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

Annual Report

2017
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Dear Friend and Supporter,

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.

2017 was a significant year at Apna Ghar for program expansion and organizational growth – the most since our inception! In this annual report, we want to share with you what your contributions mean to Apna Ghar and the communities we serve.

In 2017, we expanded our housing program by opening our new purpose built safe home that doubled our capacity and by reestablishing our transitional housing program with nine scattered site apartments for the families we serve.

In July 2017, we opened a satellite office in the suburb of Skokie, Illinois, co-located with Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center. This allows us to reach even more people affected by gender violence. We provide all our services from this location. In addition, we created a partnership with Swedish Covenant Hospital to provide services and training. Apna Ghar now operates out of five locations in the city and suburbs.

In 2017 we also developed a research-based model for enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services with Inspire Action for Social Change thanks to generous support from the Pelino family. We are currently the only organization in the country implementing this model.

Globally, one in three women is affected by gender 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. Our talented and dedicated board, 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.

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

Any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering for women and gender non-conforming people, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

-UN General Assembly, 1993

EVERY 7 OR 9 SECONDS

in the United States, a woman is physically assaulted

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

GENDER VIOLENCE IS A GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN.

IT INCLUDES:

• physical and sexual violence
• psychological violence
• intensive surveillance, cyber-stalking, monitoring cell phones and utilizing multiple technologies
• withholding food, health care, medication, adequate clothing, and hygiene products
• financial abuse such as restricting access to bank accounts, monitoring activity, or identity theft
• hyper-exploitation of household labor to serve members of the extended family

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:

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

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

Every year, 3.3 MILLION CHILDREN GLOBALLY are exposed to domestic violence.

Globally, 38% of murders of women are COMMITTED BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER.

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.

Countries Apna Ghar’s program participants are from:

Languages spoken by Apna Ghar’s staff:

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 that analyzed Apna Ghar’s client files, and examined service delivery based on staff interviews. The results showed a holistic understanding of macro and micro level barriers faced by immigrant survivors of gender violence. Thus a socio-ecological model and framework was created.

Transcending Boundaries: Investigating Domestic Violence among Immigrant Women

OUR PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS ARE FROM MORE THAN 50 COUNTRIES
Apna Ghar’s Impact

Apna Ghar is issue-based and community focused.

- We provide comprehensive prevention and intervention 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.

In 2017, we

Provided comprehensive services to 600 survivors of gender violence and their families.

Addressed immediate safety needs of 1,696 callers on the 24-hour crisis line and provided crisis counseling, emotional support, resources and referrals.

“I felt like giving up but your support helps me go on.”

Provided a safe and home-like environment for 71 survivors and their children in our safe home/emergency shelter, along with comprehensive services, so they could begin their journeys of healing and empowerment.

“I finally found a place I feel at home.”

Supported 19 survivors and their children with longer-term transitional housing and comprehensive services to give them the time they needed to continue to work towards their goals of stability and self-sufficiency.

“Apna Ghar motivates me towards my goals.”

Guided 187 survivors through the legal system, and advocated for their legal goals, connected with attorneys, and supported them through complex legal proceedings.

“Thank you from the very bottom of my heart for all the help with my legal cases.”

Connected 213 survivors and their children with community resources to meet healthcare, educational, employment, permanent housing, financial and other critical needs.

“Apna Ghar finds [the] best resources to help community of women. Empowering us.”
Developed and launched an evidence-based model of enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services, designed to promote strong relationships, empowerment, and pathways for healing and change.

Helped 152 survivors and their children overcome the trauma of experiencing gender-based violence, and empowered them through individual, family, and group counseling.

Trained 31 volunteers and advocates through 2 sessions of the state-required 40-hour domestic violence training.

Trained and informed judges, court personnel, and the legal system broadly about effectively utilizing legal remedies available to survivors of gender-based violence.

Reached 4,812 people through 493 outreach and education events and activities.

Worked with legislators, advocacy groups, community leaders, and the general public to raise awareness and make policy changes to improve systemic responses and increase options available to survivors.

“I appreciate all you do for us, and feel really motivated to make some changes in my life.”

“I felt alone, but once I came here and talked to everyone, I know I am not the only one.”

“You do such amazing work. Thank you for the work you do.”

“We are grateful that Apna Ghar is dedicated to growing these crucial services.”

“Your voice amplifies the needs of community members.”
Apna Ghar’s Expansion

Apna Ghar now operates out of five locations that include our Main office, Safe Home, Skokie satellite office, Domestic Violence Court and Swedish Covenant Hospital.

From a Volunteer-Run Hotline to a Nationally-Recognized Organization

Apna Ghar was founded by five pioneering women committed to helping Asian and other under-served immigrant survivors of gender violence access the services and resources they needed to live lives free from violence. In the mid to late 1980s, hotline calls revealed a high incidence of domestic violence, abandonment, sexual harassment and assault within the growing populations of immigrants and refugees settling in the metropolitan Chicago area. A study conducted by hotline volunteers also found that immigrant survivors were reluctant to seek assistance because of linguistic, cultural and legal barriers. Thus, in December 1989, Apna Ghar grew from a volunteer run crisis line into an incorporated organization with an emergency shelter and case management, legal advocacy, counseling and other wraparound services to assist immigrant survivors reclaim and rebuild their lives.

Since 1990, Apna Ghar has grown in size and scope, and has developed innovative programming to address the needs of survivors of gender violence. Apna Ghar’s current services include a 24-hour crisis line, emergency shelter or safe home, individual and group counseling, case management, legal advocacy, including a volunteer attorney run family law clinic in partnership with the Chicago Volunteer Legal Service (CVLS), a supervised visitation and safe exchange program that includes a court liaison, as well as community education, outreach, training and institutional and policy advocacy.

Skokie Satellite Office

In July 2017, we opened our satellite office in Skokie, Illinois, co-located with Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center. This satellite location allows us to serve a wider range of families in need of comprehensive services including supervised visitation and safe exchange services, legal advocacy, counseling and case management.
Apna Ghar’s Locations

LEGEND

- Main Office
- Skokie Satellite Office
- Swedish Covenant Hospital
- Domestic Violence Court
- 9 scattered site transitional housing apartments
- Apna Ghar partners with community partner agencies across the Chicagoland area
- *Safe home/emergency shelter is at a confidential location
New Purpose-Built Safe Home/Emergency Shelter

In January 2017, we completed construction of, and formally opened our new safe home/emergency shelter with a ribbon cutting ceremony with Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, Alderman Cappleman and other city officials. This safe home doubles the agency’s capacity to provide survivors of violence and trauma a home-like environment to achieve safety, stability and self-sufficiency.

Re-established Transitional Housing Program

In March 2017, we re-established our transitional housing program, in partnership with WINGS Program. Our transitional housing program provides long term housing along with comprehensive case management and supportive services for families in need. Apna Ghar provides rent and utilities for each apartment for the duration of the lease so that the survivors can create savings and achieve their financial, educational and wellness goals to gain stability and self-sufficiency.

Medical Partnerships

In October 2017, we formalized our partnership with Swedish Covenant Hospital to provide services for patients experiencing gender-based violence, and training to hospital personnel on appropriate screening and care planning. We look forward to growing this partnership and continuing to provide training and resources at additional Chicago area hospitals and medical facilities.

Group Services

Group counseling supplements individual counseling and provides the opportunity for adult survivors to talk about their trauma in a safe environment. Apna Ghar’s counselors host Sunday wellness workshops every other week. These workshops focus on topics such as health, fitness, yoga, nutrition, and others. In 2017, Apna Ghar’s counselors also added a monthly empowerment support group “Heal through Hope, Empowerment, Acceptance, Love.”

In addition, we conduct a therapeutic cooking group, and life skills and economic empowerment workshops to help survivors with self-development.
A New Model for Enhanced Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange Services

In August 2017, we developed and began implementing a new model for enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services. This research-based model was developed in partnership with Inspire Action for Social Change through generous support from the Pelino Family, and is being implemented in Apna Ghar’s Chicago and Skokie locations.

This model for enhanced supervised visitation and safe exchange services is a strengths-based, optimistic approach centered on the belief that change is possible. The aim of this model is to foster trust and well-being by creating an environment that increases safety and creates pathways for healing, accountability and change.

Apna Ghar is currently the only organization in the country implementing this model. This year we will begin evaluating the model and we look forward to sharing our findings.
Highlights from 2017 Events

Taste for Life
May 18, 2017
Apna Ghar’s 9th Annual Taste for Life featured special guests Chicago newscaster Ravi Baichwal and musical performer Zeshan Bagewadi. During the event, we surpassed our goal of raising $100,000 for survivors of gender violence. We were glad to feature 11 local restaurants who provided tasting portions from their menus, as well as drinks from our beverage sponsors. Kailish, a vegan restaurant in Uptown, joined us for the first time this year and won both the “Critic’s Choice Award” and “Guests’ Choice Award.”

Tee off Against Violence Golf Outing
July 20, 2017
This year marked the 2nd annual golf outing held at Willow Crest Golf Course at the Hilton Chicago Oak Brook Hills Resort. This year we had 64 golfers join us for a fun day of lunch, “best ball” golf, specialty holes, raffle, and dinner to benefit Apna Ghar and the survivors we serve.

Stride Against Violence
October 15, 2017
Over 500 runners, walkers and volunteers joined us at the 11th annual Stride Against Violence 5K Run/Walk to help us commemorate National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The event raised over $60,000 to assist survivors of gender violence. We look forward to making the 2018 event even bigger!

Other Events
We’re always grateful for those interested in hosting their own fundraisers, events, and house parties. In 2017, the South Asian Medical Student Association hosted a fundraiser on University of Illinois at Chicago’s campus, as well as the Northwestern South Asian Student Association hosted a concert fundraiser for Apna Ghar. We’re also thankful for our runner, Megan Reyes, who fundraised and ran the Bank of America Chicago Marathon on Team Apna Ghar. We are excited to announce that in 2018 we will have four runners participating in the Chicago Marathon for Apna Ghar.
With your help, Apna Ghar will continue its work in the movement to end gender violence. The next few years will bring more exciting developments.
Fatima moved to Chicago from her home country about ten years ago to marry her husband, who had promised her a better life in the United States. When she first moved here, everything seemed fine. She was happy, in a new city, and excited to see where life would take her. She and her husband had two children.

Unfortunately, soon after her youngest turned five, Fatima’s husband became abusive towards her. Not only did he start physically hurting her, he became emotionally manipulative and verbally abusive towards her and her children. He forbade Fatima from working and threatened her that he would take the children away from her if she told anyone or tried to seek help. He did everything he could to control her every move.

Fatima met Apna Ghar’s legal advocates who explained to her legal options for her protection and safety, as well as gaining custody of her children. They also explained immigration related next steps to her. The following day the legal advocate accompanied Fatima to court to file for an emergency order of protection. Afterwards, a sheriff and Apna Ghar’s accompanied Fatima to her former home to retrieve her belongings.

Apna Ghar’s legal advocates then connected Fatima to an attorney that speaks the same language and is working with her on filing for divorce and consolidating her order of protection. The legal advocate continues to provide support to Fatima throughout this process.

Fatima and her children worked with Apna Ghar’s counselors to heal from the trauma of the emotional and physical abuse they had endured. Apna Ghar’s counselors helped Fatima and her children understand the dynamics of domestic violence, power and control and helped eliminate their feelings of guilt, shame, and self-blame. Fatima and her children continue to heal and get stronger.
**Supervised Visitation and Safe Exchange**

Apna Ghar’s advocates and attorneys assisted Fatima in obtaining an order for supervised visitation at Apna Ghar for the children to safely visit with their father. In this way, Fatima and her children can maintain safety and well-being while the children visit with their father. Apna Ghar’s staff ensure that no further harm is caused to the children or Fatima.

**Case Management**

Apna Ghar’s case manager helped Fatima create a budget and savings plan as well as long-term goals of securing better employment and finding permanent housing for herself and her children. Apna Ghar’s case manager also connected Fatima and her children to doctors and healthcare to improve their physical health. Apna Ghar’s case manager also assisted Fatima in enrolling her children in after school programs, and in pursuing hobbies and interests so that they can all continue to reclaim and rebuild their lives.

**Where is Fatima Now?**

Fatima and her children moved from our safe home/emergency shelter to one of our transitional housing apartments. Fatima secured employment and is working on ensuring financial stability for herself and her children.

Fatima and her children continue to work with the legal advocate, counselors, and transitional housing case manager. Fatima also recently received her driving permit and is currently taking driving lessons. She is more optimistic about her future now and feels capable of supporting herself and her children.

“Apna Ghar helped me when I was in the lowest place ... I did not know this place existed. But now I do and I will tell everyone about it so I can help others who need it.”
For additional information, Apna Ghar’s audited financial statements and 990 are available on our website at www.apnaghar.org.
Apna Ghar expresses its deep gratitude to our government, foundation, and corporate partners and grantors, as well as our donors and in-kind contributors who gave their time and resources in 2017. Your support moves our work forward.

*Our apologies if we have inadvertently missed anyone on this list.*

**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 Criminal Justice Information Authority
- Illinois Department of Human Services
- Office of the Illinois Attorney General

**Foundation Funders**
- Albert Pick, Jr. Fund
- Alphawood Foundation
- Anonymous Foundation
- Anonymous Foundation
- Blowitz-Ridgeway Foundation
- Chicago Community Trust
- Chicago Foundation for Women
- Crown Family Philanthropies
- Field Foundation of Illinois
- Greer Foundation
- Polk Bros. Foundation
- Ravenswood Health Care Foundation
- Robert R. McCormick Foundation
- Taproot Foundation
- TJX Foundation
- United Way of Metropolitan Chicago
- VNA Foundation
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Ramzan and Parvin Dhanji Family Foundation
Ashok and Kavita Luthra
Dipankar and Alpana Mukhopadhyay
Marjorie Pelino
Anonymous Donor

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Alok and Shanthi Gaur
Indian Medical Association of NW Indiana Medstar Laboratory
Dr. Payal Naik
Stuart Family Foundation

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Asha Pundaleeka  
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Safe Home Opening in January 2017
Apna Ghar Board

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Kayla Brown, Development Associate

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Tegest Tesfaw, Shelter Advocate
Kelebe Eshetu, Shelter Advocate
Fatima Hooda, Shelter Advocate
Teuta Peja, Shelter Advocate
Mehnush Hameie, Shelter Advocate

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING
Ronti Ghosh, Case Manager

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Sara Heidbreder, Counselor
Nina Tonchev, Counselor
Chih-Hsien Lin, Counselor

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Natalia Soeler, SVSE Advocate
Lala Mahmudova, SVSE Advocate
Marné Timon, SVSE Advocate
Emily Prisuta, SVSE Advocate

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Fauzia Mohammad, Supervisor, Advocacy Services
Naveen Siddiqui, Legal Advocate
Razeena Tharani, Legal Advocate

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION
Radhika Sharma-Gordon, Manager, Outreach and Education

Apna Ghar Team
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 increase awareness 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
• Join the movement 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

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