



## Sakhi for South Asian Women: Achievements in 2007

Carrying on its strong and innovative tradition of effectively working to end domestic violence, Sakhi for South Asian Women made great strides in its program and policy areas in 2007. Some of Sakhi's key successes are delineated below:

### :: Direct Services ::

- Responded to **727 new calls for help** and worked with an active caseload of **50 to 60 survivors** per month. (See more statistics here: <http://www.sakhi.org/about/recentachieve.php#dvprogram>)
- Facilitated **10 support group workshops** focusing on critical areas like anger management, loneliness, dependency, boundaries, and healthy relationships.
- Awarded **\$11,360** through the Swarna Fund to 11 survivors for educational pursuits and leveraged **\$8,320** in external grants for survivors' efforts at achieving self-sufficiency.
- Coordinated **five financial literacy** workshops on life insurance and savings and **five health workshops** to inform women of health insurance options and resources.
- Organized **two computer training series**, each comprising at least four classes and spanning eighteen hours, to improve women's confidence and abilities with computer software. "I couldn't have asked for any more," one survivor said. "I have improved my skills and I have cleared all my doubts I had in my mind."

### :: Community Engagement and Media Advocacy ::

- Featured as experts in **48 presentations**, including a panel hosted by Dan Rather titled, "Between Two Worlds: Domestic Violence, Immigration, and Human Rights" and four sessions at the National Network to End Domestic Violence conference. Furthermore, presented materials in **23 awareness and tabling events**.
- Enabled the exhibit **Redrawing Resistance**, displayed at the Queens Museum of Art, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and the University of Vermont. One survivor with Sakhi, Nasima, reflected, "After twenty years in an abusive relationship, I did not want to think about my past. But when I was making these paintings and drawings, the colors became my emotions and I could spread them on the page any way I wanted. Sakhi has been the rudder of mine and my family's ship, and I have learned that I can overcome anything."

- Presented renowned human rights activist Mukhtaran Mai with a **StreetSmARTs award** for her courage in combating abuse in Pakistan during the May 2007 benefit gala attended by more than 500 community supporters. (Read report here: <http://www.sakhi.org/change/Gala07.php>)
  - Produced powerful and poignant *Transforming Societies* short film to demonstrate Sakhi's impact with individuals, communities, and institutions. (Watch it here: <http://www.sakhi.org/STREETSMARTS.mov>)
  - Enabled media spotlight on violence against women in major mainstream outlets, including *WNYC* and *Newsday*:  
<http://www.wnyc.org/news/articles/79173>  
<http://www.sakhi.org/learn/Newsday.htm>
- Faith-based Initiative -**
- **Held two focus groups** with survivors to collect data on their experiences with religion and spirituality while confronting domestic violence. No such data collection project with South Asian survivors has ever been undertaken.

## :: Policy Advocacy ::

### - Court Interpreter's Project -

- **Mobilized the landmark** New York State Office of Court Administration court rule in October that obligates courts ensure an interpreter in all civil and criminal cases when a party is not proficient in English. (Read more about this important work here: <http://www.sakhi.org/learn/policy.php#cip>)
- Conducted a convenient sample survey across four New York City courts as part of a language access initiative called Justice Speaks, co-chaired by Sakhi, and found **that more than three-fourths of the 171 respondents did not have a lawyer** and another quarter did not feel comfortable speaking or understanding English. Further, the survey found 93 percent of those who did not feel proficient in English did not bring someone to interpret for them, and 40 percent within that group did not know the court could provide an interpreter.
- Served as a national role model in highlighting the language-access problem through local and national presentations, including the Annual NYC Task Force on Housing Court Conference; the Task Force on Women in the Courts of the NYC Bar Association; the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators in Portland, Oregon; and, the National Network to End Domestic Violence conference in Lexington, Kentucky.