Apna Ghar provides holistic services and conducts outreach and advocacy across immigrant communities to end gender violence.
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Dear Friend and Supporter,

2016 was a significant year at Apna Ghar! We expanded our services and grew as an organization. Each year with your help, Apna Ghar conducts outreach and advocacy and provides critical services to survivors of gender violence, a global human rights violation and public health concern.

In this annual report, we want to share with you what your contributions mean to Apna Ghar and the communities we serve. In calendar year 2016 Apna Ghar reached more than 5,000 women, children, and men through outreach and direct services including our 24-hour crisis line, housing services, comprehensive case management, individual and group counseling, legal advocacy, and supervised visitation and safe exchange services.

We completed construction on our new safe home and held a formal opening and ribbon cutting ceremony with Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, First Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Family and Support Services, Alderman James Cappleman, chief of staff Tressa Feher and other representatives from the city. Our open house events included visits from our funders, donors and partners, as well as Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky and Senator Dick Durbin and their staff. State Senator Heather Steans also visited with her staff and Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, State Representative Kelly Cassidy and Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer sent staff. We deeply appreciate their support and yours.

We have restarted our transitional housing program to provide longer term, stable housing along with critical services for survivors and their families. We added a court liaison position and formalized our partnership with the domestic violence court in Chicago, and created stronger partnerships with other courts in the county. We are working with Inspire Action for Social Change to develop a research based model for enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services, which will be among the first in the country. We laid the groundwork to establish a presence in the north and northwest suburbs and we look forward to sharing more news about that later in the year!

Our talented and dedicated boards, staff and volunteers, the courageous survivors we’re privileged to serve, you our generous donors, and our extended community propel our work in the movement to end gender violence. Globally, one in three women is affected by this violence over the course of her lifetime. This is a terrible statistic, but with your support we can transform lives one at a time while taking important steps to end this violence.

We sincerely thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to achieving more together this year, and in the years to come!

Sameer Chhabria
Board President

Neha Gill
Executive Director
What is Gender Violence?

GENDER VIOLENCE DEFINED

Globally, \textbf{38\%} of murders of women are \textbf{COMMITTED BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER}.

Every year, \textbf{3.3 MILLION CHILDREN GLOBALLY} are exposed to domestic violence.

GENDER VIOLENCE IS NOT JUST PHYSICAL ABUSE AND CAN ALSO INCLUDE:

\begin{itemize}
  \item emotional and verbal abuse
  \item intensive surveillance, cyber-stalking, monitoring cell phones and utilizing multiple technologies
  \item withholding food, healthcare, medication, adequate clothing, and hygiene products
  \item financial abuse such as restricting access to bank accounts, monitoring activity, or identity theft
  \item hyper-exploitation of household labor to serve members of the extended family
\end{itemize}

1 IN 3 women will experience gender violence over the course of her lifetime

EVERY 7 OR 9 SECONDS in the United States, a woman was physically assaulted

IMMIGRANT SURVIVORS OF GENDER VIOLENCE FACE UNIQUE BARRIERS

Recent immigrants to the United States who experience gender violence often face additional barriers that make it especially difficult for them to reach out for help or receive services. These may include:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Community or extended-family attitudes, such as \textbf{SILENCING, SHAMING AND VICTIM-BLAMING}
  \item \textbf{WITHHOLDING OF PASSPORTS} and other papers
  \item \textbf{THREATS OF DEPORTATION} or child abduction
  \item \textbf{LANGUAGE BARRIERS}
  \item \textbf{LIMITED ACCESS TO BANK ACCOUNTS} and communication technologies
  \item Economic and \textbf{IMMIGRATION-STATUS BARRIERS}
  \item Cultural and religious barriers
\end{itemize}

41-61\% of Asian women report experiencing physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime.

RESEARCH SHOWS that children who witness domestic violence exhibit anxiety, low self esteem, depression, anger, and are at much greater risk to repeat the cycle as adults.

ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS comprise the largest group of people trafficked into the U.S.

More information at www.nnedv.org and www.api-gbv.org
Apna Ghar developed its own service model through a research collaboration with the Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) at Loyola University, *Transcending Boundaries: Investigating Domestic Violence among Immigrant Women*

At Apna Ghar we are issue-based and community-focused

We provide comprehensive intervention and prevention services aimed at helping survivors of gender violence achieve safety, stability and self sufficiency

We conduct outreach, provide community education, training and technical assistance in an effort to raise awareness about gender violence while providing resources and information on culturally appropriate service based responses

We conduct systems and policy level advocacy in partnership with advocacy groups to improve overall conditions for the survivors we serve

Together we can end gender violence
LEGAL ADVOCACY Guides and Supports

Apna Ghar’s legal advocates guide survivors through the legal system, help them understand their options and help them access available remedies, including obtaining civil orders of protection, pressing criminal charges, obtaining crime victims’ compensation, filing for divorce, custody and support, as well as immigration benefits through protective statuses such as the Violence Against Women Act. Advocates help clients obtain legal representation through an in-house family law legal clinic and partnerships with area legal aid agencies and volunteer attorneys.

Assisted 191 survivors in accessing justice in 2016

CRISIS LINE When Time Matters Most

The 24-hour crisis line serves as the primary point of access for those seeking help from Apna Ghar, and is in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our staff and volunteers address the immediate safety needs of callers, who can connect to our services, get referrals to other programs, and get information about options available to them.

Responded with information and referrals to 1,800 calls in 2016

SAFE HOUSING Empowers

Our safe home/emergency shelter provides survivors fleeing violence and trauma a home-like atmosphere where they can begin their journeys of healing and empowerment, and start reclaiming their lives. Care is taken to maintain a culturally sensitive, secure, and healing environment. While at the shelter, survivors receive wrap around services, including counseling and therapy, legal advocacy, and case management services.

Transitional housing apartments offer a longer-term housing option for survivors who need extra time to continue to work towards goals of stability and self-sufficiency. While in our housing programs, survivors also receive case management and other wrap-around services including counseling, legal advocacy, and supervised visitation and safe exchange.

Provided safe housing to 91 women and children survivors in 2016
COUNSELING Helps Overcome Trauma
Apna Ghar’s counselors provide individual and group services including psycho-social education, narrative therapy, support groups, expressive art therapy, and conflict management to help adult and child survivors process the trauma of abuse. Counseling helps survivors overcome the trauma associated with gender violence and empowers them as they embark on their journeys towards stability and self-sufficiency.

Provided individual and group counseling to 204 women and children in 2016

CASE MANAGEMENT Provides Resources
Apna Ghar’s case management services are offered to our residential and nonresidential program participants to ensure long term stability and self-sufficiency. Our staff work with program participants to develop action plans and connect participants to community resources to meet health care, educational, employment, permanent housing, financial and other critical needs.

Provided case management to 240 women and children in 2016

SUPERVISED VISITATION AND SAFE EXCHANGE Provides Stability
Apna Ghar’s supervised visitation and safe exchange (SVSE) program provides a safe place where children can interact with the parent who has used violence in the presence of a trained facilitator. It is an opportunity for a relationship to form and develop in a comfortable, non-threatening and conflict-free environment. We also offer a safe location for parents to pick up and drop off their children when the courts determine that parents may have unsupervised visits. These safe-exchanges are also facilitated by Apna Ghar’s trained staff.

In 2016 we added a court liaison position to provide training to court personnel and to support families seeking child based remedies in domestic violence cases. In addition, we are working on a research based model for enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services with Inspire Action for Social Change.

Enhanced the safety of 339 women, children and men through SVSE services in 2016
Community Engagement
Apna Ghar raises community awareness about gender violence and provides information and training on available resources to combat this violence. We also provide the state-required 40-hour domestic violence training for new volunteers and staff as well as training and technical assistance to partner organizations.

Technical Assistance
Apna Ghar provides training and technical assistance to community organizations and conducts systemic and policy level advocacy to impact larger scale changes to further benefit the survivors we serve. In 2016, Apna Ghar continued to assist Maryville Academy in implementing their supervised visitation and safe exchange program.

Policy Advocacy
Policy advocacy allows Apna Ghar to improve overall conditions for the survivors we serve. We work with legislators, advocacy and community groups, community leaders, and the general public to raise awareness, make systemic and policy changes to improve current processes, responses, and remedies and increase options available to survivors.

Local and National Initiatives
Apna Ghar joins partner organizations in Chicago and across the country to support efforts such as the TRUST Act campaign for a more welcoming Illinois that offers protections and relief to immigrants. We also joined organizations to hold know your rights workshops and trained others on culturally competent services for immigrant survivors of gender violence.

We collaborated with partner organizations to meet with legislators regarding pertinent issues.

Reached over 3,500 people through 400 outreach events
Art Show
March 2016
The 2016 art show, Collective Voices, Shared Journeys, explored issues of gender violence, immigration/refugee rights, wellness, disabilities and mental health. The show featured art created by survivors of gender violence and advocates for the cause. The opening reception included live performances and the closing reception included a panel discussion. There were also other events with partner organizations that took place throughout the month.

Taste for Life
May 25, 2016
Apna Ghar’s 8th Annual Taste for Life featured special guests comedian Paul Varghese and Chocolatier Uzma Sharif. During the event, we reached our goal of raising $20,000 for our new safe home. We were glad to feature 7 local restaurants who provided tasting portions from their menus, as well as drinks from our beverage sponsors.

Inaugural Golf Outing
September 1, 2016
In 2016, we added a new signature fundraising event, a gold outing which was held at the Hilton Oak Brook Hills. We had great weather and 78 golfers and many new sponsors and supporters joined us for this inaugural event.

Stride Against Violence
October 16, 2016
Over 400 runners, walkers and volunteers joined us at the 10th annual Stride Against Violence and helped raise awareness of the prevalence of gender violence in our communities. The event raised over $30,000 to assist survivors. We look forward to making the 2017 event even bigger!
Rekha moved to the suburbs of Chicago from southern India to be with her fiancé Jai, a wealthy businessman. Rekha, an accountant was also promised a job by Jai. Unfortunately, the abuse started fairly soon after Rekha arrived and though she considered returning home to India, she got pregnant. After her son was born, the abuse worsened, and Rekha told Jai she wanted to return to India. Upon hearing this, Jai who had already been physically violent towards Rekha, became incensed, slapping and beating her almost to the point of unconsciousness. Rekha bravely attempted to shield herself. She also did not want the commotion to frighten their son who was upstairs asleep. Jai then attempted to drug Rekha by forcing her to take sleeping pills. Rekha still managed to find her passport and other important documents and hid them under her pillow.

The following day Jai left for the office with Rekha’s suitcase and removed all the phones from the house. Rekha had already planned to leave, but she didn’t know anyone in Chicago, she didn’t even know her neighbors, and public transportation options were limited. But she took her son and left the house on foot.

Thankfully a police car drove by and stopped to talk to ask Rekha what was wrong. When she told the officers, they drove back to the house so she could get all her belongings, and they recorded what they saw, and decided to file charges against Jai. Rekha and her son were escorted to the hospital where she received stitches and her arm which was fractured as a result of Jai’s violence was put in a cast. Hospital personnel then linked Rekha to Apna Ghar.

A few months prior to this violent incident, Rekha had looked up Apna Ghar online, so she was glad to be in touch with us now, and to find out about her options and the services we provide. Her major concern was her son: getting custody of him and ensuring he did not witness or experience any more violence. She also wanted to know her rights as an immigrant since after bringing her to the U.S., Jai had not petitioned for any further immigration relief, and though he employed her in his business, he had not paid her. Most urgently, however, Rekha would need a place to stay upon her release from the hospital. We immediately welcomed Rekha and her son to our safe home.

The hospital coordinated for the police to escort Rekha and her son to Apna Ghar’s safe home. The only things she had with her were clothes, passports, her wallet, and most importantly, her son. Rekha was relieved to be in a safe place, where the staff were kind and welcoming. With Apna Ghar’s support, Rekha felt she could begin to think about a future free of fear and violence.

Rekha and her son ended up staying at the safe home for four months while she worked with Apna Ghar’s staff towards her goals of safety, stability and self-sufficiency.

Soon Rekha put her accounting skills to work and landed a job with a bank, and then moved with her son to one of Apna Ghar’s transitional housing apartments. Apna Ghar helped furnish the apartment and continued to work with her on her goals to gain custody of her son, and to gain immigration status in order to remain in Chicago with her U.S. born son.

In 2016, 640 women, children and men received comprehensive services at Apna Ghar
For the next three years, Rekha was embroiled in two court cases: the criminal case against Jai and a custody case for their son. Jai was ultimately convicted of assault, and Rekha also won custody of their son. Apna Ghar’s legal advocates supported her throughout these processes, helping her find representation and accompanying her to court and attorney meetings.

In addition, Apna Ghar’s advocates helped Rekha with finding representation to seek immigration relief under the Violence Against Women Act and several years later, she became a permanent resident and eventually a United States citizen. Apna Ghar’s advocates helped Rekha gather documents, write an affidavit, and they provided letters of support for her petition to the government. They also connected Rekha to counseling services at Apna Ghar and encouraged her to participate knowing that legal issues take a long time to resolve and can therefore take an emotional toll.

“...I didn’t have a place to live, no legal status, no job, and it was so overwhelming. But thanks to Apna Ghar, I not only survived but I put my life back together little by little. It shouldn’t be that hard, but it is, and Apna Ghar’s support made all the difference.”

Rekha’s son is now a junior in high school and considering college. Rekha continues to work in accounting and finance and has supported herself and her son since leaving Apna Ghar’s transitional housing program.

Rekha continues to be in touch with Apna Ghar and even volunteers when she has time. She found community, friendship and support at Apna Ghar and she is happy to stay connected and to give back when she can.
Statement of Activities

TOTAL REVENUES FY 2016
$1,373,557

- Events (net): $73,813 (5%)
- In-Kind: $35,631 (2%)
- Government Contracts: $613,821 (42%)
- Foundations & Corporations: $360,939 (25%)
- Individual Contributions: $377,128 (26%)

TOTAL EXPENSES FY 2016
$1,134,779

- Programs: $1,048,430 (85%)
- Management & General: $170,793 (14%)
- Fundraising: $9,095 (1%)

For additional information, Apna Ghar’s audited financial statements and 990 are available our website at www.apnaghar.org.
With your help, Apna Ghar will continue its work in the movement to end gender violence. The next few years will bring several exciting developments.

Safe Housing
We completed construction of our new safe home and have moved survivors in! We are now working on plans for construction of the basement so we can provide group counseling and health and wellness services to the survivors. We also restarted our transitional housing program to provide longer-term safe housing for survivors and are adding apartments!

Program Expansion
We will continue to strengthen our core services, deepen our understanding of our mission and vision, and develop a case management framework and approach to services. We have also laid the groundwork to provide services in the Chicago’s north and northwest suburbs, and are developing a model for enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services. We are excited to share more news about this in the upcoming months! Additionally, we continue to increase our outreach and education efforts to inform and increase awareness of our services, and culturally competent services for immigrant and refugee survivors of gender violence.

Development Manager, Ashley Tsuruda received a leadership award from the Illinois Comptroller’s Office
We were featured in Chicago Foundation for Women’s Annual Report (2015)
Our art show “Collective Voices, Shared Journeys” was featured in the Medill Reports Chicago, and our art therapy services were featured in Tikkum Magazine
India Abroad featured our positions on reproductive justice issues via the Purvi Patel case as well as on the general elections and their impact on immigrant survivors of gender violence
DNAinfo listed Apna Ghar among the 10 most deserving causes working to end gender violence
Executive Director Neha Gill co-authored a case study on Apna Ghar published in the book “Spirituality, Culture and Development: Implications for Social Work”
Apna Ghar was featured in Deepa Iyer’s book “We Too Sing America: South Asian, Arab, Muslim and Sikh Immigrants Shape Our Multiracial Future” published in 2015 and in 2016, Executive Director, Neha Gill participated in the Chicago leg of the book tour.

Senator Dick Durbin, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, and Executive Director Neha Gill at the opening of our new safe home

Future Plans
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Apna Ghar, Inc. (Our Home) thanks its Government and Foundation partners and grantors

**Government Funders**
City of Chicago, Department of Family and Support Services  
Cook County Justice Advisory Council  
Emergency Food and Shelter Program  
Family Court Enhancement Project  
Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
Illinois Department of Human Services  
Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority  
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Vivek & Roma Misra  
Rikki Mistry
2016 was an exciting and productive year at Apna Ghar! We expanded our programs and grew as an organization. We are grateful for your support, and because of it we feel confident as we look ahead at 2017. Thank you!

Your support is deeply meaningful to the survivors we serve as they embark on their journeys of healing and empowerment.

Thank you to Designs for Dignity for seeing our safe home project from conception to completion and for the total project impact of $148,958.00 in pro-bono hours, design services, and material donations. Thank you to Jill Buckner for the professional photographs of our home.

Our apologies if we have inadvertently missed anyone on this list.
Apna Ghar Board and Staff

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COUNSELING
Sara Ogawa Heidbreder, Counselor

Lists as of May 2017
GET INVOLVED
TOGETHER WE CAN END GENDER VIOLENCE

INVEST
You can help survivors of gender violence reclaim and rebuild their lives
• Donate to Apna Ghar online, by mail, or over the phone
• Sponsorship opportunities available for individuals and corporations at our fundraising events
• Connect us to your giving networks

INSPIRE
Introduce your friends, peers, and colleagues to Apna Ghar
• Host a party or a fundraiser to raise visibility and support for Apna Ghar’s work
• Bring friends, family, and colleagues to our events
• Link to us or feature us on your website, blog and/or social media, and print publications
• Raise awareness to end gender violence in your communities

VOLUNTEER
You can make a difference by donating your time and expertise
• Take our 40-Hour Domestic Violence training and work directly with survivors
• Volunteer at special events and fundraisers (applications available online)
• Partner with us for group volunteer opportunities

STAY CONNECTED
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youtube.com/user/ApnaGharInc