

SAWERRAA

Two months ago, an Indian father pled guilty to shooting his wife and nine year-old son in a Kansas City suburb. His wife was hospitalized with serious injuries. Their son died. Their young daughter was taken into protective custody by the juvenile authorities.

Friends and neighbors, including the Indian community, in the small Missouri town were stunned. The Singh family epitomized the immigrant success story – they owned a home in the suburbs, a gas station and a convenience store, and their two children attended a private elementary school. Neighbors described the family as friendly and well-mannered.

Arriving parents and students, streaming out of their classrooms, crowded the school parking lot that Thursday afternoon in November 2002. Parents and children watched in horror as Jaswinder Pal Singh (aka 'Jesse') confronted his wife, Mandeep Kaur. Jesse pulled out a gun and fired. He shot Mandeep and then nine year-old Kawaldeep, as the boy tried to protect his mother. Their six year-old daughter witnessed the attack.

How could a tragedy like this happen? South Asians are generally thought to be peace-loving, family-oriented people. The Singh family apparently had a strong support system. Jesse's parents and uncle lived nearby. Although he suffered from depression, Jesse had stopped taking his medication. His lawyer described the Singh's marriage as "very heated and [full of] troubled marital discord." Their daughter told police they could not go home because her father was "going to kill" them. Mandeep was attempting to leave her husband, with the children, when Jesse arrived.



Certain elements in this story make it unique, but sadly domestic violence in South Asian communities is not unusual. Statistics indicate that at least 1 in 5 South Asian families in the US experience some form of domestic violence.

Once a month, SAWERRAA will feature a true story of South Asian domestic violence in this space. We will include bits of information about this affliction and notify you of upcoming events. Let us come together as a community to ensure that our families are healthy, happy, and safe.

If you, or anyone you know, suffers from family violence please urge them to seek help.

Domestic Violence is...

- harassment
- intimidation
- threats
- stalking
- sexual assault
- choking
- name-calling
- punching
- isolation
- verbal put-downs
- hair pulling
- slapping
- shoving
- enforcing economic dependence

 **No one deserves to be abused** 

SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT REGIONAL ASSOCIATION

24 Hour Helpline ♦ Counseling P.O. Box 31753
Emergency Assistance St. Louis, MO 63131
Language Assistance www.saweraa.org
Community Education sawerra@saweraa.org

Helpline: 1-877-SAWERRAA
1-877-729-3722

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