% of South Asian respondents reported being hit regularly as children compared to 70% of Cambodian, 61% of Chinese, 80% of Korean, and 72% of Vietnamese respondents.
- ◆ 5% of South Asian respondents said a woman who is being abused should not tell anyone about the abuse, whereas 29% of Korean, 22% of Cambodian, 18% of Chinese, and 9% of Vietnamese respondents did.
- ◆ 82% of South Asian respondents indicated that a battered woman should turn to a friend for help, whereas 44% of Cambodian, 37% of Chinese, 41% of Korean, and 29% of Vietnamese respondents agreed with this statement.
- ◆ 74% of South Asian respondents supported a battered woman calling the police for help, whereas 47% of Cambodian, 52% of Chinese, 27% of Korean, and 49% of Vietnamese respondents did.

Yoshioka M. and Dang Q. *Asian Family Violence Report: A study of the Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, South Asian, and Vietnamese communities in Massachusetts*. Boston, MA: Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence; 2000.

A study of 160 South Asian women (who were married or in a heterosexual relationship), recruited through community outreach methods such as flyers, snowball sampling, and referrals in Greater Boston, found that:

- ◆ 40.8% of the participants reported that they had been physically and/or sexually abused in some way by their current male partners in their lifetime; 36.9% reported having been victimized in the past year.
- ◆ 65% of the women reporting physical abuse also reported sexual abuse, and almost a third (30.4%) of those reporting sexual abuse reported injuries, some requiring medical attention.
- ◆ 15.8% reported injury or the need of medical services as a result of a partner's violence.
- ◆ No significant difference was found in the prevalence of domestic violence between arranged marriages [typically refers to marriages arranged by parents or relatives of each member of the couple] and non-arranged marriages.
- ◆ 11% of South Asian women reporting intimate partner violence indicated receiving counseling support services for domestic abuse.
- ◆ Only 3.1% of the abused South Asian women in the study had ever obtained a restraining order against an abusive partner. This rate is substantially lower than that reported in a study of women in Massachusetts, in which over 33% of women who reported intimate partner violence in the past 5 years had obtained a restraining order.
- ◆ Women who reported intimate partner violence were more likely than those without such violence to indicate that they had experienced "poor physical health in 7 or more of the last 30 days" (19.5% vs. 6.7%), "depression [in] 7 or more of the last 30 days" (31.8% vs. 10.2%), "anxiety [in] 7 or more of the last 30 days" (34.1% vs. 20.1%), and "suicidal ideation during the last year" (15.9% vs. 2.5%).

Raj A, Silverman J. Intimate partner violence against South-Asian women in Greater Boston. *Journal of American Medical Women's Association*. 2002; 57(2).

In a study of 62 battered women (20 African American, 22 Hispanic, and 20 South Asian) who had accessed domestic violence services:

- ◆ South Asian women were more likely to seek help from family members than African American or Hispanic women. The difference was notable in the proportion of women who disclosed the violence to their father (40.0% of South Asian, compared to 11.1% of African American and 8.7% of Hispanic) or their brother (55.0% of South Asian, compared to 16.7% of African American and 21.7% of Hispanic).
- ◆ Following disclosure, South Asian women were significantly more likely to be advised by family members “to stay in the marriage” than other groups of women.

Yoshioka MR, Gilbert L, El-Bassel N, Baig-Amin M. Social support and disclosure of abuse: Comparing South Asian, African American, and Hispanic battered women. *Journal of Family Violence*. 2003; 18:171-180

Reports of in-law abuse:

- ◆ Among the 169 South Asian respondents who were married at the time of the survey, 5.7% reported having experienced emotional abuse by in-laws. The proportion of women who reported emotional abuse by in-laws was significantly higher among those reporting partners’ violence in their current relationship (15.4%) than those who did not report such violence.[†]
- ◆ In a telephone interview survey of a random sample of Gujarati adults aged 18-64, 6.6% of female respondents reported that in-laws had called them names.[‡]

[†] Raj A, Livramento KN, Santana CM, Gupta J, Silverman JG. Victims of intimate partner violence more likely to report abuse from in-laws. *Violence Against Women*. 2006; 12: 936-949.

[‡] Yoshihama M. The Shanti Project, Baseline Community-Wide Survey. Unpublished raw data.

A report on 160 U.S. domestic violence related homicides in Asian families based on newspaper clippings and information from advocates for a six-year period from 2000–2005 found:

- ◆ 30 of 158 (19.0%) victims with known ethnicities were South Asian.
- ◆ 29 of 122 (23.8%) perpetrators with known ethnicities were South Asian.

Dabby C, Patel H, Poore G. *Shattered Lives: Homicides, Domestic Violence and Asian Families*. San Francisco, CA: Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence; 2009.

3. Selected Translated Materials

Bengali

- ◆ **The Survivor’s Handbook**
By Jackie Barron (2009), Women’s Aid Federation of England, England
Website: www.womensaid.org.uk, Email: info@womensaid.org.uk
Weblink: www.womensaid.org.uk/landing_page.asp?section=0001000100080004
- ◆ **Legal Handbook for South Asian Women in Abusive Relationships**
Manavi, New Brunswick, NJ
Web: www.manavi.org, Email: Manavi@mananvi.org, Tel: 732.435.1414

- ◆ **You Have the Right to be Safe in Your Home**

Manavi, New Brunswick, NJ

Web: www.manavi.org, Email: Manavi@mananvi.org, Tel: 732.435.1414

Weblink: www.manavi.org/documents/palmcard-bluebengali.pdf

Gujarati

- ◆ **The Survivor's Handbook**

By Jackie Barron (2009), Women's Aid Federation of England, England

Website: www.womensaid.org.uk, Email: info@womensaid.org.uk

Weblink: www.womensaid.org.uk/landing_page.asp?section=0001000100080004

- ◆ **You Have the Right to be Safe in Your Home**

Manavi, New Brunswick, NJ

Web: www.manavi.org, Email: Manavi@mananvi.org, Tel: 732.435.1414

Weblink: www.manavi.org/documents/palmcards-yellosgujurati.pdf

Hindi

- ◆ **Creating a Safety Plan**

The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Website: www.pcawa.org, Email: pcawa@pcawa.org, Tel: 905.282.9792

Weblink: www.pcawa.org/Files/Hindi-Safety%20Plan-Revised%202005.pdf

- ◆ **Find Out More About Domestic Violence**

Multilingual Access Project, Seattle, WA

Website: www.map-seattle.org, Email: info@map-seattle.org, Tel: 206.233.2774

Weblink: www.map-seattle.org/hi/more.shtml

- ◆ **English/Hindi Legal Glossary**

Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, CA

Website: www.saccourt.ca.gov, Tel: 916.874.6867

Weblink: www.saccourt.ca.gov/general/legal-glossaries/legal-glossaries.aspx

- ◆ **You Have the Right to be Safe in Your Home**

Manavi, New Brunswick, NJ

Web: www.manavi.org, Email: Manavi@mananvi.org, Tel: 732.435.1414

Weblink: www.manavi.org/documents/palmcard-tanhindi.pdf

Punjabi

- ◆ **Creating a Safety Plan**

The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Website: www.pcawa.org, Email: pcawa@pcawa.org, Tel: 905.282.9792

Weblink: www.pcawa.org/Files/Punjabi-Safety%20Plan-Revised%202005.pdf

- ◆ **English/Punjabi Legal Glossary**

Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, CA

Website: www.saccourt.ca.gov, Tel: 916.874.6867

Weblink: www.saccourt.ca.gov/general/legal-glossaries/docs/punjabi-legal-glossary.pdf

- ◆ **Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence**
Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, San Francisco, CA
Website: www.apiidv.org, Email: info@apiidv.org, Tel: 415.568.3315
- ◆ **Planning Ahead to Make Yourself Safe**
Multilingual Access Project, Seattle, WA
Website: www.map-seattle.org, Email: info@map-seattle.org, Tel: 206.233.2774
Weblink: www.map-seattle.org/pa/plan.shtml

Tamil

- ◆ **Creating a Safety Plan**
The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada
Website: www.pcawa.org, Email: pcawa@pcawa.org, Tel: 905.282.9792
Weblink: www.pcawa.org/Creating%20a%20Safety%20Plan%20Final-%20Tamil.pdf

Urdu

- ◆ **Creating a Safety Plan**
The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada
Website: www.pcawa.org, Email: pcawa@pcawa.org, Tel: 905.282.9792
Weblink: www.pcawa.org/Files/Urdu-Safety%20Plan-Revised%202005.pdf
- ◆ **Domestic Violence Handbook**
Fairfax County Network Against Family Abuse, Fairfax, VA
Website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dsm/dviolence
Weblink: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dsm/dviolence/dvhandbooks/urdu.pdf
- ◆ **English/Urdu Legal Glossary**
Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, CA
Website: www.saccourt.ca.gov, Tel: 916.874.6867
Weblink: www.saccourt.ca.gov/general/legal-glossaries/legal-glossaries.aspx

For a complete list of translated materials, visit www.apiidv.org.

4. Other Resources

National Domestic Violence Hotline

For crisis intervention, safety planning, information about domestic violence and referrals to local service providers, contact 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224. Assistance available in English and Spanish, as well as other languages through interpreter services.

Directories

- ◆ **International Directories**
Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center, www.866uswomen.org

Hot Peach Pages, International Directory of Domestic Violence Agencies, www.hotpeachpages.net

- ◆ **National Directory**

Directory of Domestic Violence Programs Serving Asians, Native Hawaiians, & Pacific Islanders, Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence, www.apiidv.org

Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

For questions, information, publications and technical assistance, contact the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence at 415-568-3315, info@apiidv.org, www.apiidv.org

