

.....Welcome2006

Let us continue to come together as a community to ensure that our families are healthy, happy and safe.

Identify Abuse
Promote Human Rights

HAPPY NEW
YEAR !!!

Walking a New Path

I hear their voices chanting a new song

Strong and demanding

Take my hand now and we will join them

Never mind the miles.....

V. Bejarano

Did you know?

- One out of every three women become victims of Domestic Violence
- Between 3 and 4 million women are battered each year in the U.S.
- 85 - 95% of all Domestic Violence victims are females
- Children are abused in more than half of all Domestic Violence cases
- Statistics from South Asian Domestic Violence organizations in the U.S. reflect that 1 in 5 South Asian families experience Domestic Violence at some time
- There are more than 14 South Asian Domestic Violence Organizations in the U.S.
- Incidence reports by South Asian Women's Organizations
 - In Georgia, Raksha reported over 75% of 450 calls received in the first year were related to Domestic violence
 - In New York, Sakhi has provided services to over 3,000 women in ten years

These facts and more are published on our website: www.saweraa.org

Be Involved How you can Help

Volunteer for Saweraa

Sponsor Saweraa Programs and Activities

- Friend \$100 - \$199
- Patron \$200 - \$499
- Benefactor \$500 - \$999
- Angel \$1000 & up

You still have a few days left before the end of the year to make your Tax Deductible Donation for 2005. Call 314-551-0006.

Participate in Saweraa Events

- Book Discussions
- Movie Discussions
- Fund Raising events
- And more.....

We will continue to publish the event announcements in our newsletters. Mark your calendars.

**Office Tel: 314-551-0006
Office Hours: 10 am to 3 pm
Monday through Friday**

*We welcome your comments,
suggestions and questions...
Thank you for your feedback.*

Email us at: info@saweraa.org

Helpline: 1-877-SAWERAA

1-877-729-3722

24 hour helpline

Counseling

Emergency Assistance

Language Assistance

Community Education

www.saweraa.org

Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2006



No one deserves to be abused

Domestic Violence Destroys Families

“Obey his three sisters, deposit all my earnings into his bank account, and no children”

Mallika listed her husband’s demands before he would agree to come home. Dilip had walked out on Mallika after their last fight and moved into his sister’s house.

34-year old Mallika came to the U.S. in 1991 after her marriage to Dilip, a man six years her senior. Dilip had been employed for several years at a store owned by his sister’s husband. Everything was fine at first, Mallika said. Her husband was nice to her when they got married in India, one year earlier, and even initially in the U.S. where Mallika joined Dilip upon receiving her dependent visa.

It was not long before her sisters-in-law began “running her life,” however. They bought her groceries and even the clothes she wore. Mallika was rarely permitted to go shopping with her husband, and, when she did, she was not allowed to buy anything she liked - be it a pair of jeans, or any kind of grocery item. Dilip’s two younger sisters demanded that she obeyed them and forbade Mallika to call or write anyone. “One day, I was making chappatis and my sister-in-law came in, snatched the rolling pin from my hand and started making the chappatis. I was surprised, as I had never seen anything like that happen in my house.”

“When I complained ... he said I should voice all my complaints in the “big house”

When Mallika complained to Dilip about his family’s behavior, he got angry and sided with his sisters. Her eldest brother-in-law who mediated their fights, told Mallika that “she had no rights in this house. She could only eat here and live here.” He also ruled that she close her personal bank account and deposit all her paychecks in her husband’s private account. There was to be no joint account.

Their fights grew worse - until the day Dilip slapped Mallika and left the house, and threatening not to ever come back unless she agreed to abide by his conditions. Mallika chose to live alone - their marriage lasted less than a year and a half.

Mallika continues to live alone on a minimal income, but she has her self-respect.

-- Abraham, Margaret, *Speaking the Unspeakable: Marital Violence among South Asian Immigrants in the United States*, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000. pp 112-115

Points to Ponder:

- Does the interference of Dilip’s sisters constitute abuse of Mallika?
- Should Mallika have accepted the conditions imposed by her husband?
- Are there limits to the power senior family members should have in an employer-employee relationship?
- What could or should Dilip have done to stop the family abuse?
- Is there a point in a family relationship where loyalty to one’s elders become destructive in a marriage?
- Should sponsorship and employment of a family member be sufficient reason to exercise control over the sponsored member’s family?

“Thank You!” to the South Asian Community for your keen interest in SAWERAA’s progress. Your concerns, good wishes and support have been an inspiration for us to continue moving forward. We are very excited to share our achievements with all of you, our partners in fighting domestic violence.

Our achievements, outlined below, occurred between June 2003 to December 2005

Help line Services

Calls to SAWERAA Helpline	277
Referrals Given	117
Direct Services Provided	235

Two clients received emergency financial assistance.

Helpline Volunteers have contributed more than 26,000 hours keeping the confidential helpline open

Beginning in 2005, several clients received extensive victim and legal advocacy services from SAWERAA.

Community Outreach and Education Program :

Over 25 presentations on Domestic Violence in South Asian Community to members of South Asian communities, domestic violence agencies, school staff and university students. This year, discussion groups met approximately every 3 months to discuss movies and short stories discussions about South Asian family issues. SAWERAA’s monthly newsletter begun in March, reaches 3,200 families in St. Louis Metropolitan area! Volunteers have spent more than 2000 hours planning and organizing our outreach presentations, discussion groups, newsletters.

Volunteer Program :

10 volunteers received intensive domestic violence and helpline training in 2005.

Other Programs and Services:

A key objective was to build public awareness of domestic violence in our community . To that end, SAWERAA held its first Walkathon in Fall with 30 people in attendance. Great progress has been made in building collaborations with South Asian businesses and organizations; domestic violence and social services agencies. SAWERAA is proud to be a member agency of the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence. SAWERAA’s Board actively seeks resources and contributions so that we may fulfill our mission. Individual donors had contributed generously assisting the Board to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities. This year, SAWERAA was awarded for the first time a grant of \$9,500 from Department of Public Safety and \$3,000 from Zonta Club.

Next newsletter, we will tell you about SAWERAA’s plans fro 2006. Happy Holidays!