



NIRBHAYA

A fundraiser to benefit Saheli

Friday, 8 December 2017

Woburn Hilton

Brought to you by

Saheli Gala Committee



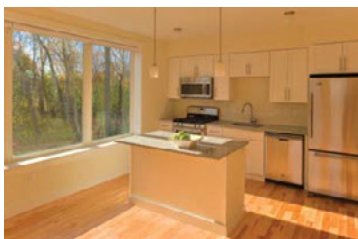
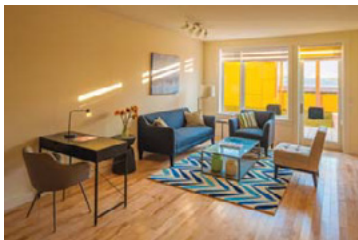
the mind is a
the head is held
here knowledge is for
the world has not been
broken up into fragments
By narrow domestic walls
where walls come out from the depth of truth
Where a tireless striving stretches
its arms towards perfection
where the power of reason has not lost
the way in the desert sand of dead habit
where the mind is led forward by the
into ever widening thought and action
That heaven of freedom is
the

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From the Co-Executive Directors



It is an honor to serve Saheli as the Co-Executive Director. I was drawn to Saheli's vision of a world without violence, which is ultimately rooted in the family. The work of ending domestic violence is not easy, but will have deep and lasting changes on society as a whole. When all people have the opportunity to experience healthy and supportive family life, both women and men will flourish, and children will achieve their full potential.

While we work towards this goal, Saheli continues to do the important work of providing support and healing for women who are working to end cycles of domestic violence and abuse in their own lives.

The Nirbhaya gala team has done a tremendous job putting together this event and it has been a pleasure to assist them in their work. We are grateful for your support on this journey to a better and more peaceful world. Thank you for joining us tonight and for all your contributions to Saheli's work.

Nadia Madden

Co-Executive Director, Saheli



On behalf of our Board of Directors, Advisory Committee, our gala committee, and the entire staff at Saheli, I would like to welcome you to our 5th biennial gala, Nirbhaya. It is a great honor for me to serve as the Co-Executive Director of Saheli, and have the opportunity to make a positive impact in the community.

No one deserves to be abused. Yet intimate partner violence is universal. It happens within every community and impacts all cultures irrespective of what their socio-economic status and ages are. It is Saheli's mission to empower the women in our community to lead safe and healthy lives, free of abuse.

As the co-chair of Nirbhaya, I envision this gala to be a celebration of our past, present, and future. It is an opportunity to honor the women who recognized the need for an organization like Saheli in our community and did something about it. It is a chance to acknowledge our passionate and dedicated domestic violence advocates who tirelessly work to guide our clients to become true survivors. It is also a time to look into the future that can be a world free of violence.

We are proud of the accomplishments of the organization over the past 21 years and recognize that we could not have delivered our mission without the support and partnership of our volunteers, donors, sponsors, sister organizations, community and our friends & family.

Our work is not done yet. We are counting on your support to help us build a world where every woman can live a life without fear - NIRBHAYA! I look forward to welcoming you at the gala.

Savitha Rajiv

Co-Executive Director, Saheli
Co-Chair Nirbhaya

TESTIMONIALS



Founded on the belief that effective social change can be created at the grassroots, The Lenny Zakim Fund (LZF) identifies, supports and connects small community based organizations operating “below the radar screen” of other foundations and government agencies.

The LZF has a special interest in organizations that are pursuing social justice while providing positive support and opportunities to people in under served communities.

Saheli does exactly this as it empowers South Asian women and their families to lead safe, healthy lives. They provide vital services to vulnerable immigrant women and their families; women who are confronted by domestic violence and may in crisis. The women served by Saheli may need critical health or legal services. They may feel they have no one to talk to and nowhere to turn, but they can always turn to Saheli for compassionate, professional help. That is why The Lenny Zakim Fund is, and has been, a supporter of Saheli.

~ Jude Goldman
Lenny Zakim Fund

Saheli's work to support families in the South Asian American community is a beacon of light for survivors of violence and oppression. Their leadership, dedication and compassion has helped strengthen communities and saved lives. As a member of Jane Doe Inc., Saheli brings an important voice and perspective to our statewide membership coalition dedicated to addressing sexual and domestic violence in Massachusetts.

~ Debra J. Robbin
Jane Doe Inc. Executive Director



SAHELI has successively collaborated with the Burlington Police Department for the past 15 years assisting victims of domestic violence in the South Asian community. When called upon by the Burlington Police Department for assistance, SAHELI has provided translation, shelter, advocacy, and support for numerous victims and their families.

SAHELI has built a bridge between victims of violence and the Burlington Police. SAHELI has made it possible for victims of violence to come forward to the police for assistance

The Burlington Police Department will continue to collaborate with SAHELI to assist those affected by domestic violence.

I want to thank SAHELI and their volunteers for their generous time and work that they have done for the community of Waltham. For the last several years, SAHELI volunteers have taught a weekly class highlighting basic computer skills, which addresses a large need with our patrons. Several of our patrons are on the wrong side of the digital divide and are often at a disadvantage when it comes to applying for jobs, communicating with loved ones in other areas, looking for housing, and even shopping. I have noticed a remarkable improvement in several of the students who attend the computer classes sponsored by SAHELI. Not only have patrons' skills improved, their confidence levels have risen. Students who were pure beginners at the start of the class have returned to help teach.

One woman, who took the class, last spring, still comes to the library every day to practice using the computer. She tells me, on an almost daily basis, that the class has changed her life and she is so grateful for it. We are so grateful for SAHELI and continue to look forward to continue this amazing partnership.

~ Laura Bernheim
Reference Department Head,
Waltham Public Library



NIRBHAYA

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Usha Vakil
Chair and President Emeritus



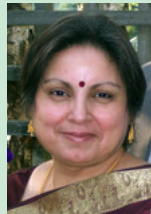
Savitha Rajiv
Co-Chair & Co-Executive
Director



Tanvi Devimane
Co-Chair & Vice President,
Board of Directors



Manju Sheth



Neelam Wali



Shobha Shastry



Anu Chitrapu



Gouri Banerjee



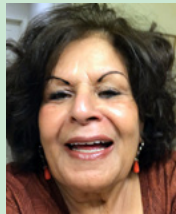
DJ Yogi



Nadia Madden



Ranjani Saigal



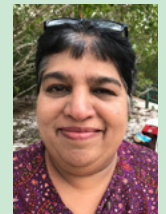
Salita Mehta



Divya Chandra



Lata Rao



Rita Shah



Upendra Mishra



Supriya Lagu



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BEST WISHES TO SAHELI

FROM

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Saheli's New Empowerment and Enrichment Programs



Parenting Workshops

Practical Self-Care for Busy Parents - Maya Ragavan, MD, October, 2017

Positive Discipline - Maya Ragavan, MD, November, 2017

Kids and Nutrition - Maya Ragavan, MD, December, 2017

Communicating with Your Middle-Schooler - Rohit Chandra, MD, February, 2018

Preparing Children for Next Steps After High School - March, 2018

Reflections Upon Rearing South Asian Children - April, 2018

Legal Clinics

Immigration Law

Trupti Patel and Assoc. November 21, 2017, Cambridge, MA

Family Law

Atty. Manisha Bhatt, December, 14, 2017, Cambridge, MA

Immigration and Family Law

Attys. Jessica Chicco and Ann Sheldon, January 23, Quincy, MA

Immigration Law - February, 2018

Family Law - March, 2018

Immigration Law - April, 2018

College Readiness Workshop For South Asian Girls

Watertown High School, Watertown, MA

November, 2017

December, 2017

January, 2018

Basic Computer Literacy Classes

Wednesday Evenings at the Waltham Public Library, Waltham, MA

9 or 12 Week Sessions

Fall 2017: October 6 - December 6, 2017

Spring 2018: March - May 2018

Fall 2018: September - December 2018

Saheli Board of Directors

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President and Director

Tanvi Devimane
Vice President and Director

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Kiran Uppuluri
Director

Usha Vakil
Director

Saheli Staff

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Co-Executive Director

Savitha Rajiv
Co-Executive Director

Rita Shah, MSW, LCSW
Family Services Coordinator/
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Salita Mehta
Senior Domestic Violence Advocate

Renu Tewarie
Domestic Violence Advocate

Usha Verma
Domestic Violence Advocate

Saheli Advisory Committee

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Anu Chitrapu

David S. Ludwig MD, Ph. D

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Trupti Patel ESQ

Ranjani Saigal

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Rajendra Trivedi, MD

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Neelam Wali



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Look what Saheli has been up to since Nirbhaya 2015!

Saheli provided 3487 hours of services to 310 clients in 1660 meetings

Individual Advocacy
**844 Hrs /
142 Clients**

Legal Advocacy
**421 Hrs /
167 Clients**

Counseling by LCSW
**380 Hrs /
71 Clients**

Police Advocacy
**100 Hrs /
84 Clients**

Health Advocacy
**105 Hrs /
24 Clients**

Housing Advocacy
**84 Hrs /
24 Clients**

Public Benefits
**78 Hrs /
9 Clients**

Court Accompaniment
**50 Hrs /
8 Clients**

Served clients from **8 Countries** in **8 Languages**

English हिन्दी
اُردو پنجابی گجراتی বাংলা தமிழ் తెలుగు

Attended **50+** training sessions and collaborative sessions with community organizations

Launched Legal Clinics to provide **FREE** immigration and family law assistance

20 Parents attended the newly launched Healthy Parenting Program

At least **5000** members of the community were provided information about Saheli services by over **40** volunteers at nearly **150** community and collaborative events

Won **8** Awards

Great Non-Profits
MA Asian American
Commission
Mass DOT
MOVA

New England Choice Award
Volunteer of the Year
INEN WQY
YWCA Great Guy

College
Readiness
Program for
high school
girls
8 graduated

Continued
Computer
Literacy
Programs
**90 Students
2 Campuses**

Spent over **1500** hours educating more than **400** members of the South Asian community on Domestic Violence Prevention

Over **900** supporters receive Saheli news and events via social media



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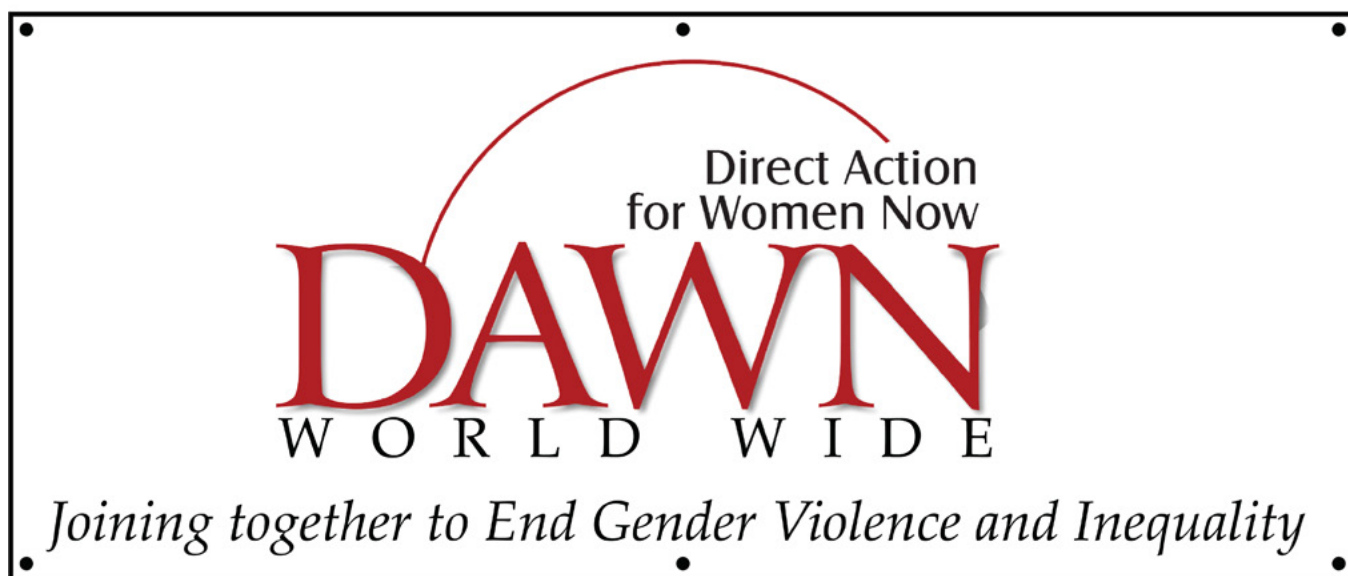
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Best Wishes to Saheli



Web: www.dawnww.org

Facebook: DAWNWW

Guests of Honor



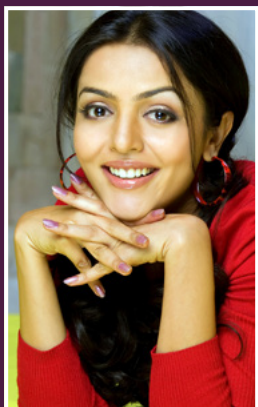
Dipti Mehta (Playwright/Performer) www.diptimehta.com

Dipti discovered the power of theater at the young age of 6 in Mumbai, India when she was first cast in a school play. This marked the beginning of her acting career, though she was yet unaware that she had indeed discovered her calling.

When she was 13, an All India Radio (AIR) programming officer spotted Dipti at an elocution competition and offered her an opportunity to write and broadcast her ideas. It was here Dipti found a platform to express her developing feminist ideas, and also where she eventually became a radio jockey on FM at AIR, as well as a voice over artist and a live host for major events. Dipti believes theater is a powerful means for social transformation. Desire to make a difference through art is at the core of all her work and is reflected in HONOUR: Confessions of a Mumbai Courtesan.

HONOUR in particular has made Dipti a sought after speaker both as a feminist and an advocate of women's rights. She has been on anti-sex trafficking panels with FBI agent Mara Schneider; writer and social worker Stuart Perrin; law professor Gloria Brown Marshal; and with groups like ECPAT and AF3IRM. Central to her artistic practice is the need to give voice to those who have none. It is in this light that she created HONOUR: Confessions of a Mumbai Courtesan as an attempt to give voice and a face to brothel dwellers bringing their humanity to encounter that of her audiences.

TV credits include Shades of Blue (NBC), The Blacklist (NBC), Golden Boy (CBS), Deadline Crime with Tamron Hall (Investigation Discovery), One Life to Live, Hum-Tum (ZEE NEXT), and Yoga for you (ZEE International). Film credits include Accommodations, Humor Me, Split, I Dream of Hope, Midnight Delight, Far Away, Penumbra (Cannes Short Film Corner), A box came to Brooklyn, Life! Camera Action (Winner- 11 nominations and 3 awards), A good life, Walkaway, Mamarosh, Red Corvette, Victory, Colors of Passion, and Summer of 2007. Theater credits include A Muslim in The Midst (Yale), Girl #2 (TBTB), Half Hearted (Cherry Lane Theater), Graham...the Eclipse (Winner - 4 awards), Nishfal (Winner-2 awards), Get Back (68 Cents), Vagina Monologues (Abingdon Theater) and Bollywood Wedding.



Priti Amin-Pereira (Actress)

Priti Amin-Pereira is an award-winning television actress. A Gujarati, she grew up in Hyderabad with a passion for acting from an early age. The first in her family to venture into performing arts, with the encouragement and support of her mother she obtained a degree in Theater from Hyderabad Central University.

Priti started her acting career in television with Jhoomke Jiiya Re and continued to work in several other Hindi and Telugu serials. She is most famous for her lead role in the Telugu serial Chakravakam, a high power emotional drama for which won the Best actress award. She is also a trained Kathak dancer, does theater and modeling.

Growing up, Priti watched her mother face domestic violence and abuse and was abused herself. While looking for an opportunity to work with a social services organization, she found Saheli and discussed the idea of making a video that would highlight the plight of South Asian women like her mother who face domestic violence. With her skills and years of experience in theater and television, Priti wrote, directed and produced the Domestic Violence video to show the transformation of a woman from a victim to a survivor.

While making the video, Priti felt like she was narrating her mother's plight, her courage to break free, move forward to make sure her daughter does not go through the abuse like she did, instead have an identity of her own. It was a huge transforming experience of her and she hopes the video brings transformation to the women watching it.

Priti now lives in Boston with her husband Lionel Pereira. She would like to dedicate the video to her mother Neeta Amin.



Jayshree Bala Rajamani

(Dancer and Founder, Bharathakalai School of Dance)

Jayshree Bala Rajamani is one of the leading practitioners and teachers of the ancient Indian dance form of Bharathanatyam in Massachusetts, USA. She was initiated into this art by her mother and then came under the tutelage of eminent Guru, K.J. Govindarajan. She specialized in Abhinaya with Guru Jamuna Krishnan.

The Massachusetts House of Representatives honored her with a special citation:

"We celebrate and honor your passion, your art, and your loving devotion. You have immeasurably enriched your students and your community."

In addition to her ongoing teaching commitments, Jayshree also conducts Lec-Dems on Bharathanatyam at different schools, universities and museums. She has been collaborating with non-traditional musicians and dancers, showcasing not merely her own versatility as an artiste but also the versatility of the dance form - to much critical acclaim.

In 2015 she created the "TriNethra: The Third Eye Festival of Dance", aimed at celebrating and promoting dance and dancers in the Greater Boston Area.

Jayshree has a Masters degree in Mass Communications from the Mass Communication Research Center, New Delhi.



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Saheli Awards

September 2015:

Saheli was honored by a prestigious 2015 Top-Rated Award by **GREATNONPROFITS**

October 2015:

Lifetime Achievement Award presented to Saheli by **The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Asian American Commission**

April 2016:

Length of Service Recognition presented to Salita Mehta by **MOVA** (Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance)

May 2016:

For their dedication and work to empower South Asian women and their families lead safe and healthy lives" award presented to Saheli by **the Massachusetts Department of Transportation**

October 2016:

Best Non-Profit Organization Award presented to Saheli by **New England Choice Awards**

May 2017 :

Usha Verma, Chair of the India Society of Worcester was chosen as the **Saheli Volunteer of the Year** for her tireless service in her community

May 2017:

Attorney Manisha Bhatt of Greater Boston Legal Services and past Saheli Advisory committee member was chosen as the **INEN Woman of the Year!**

October 2017:

The YWCA of Worcester, which is working to eliminate racism and empower women, gave their **2017 YWCA Great Guy Award** to Saheli Volunteer Jonjy Ananth, MD, MPH, on October 16th, 2017 to recognize his commitment to ending domestic violence.

Saheli thanks the following
OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS
without whose work we could not do
so much for the community

Domestic Violence Advocate Volunteers

Rajoo Ananth, Jonjy Ananth, Lata Rao

Media Volunteers

Joya Banerjee Haider Ghiasuddin
Web site Newsletter editor

Program Coordinators

Mani Dixit, Prachi Gandhi, Gul Shamin, Bharti Kalra

Parenting Workshops & Community Wellness Program Volunteers

Maya Ragavan, MD

Pediatrician, Boston University Medical Center

Uma Chandrika-Millner, Ph. D.

Boston U Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation and Lesley University

Rohit Chandra, MD

Psychiatry, Mass General Hospital

Legal Clinic Volunteers

Attorney Trupti Patel ESQ and Associates

Boston & Burlington

Attorney Manisha Bhatt

Greater Boston Legal Services

Attorney Jessica Chicco

Attorney Ann Sheldon

Domestic Violence Ended (Dove)

Educational Empowerment Program Volunteers

Deepika Madan

Instructor, Computer Literacy Class, Waltham

John Morgan

Instructor Aide, Computer Literacy Class, Waltham

Vandana Sharma

Instructor, Computer Literacy Class, Quincy

Alvin Mullin

Instructor, Computer Literacy Class, Quincy

Mary Mathews

Instructor Aide, Computer Literacy Class, Quincy

Student Interns

Christine Francis, Jiya Nair, Shreeya Chandra,
Neeharika Munjal, Anushka Ray-Ghosal



Stories of Saheli's Survivors

SAHELI EMPOWERS SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES TO LIVE SAFE AND HEALTHY LIVES. TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL, WE PROVIDE SERVICES TO MEMBERS OF THE SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY WHO ARE SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, EMPOWER THE FAMILIES WITH FINANCIAL AID AND UNDERTAKE PROGRAMS THAT REDUCE VIOLENCE IN THEIR HOMES. SAHELI IS UNIQUELY FOCUSED ON THE NEEDS OF IMMIGRANTS WITH ROOTS IN AFGHANISTAN, BANGLADESH, BHUTAN, INDIA, MALDIVES, NEPAL, PAKISTAN AND SRI LANKA. HEADQUARTERED IN BURLINGTON, MA WE OFFER AN ARRAY OF FREE SERVICES TO OUR SURVIVORS INCLUDING COUNSELING, RESOURCES, WORKSHOPS AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN WALTHAM, WATERTOWN, QUINCY AND SHREWSBURY.

Here are three stories of our Survivors -

Transnational Abandonment

Wife abandonment is a rapidly growing problem in the South Asian community.

Abandonment takes several forms —a woman living in the US suddenly finds her husband has disappeared leaving her and their children in a rented apartment with no funds; or, a woman who has valid travel documents goes to back home for a vacation and is abandoned when her husband leaves with her passport, visa, and other documents; or, a marriage is arranged in India and the husband returns to the US promising to send documents for the wife to follow. But, she is never sent documents.

Saheli is well positioned to help because abandoned women require significant investments of time, advocates have to be well trained, attorneys have to be affordable both overseas and in the US, and women need counseling, regular communication, friendship and support.

Sujata had just arrived from India with her beautiful newborn baby. She was full of hope, looking forward to her new family life in the US. After several domestic disputes her husband abandoned her. In a new country, with no family support, Sujata's situation was precarious. She had an MBA, but with an H-4 visa she was not allowed to find employment. With no one to turn to, she called Saheli.

Sujata's advocate at Saheli worked with her for over two years, helped Sujata to obtain affordable legal aid attorneys, saw her through the divorce/separation and child support process. She accompanied Sujata to police and court, wrote affidavits, obtained child support, and attended court hearings. Counseling, financial assistance

and public funds and assistance for her child, empowered Sujata to heal and start the process to obtain a green card.

For two years, Saheli provided Sujata the support she needed to become independent and support herself and her child. Saheli continues to support Sujata, paying for her driving lessons and finding a way to help her buy a used car so she can become truly independent and empowered.

Abuse of Senior Citizens

More older women are being abused.

Increasingly, older South Asian women turn to Saheli for help. In 2016 an elderly South Asian woman chose to leave her son's home and move into a temporary Respite nursing home facility. She suffered from chronic illness which needed regular medical attention, but treatment was very expensive. With no income of her own, she was dependent upon her sons financially. The nursing home would not allow her to stay indefinitely and contacted Saheli for help. With help from the Indian Circle of Caring and Saheli's network of social work partners, Saheli advocates worked cooperatively with family members. We cautioned her sons who lived in different states that if the family did not make arrangements for their mother, and try to find a permanent housing solution, their mother would become homeless. Fortunately, the sons worked with Saheli and decided to share the responsibilities of caring for their elderly mother.

Survivors from low literacy and low socioeconomic backgrounds

Low literacy and low-income women are more vulnerable to abuse.



Zara and her two young children are victims of extreme isolation. Zara's husband made them virtual prisoners in a one-bedroom apartment with barely any furniture, TV or computer. Zara was not allowed to venture out of the apartment with her children or socialize. The lack of oral and visual stimulation impacted her children's speech development. Introduced to Saheli by a social worker, Zara requested Saheli's help to discuss the consequences of physical abuse and isolation with her husband. Saheli successfully persuaded him to permit his wife to build friendships and participate in community events. The abusive husband was well aware of the legal and immigration consequences as a result of abuse upon wives and children.

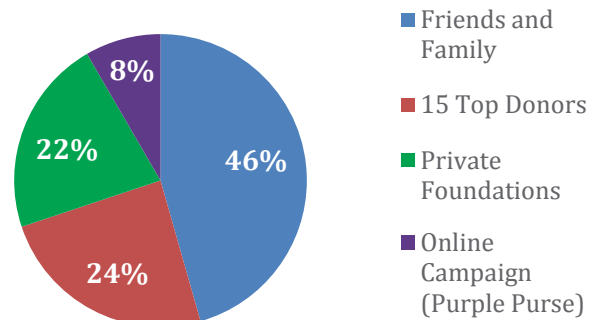
Zara wanted to dissolve the abusive marriage. However, she did not have the education, English language skills or the ability to be financially independent. Saheli's advocates helped her to build her skills to gain employment. We also helped Zara with cash assistance, a phone, and a safety kit consisting of a variety of local resources. Most importantly, our advocates counseled in Hindi and over a period of a year, helped her build her resilience. Our goal is to provide this family with a TV and a laptop computer.

The Saheli work model is - support and empower women, community engagement and state-wide advocacy against violence.

In pursuit of our main mission to end Domestic Violence in our community, we liaise between sister organizations, communities and survivors to end violence against women and develop strong and healthy communities. Our advocates work tirelessly around the clock to counsel, to support survivors and provide the necessary support work with law enforcement officers, immigration, legal and medical service providers. They work with survivors who need shelter, and financial resources, transportation, food and medicine.

The need for domestic violence services among South Asians is great and growing roughly 15% every year. We rely upon your generosity now more than ever to help the growing number of survivors. As can be seen in the pie chart below, our donors, friends and family are the greatest source of strength & support.

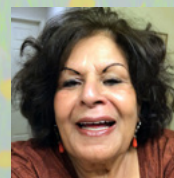
Saheli Revenue Sources 2016



The government of India estimates that there are roughly 147,000 families abandoned every year by husbands who return to the US or other countries.

This fundraiser is an opportunity to raise funds for direct services to South Asian women and children who are abused, abandoned and isolated. We reach out to you to raise awareness of violence and oppression in South Asian homes and ask for your support to build a strong South Asian community, not just today but for the future as well. Saheli will continue to empower and advocate for women by working closely with the community and other violence prevention providers.

We hope you will support us generously, participate actively in our work as volunteers, and share your thoughts and insights with us.



Salita Mehta

Senior Domestic Violence Advocate, Saheli

*Thank you to our donors
for supporting Saheli's
mission. We could not
provide vital and confidential
services without you!*





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आशा

चिंतित क्यों हैं?
जीवन की दौड़ में कभी न कभी हारना निश्चित है।
फिर रोता क्यों हैं?
उत्तर फेंक इस गम की चदर को,
जला ले आशा की किरण को,
फिर बुझाने मत दे इस को।
बिना आशा, जीवन लाश है।

आशा की चिंगारी को जलने दे,
बदले की ऋतू फिर से सावन आएगा,
होगी हरयाली चारों ओर, मोर नाचेगा।

आज नहीं बिता अच्छा,
है आशा !
कल होगा आज से अच्छा।
तू आशा की चिंगारी जलने दे,
नया अवसर लाएगा कल का सवेरा।

निराशा में ही आशा है,
फिर तू क्यों भयभीत हैं?
अपने कदम बढ़ा,
आशा की किरण पकड़ कर,
मंज़िल पास आजा येगी,
यह हौसला देख कर।

गिर कर उठना खुद ही पड़ता है,
जब तक साँस चलती है,
कन्धा कोई नहीं देता है।
इसलिए आशा की किरण को जलने दे।

रेनू तिवारी



By Renu Tewarie

An Advocate's Plea

If you could look into her eyes

See the pain

See the confusion

The questions!

If you could hear her voice

Broken,

In fractured sobs

You would know her need!

If you could listen to her crying attempts to explain

Her need for help.

You would know that her shy smile hides a shattered heart

A broken soul!

The sanctity of her marriage is a sham, an emptiness

Of splintered fragments

Jagged pieces of herself,

Locked in the ornate box of

Of her prison

Sabeli, step forward

Enfold all your hurting sisters in a warm embrace

Repair the hidden cracks of this community

Self-destructing from the shame of her suffering

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By Salita Mehta



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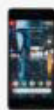


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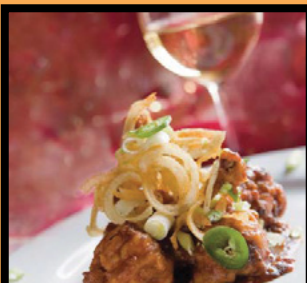
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