



Training Curriculum

III.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST ASIAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER WOMEN

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Prepared by

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Formerly, Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

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1. INTRODUCTION

a. Rationale for training

- *Compartmentalized services don't work for our communities.* Asian and Pacific Islander women coming to domestic violence programs eventually disclose sexual violence and don't go to different programs once they've established rapport with a domestic violence advocate.
- *Domestic violence advocates can address sexual violence experiences in home countries and conflict zones.* Immigrants and refugees who experienced sexual violence in their home countries, particularly if they lived in conflict zones and were victimized during civil or international wars, may not have addressed these experiences, nor would they have gone to a rape crisis center.
- *Advocate discomfort about sexual violence inhibits disclosure by victims/survivors.* API battered women often mention that their domestic violence advocates hesitate to bring up sexual violence beyond the issue of marital/intimate partner rape but that they need a place to talk about sexual abuse in their home countries. Domestic violence advocates are not being trained to become sexual assault counselors, but to ask about and understand battered women's experiences and vulnerabilities to sexual violence.

b. Learning objectives

As a result of this session participants will be able to:

- Define gender violence to include 4-8 forms of sexual violence.
- Enumerate and discuss 4-8 forms of sexual violence that women in the API ethnic communities they serve experience or are vulnerable to.
- Identify and address sexual violence experienced by immigrant/refugee battered women who have come from conflict zones.

- Identify their own discomfort at asking or following-up about sexual violence – naming two culturally specific reasons and two personal ones.
- Organize a discussion in their program that results in incorporating interventions on sexual violence.
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2. TYPES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

a. Identifying sexual violence: skit and discussion

→ Start with following skit: Instruct audience to listen for types of sexual violence and efficacy of interventions

A 45-year-old woman who came to this country as a refugee talks to her domestic violence advocate who she has seen regularly for past 4 months

Woman: Thanks for seeing me today. You know I couldn't tell you on the phone but my husband, he's trying... to make me... no, I'm not helping him... you know, I didn't sleep much last night.

Advocate: Was there any domestic violence last night?

Woman: No, no, but my husband says I'm a slut, it makes me feel so bad to hear that, to hear such bad words – husbands are not supposed to say such words, and other dirty words to a wife. I can't tell these words to anyone, that's why I called you. I can't tell my sisters, they are so dirty, so dirty they make me bleed inside, maybe he should just use that knife and cut me dead...

Advocate: These words distressed you a lot, what kinds of words did he say?

Woman: Oh I can't say them, you are so young, yes, you are too young, oh do you know words in our language, do you speak it? Maybe not, because you are so American. Are you married? You must have a good husband because you are so pretty... but maybe you are like American girls and not

married yet, you don't know how men put their thing in all your holes... do you speak my language or not, or only English?

Advocate: Yes, yes I do. I think it's hard for you to talk about such words or what happened. Yes I'm young, but I've heard them before. Because many women tell me, my sister-in-law tells me – because you know I work in this field – she was telling me about her little girl...

Woman: You know he was saying stupid slut, how do I know the kids are mine, see how tall the middle boy is – you must be having affairs. I'm crying, I'm hurting so much, even to go to the bathroom every morning is hurting, I'm crying but he doesn't stop...

Advocate: It's another form of abuse, to call you bad names and accuse you of having affairs.

Woman: Even my oldest brother, who was also in the army like my husband back home during the war - he's dead. I can't speak badly of the dead, he got a hero's medal from the army, but even he accused me of having affairs because my middle son is so tall... why, why don't they understand?

Advocate: But in many families, siblings don't resemble each other. Was your brother...

Woman: (interrupts, angrily)... He was not a hero to me or my sister, she is also dead now, of AIDS... I'm a good woman and wife – I'm not like those American girls, going with any man on TV, grunting on TV, you know... you know what I mean, what's that kind of show called...? You know with sex, have you seen such videos?

Advocate: Hmm, that's called pornography. Do you remember how we had looked at the power and control wheel and discussed that sexual abuse is one kind of domestic violence.

Woman: (abruptly, indicating conversation is over) No I don't remember.

Advocate: Sounds like...

Woman: (exasperated) I don't remember. Do you understand me?

– End of skit –



NOTE TO TRAINERS:

1. In deciding seating arrangements, please consider having male trainees sit at a separate table. Because this is such a discomforting subject, we found that this set-up can be more conducive to discussions.
2. More time for discussion needs to be built into the sexual violence training because it generally takes longer for trainees to talk about sexual violence instead of domestic violence.

→ Discussion Questions for Trainees

15 minutes

- What kinds of sexual violence did you identify in the skit?
- What emotions did you notice?
- Name 3 things you liked/disliked about the advocate's interventions?
- What would you have liked to say or ask? Write down how you'd phrase your questions/interventions.
- The men's table should address how they would deal with such disclosure from a female client.

→ Call out

10 minutes

- What kinds of sexual violence did you pick up on?
Ensure answers include:

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- ◆ Rape
 - ◆ Anal intercourse
 - ◆ Child molestation
 - ◆ Rape during war
 - ◆ Incest by dead brother against sister (not above client)
 - ◆ Watching and mimicking pornography
 - ◆ Children in home exposed to pornography
 - ◆ Name calling
 - ◆ Rejecting child born of a possible wartime rape
 - ◆ Penetration with objects
 - ◆ Violence related HIV infection and (sister's) death
- What emotions did you notice?
If replies deal with woman's emotions only and not advocates', draw the audience's attention to this.
 - Name three things you liked and/or disliked about the advocate's interventions.
 - What would you have liked to say or ask? Call out how you would have framed your question or intervention.
 - Ask men's table (if applicable): What issues did you discuss?

b. Definition

- Sexual violence includes sexual actions and threats that are experienced as invasive to the body and violate bodily integrity. —World Health Organization Report, 2002
- Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work. —Jewkes, Sen and Garcia-Moreno WHO Report 2002



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

c. Types of sexual violence and vulnerabilities

- We distinguish between experiences of, and vulnerabilities to sexual violence.
- Labeling certain culturally sanctioned practices as sexual violence can be seen as a matter of interpretation. For example, the tradition of wife inheritance (a widow has to marry her brother-in-law) was historically intended to ensure economic security and safety for a widow, to keep family property intact, and other reasons. However, these are no longer seen as justifiable traditions and based on the definition of sexual violence above, they are experienced as an invasion of bodily integrity.
- We devised two lists based on related questions:
 - ◆ What kinds of sexual violence do API women experience? These are listed in *Types of Sexual Violence*.

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- ◆ What particular contexts increase women's vulnerability? These are listed under *Vulnerable Women & Girls and Potentially Dangerous Settings*.



NOTE TO TRAINERS

1. Refer trainees to handout entitled "Types of Sexual Violence".
2. Go down the list (do not define every item), and plan ahead which ones you want to elaborate on and mark them. Items that typically need explanation or are important to clarify are marked with triple asterisks (***) , but feel free to devise your own list to address.
3. The point is to have trainees understand that histories of sexual violence go beyond marital rape.
4. We have not defined these terms, but offer a brief explanation if necessary.

c1. Enumerating types of sexual violence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child Sexual Assault (CSA) ■ Coerced (forced) sex (***) ■ Coerced sexual initiation (***) ■ Custodial rapes: in police stations, jails, etc., (***) ■ Cyber assaults, cyber stalking and cyber predators (***) ■ Date rape/Drug facilitated rape ■ Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) ■ Forced marriages, including marriage of children (***) ■ Gang rapes ■ Ignorance about sexuality, anatomy, sex, or sexual safety (e.g. birth control is deliberately maintained by parents to 'protect' girls). Such ignorance can cause serious harm in the face of predatory behavior. (***) ■ Incestuous Sexual Assault (ISA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Marriage related sexual violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Abandonment, physical and/or sexual abandonment of wives/brides ◆ Infidelity ◆ Marital rape ◆ Polygamy: one man has several wives – whether through legal or 'cultural' marriages (listed as sexual violence because the culture or the husband forces women to accept this arrangement) ◆ Polyandry: one woman has several husbands (listed as sexual violence if a woman is forced into this arrangement) ◆ Temporary marriage: practiced in parts of West Asia as a way to legitimize sexual relations between non-married couples (over the dating period, for example) or with a prostitute (for the length of the encounter). (***) ◆ Marriage by capture: practiced in parts of Southeast Asia, a woman is 'captured' by potential husband and kept captive for a few days before 'consenting' to marry him. (***)
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(continued)

Types of Sexual Violence continued...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repeated molestation by known assailants or by strangers in crowded public spaces (e.g. buses). In India, this is termed 'eve-teasing'. ■ Neglect/coldness: extreme sexual neglect or coldly going through the motions of sex (***) ■ Pornographic-related violence: being forced to watch and mimic pornographic acts ■ Rape by a known assailant or by a stranger ■ Rape and its aftermath, which can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Victim-blaming ◆ Being forced to marry rapist or someone else right away ◆ Abandonment or violence by the victim's family towards the victim ◆ If a pregnancy results from the rape, family may send her to their home country permanently, force her to carry the pregnancy, give up child for adoption, or force her to have an abortion ■ Sexual harassment in workplaces, places of worship, homes, schools, or university campuses. (***) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Survival or transactional sex: women having sex in exchange for necessities like food, children's clothes, a place to stay, etc., and not necessarily with multiple men (this is not the same as sex work). (***) ■ Unprotected sex (forced) leading to an unwanted pregnancy, HIV, or STI exposure. This can affect women with trans-national partners who travel between the U.S. and home countries frequently. (***) ■ Virginity examinations and attendant surgeries to ensure that her hymen is in tact (e.g., sewing up a torn hymen). In fact, ruptured hymens do not necessarily bleed - referred to medically as a compliant hymen. (***) ■ Voyeurism, includes flashing, peeping, or using technology. ■ Wife inheritance: also called fraternal polyandry where a widow must marry her dead husband's brother. (***) ■ Witnessing rape: children or family forced to watch (or know it is happening) and how it affects both victim and witness.
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→ Ask if there are any additions or clarifying questions



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

c2. Vulnerable women and potentially dangerous settings

What particular contexts and situations increase women's vulnerability? We created this list to draw attention to vulnerabilities, thus this doesn't mean that everyone on this list experiences sexual violence. However, being alert to the vulnerabilities of certain groups informs our advocacy. Those that may be applicable to APIs are noted by triple asterisk (***)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Actresses ■ Athletes ■ Battered women ■ College campuses ■ Disaster zones (e.g., tsunami in SE Asia, earthquakes in Pakistan) (***) ■ Domestic workers (***) ■ Elderly ■ Healthcare settings ■ High schools (can include predatory behavior from teachers, coaches, other authority figures) ■ Homeless women and kids ■ Immigration processes/unsafe travels (***) ■ Incarcerated women ■ International Marriage Bureaus: women marrying through IMB services (***) ■ Lesbians, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, including teens and young women (***) ■ Mentally disabled or mentally ill ■ Military wives/partners and women in the vicinity of military bases (***) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Models ■ Those in police custody/jails (particularly in home countries) (***) ■ Poor women and the exploitation of female poverty in the form of adoption, trafficking, and transactional sex. ■ Pregnant women ■ Prostituted women, teens, and children/sex workers ■ Refugees in war or post-war camps (***) ■ Religious and cultural minorities (***) ■ Sexual abuse by clergy/clerics ■ Stalked women ■ Teens: pregnant, sexually-active teens, or runaways (***) ■ Trafficked women ■ Wartime vulnerabilities (e.g., civil or international wars) (***) ■ Women with disabilities ■ Workers in exploitative settings
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→ Ask if there are any additions

3. MULTI-LEVEL PREPARATIONS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS SEXUAL VIOLENCE



NOTE TO TRAINERS

1. The points in Part III are located in the trainee's handout. Trainers should select sections to elaborate based on their own work, the experience of the trainees, and the purposes of the training while interspersing the presentation with lots of discussion.
2. This curriculum emphasizes diminishing advocate discomfort so domestic violence service providers working with API battered women can extend their advocacy to raise issues about sexual violence. Hence, the section entitled "Advocate Level Preparations", paragraphs 1a, 1b, and 1c are all on advocate discomfort and require particular attention in the training.
3. The API Institute will gladly provide technical assistance, so trainers should feel free to contact us to discuss any section or to build on it.

a. Advocate Level Preparations

a1. Understanding advocate discomfort

- Advocate discomfort is a significant barrier to addressing battered women's experiences or vulnerabilities to sexual violence. In our experience, we hear conflicting accounts: API battered women express their readiness to disclose sexual violence but, advocate discomfort inhibited them. API advocates mention that for many API battered women it's not culturally appropriate and/or age-appropriate for an older client to discuss sexual violence with a younger advocate. Hence, surfacing advocate discomfort is important to strengthening advocacy.
- Our own ignorance about sexuality and anatomy affects our ability to ask about sexual violence.

- We need to address our own misconceptions, stereotypes, and projections about sexual violence.
- Battered women notice and are affected by the levels of advocate discomfort and will hold off on disclosing histories of sexual violence.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

a2. Language: vocabulary, terms, interpretation/translation

- Lack of adequate language skills or knowledge of the correct vocabulary are often cited by advocates as the reason for not addressing sexual violence with victims. **However, the language and terms we use need to be figured out in the languages we speak when interacting with clients, even for those whose primary language is English.** Advocates will need to discuss the following issues to address their own discomfort and prepare themselves for interventions about sexual violence.
- Consider and discuss the vocabulary and terms for sex used in different cultures and/or languages of the populations served. For example, there are direct and indirect terms for asking the same question and either or both can be used based on contexts and language, such as "Did you have sex together?" or "Did you go with him?"
- Establish the vocabulary to be used for terms of sexual coercion. Questions like "Did you want to have sex? Did he force himself on you? Did you have to go with him?" have different implications and meanings for victims of sexual assault.
- Discuss and understand whether clinical terms and technical language such as 'sexual intercourse', or colloquial, everyday terms like 'sleeping

with' will be more effective. This applies to English and any other language.

- Acknowledge areas of ignorance or gaps in knowledge and learn how to address them with a client or get staff support. For example, acts of sex or sexual assault can be described using unfamiliar terms (in English or another language). Advocates can ask a victim/survivor to explain what happened instead of trying to cover their confusion or ignorance.
- Ignorance about anatomy, naming parts of the body and/or using anatomical terms affect advocates' comfort levels. It is helpful to establish if words, gestures, or drawings will be used and not to hide behind formal or clinical terms for body parts that can make a victim/survivor feel blamed for their ignorance.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

a3. Advocates' own reactions, experiences and vulnerabilities

- Asking questions about sexual violence will bring up reactions from advocates that can include dissociating, having flashbacks, feeling fear of the perpetrator, or feeling disgusted by the details of the story. It is important to identify the possible range of feelings and understand how they may be rooted in one's own personal experiences and/or family histories.
- Disclosing one's own experiences to a client should not be used as a strategy to build rapport or show a victim/survivor that you understand what happened to her. Such sharing can be burdensome for her. However, a shared ethnic or cultural history can make for deeper understanding (e.g., a refugee client who has fled a conflict zone where

sexual violence has been used will expect that an advocate from the same region understands her better). This bond should not be seen by an advocate as an invitation to self-disclosure.

- Just as domestic violence advocates who are themselves survivors of intimate partner violence figure out how to deal with the effects this can have on their day-to-day work, advocates also need to understand how their own history of sexual violence will affect their discomfort levels.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

→ Exercise and Discussion Questions

- **Write down (using index cards at the tables):**
Write at least one 'cultural' and one personal reason you are or might feel uncomfortable about or avoid addressing sexual violence.
- Trainer collects the cards (to be read out later)
- **Discussion question: 15 mins for discussion at the tables**
How do cultural and/or ethnic identities contribute to advocate discomfort about sexual violence?
- **Call out:** Audience calls out answers discussed at the tables and trainer can read out some of the responses on the cards.

b. Survivor/Victim and Community Level Preparations

b1. Learning client histories, vulnerabilities and experiences

- Just as domestic violence programs serving API communities understand the cultural needs of the battered women they serve, the same approach applies to sexual violence. Programs should educate themselves about the vulnerabilities and histories that apply to the client communities served. For example, college students are vulnerable to drug facilitated rape, but first generation refugees could have experienced violence in refugee camps.
- Identifying which ethnic-specific types of sexual violence apply informs prevention and intervention. For example, forced marriages of young girls would indicate coerced sexual initiation; or an ethnic group that practices wife inheritance and has fled a civil war may have a high of incidence of polygamy where women of a wide age range are married to a younger man (the surviving brother who was too young to fight in the war).
- Learning the history of the ethnic groups served helps identify the barriers survivors of sexual violence may face within their own communities (e.g., women victimized by war-time rapes and their children can be ostracized from their community). If such incidents of rape happened during civil war, the rapists could be accepted members of the community, and their victims would have to cope with this trauma.
- Listen for clues about sexual violence that women drop if they don't want to address it directly. They may be trying to assess how you'll handle the information before disclose more. For example, someone may ask, "Have you seen those shows on TV where naked people are doing dirty things?" could be a clue that her partner watches pornography, that she is forced to watch it, and/or she has to mimic the pornographic acts.
- Develop a picture of the individual battered women and based on her socio-cultural and immigration history, consider her vulnerabilities and possible victimization based on the list developed by the API Institute on Domestic Violence. For example, given the revelations about clergy

abuse by Catholic priests, consider if a Catholic woman may have experienced this form of abuse.

- Distinguish between (a) a history of sexual violence, (b) current crises caused by recent assault, and (c) a history or crises for others in the family (i.e. mother, sister, daughter, etc.) that the client deals with. This then informs interventions and referrals needed.

b2. Community responses

- Anticipate what community responses can be expected based on cultural norms. For example, will a victim find support or will she be blamed? Could a young girl be forced to marry her rapist?
- Understand how community responses may be different if the violence happened recently, or many years ago in the home country.
- Anticipate what community attitudes will be towards perpetrators. Will they confront or tacitly support perpetrators? For example, how are perpetrators of war-time rapes, living in their midst, treated?
- Clan, religious, or other community leaders wield power in the community and influence community attitudes towards gender violence, towards victims and towards abusers. Their authority needs to be understood in devising community based responses that support victims and survivors. Also, advocates must be aware of beliefs that might harm victims of sexual violence.
- Victims/survivors and advocates hear many cultural excuses that for example ,justify victim-blaming, and they may sometimes knowingly or unknowingly agree with such attitudes. Advocates need to be prepared to counter cultural defenses that justify violence against women.
- Advocates can face barriers and ostracism within their own ethnic communities in terms of bringing up the issue of sexual violence, so the impact of doing so has to be considered. For example, what are the spaces in which one can speak up about child molesters, landlords who rape women, predatory monks, etc? What does it mean to 'speak up' about them and how will victims/survivors be affected?



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

b3. Victim-blaming

- Victim-blaming around sexual violence (compared to domestic violence) can often run deeper because sexual assault may not even be seen as violence, but rather as a sexual encounter.
- Victim-blaming uses the circumstances of an assault and a victim's appearance as a measure of who is a 'good', or credible victim (i.e. modestly dressed, shy, assaulted at home, etc.), compared to a victim lacking credibility because she is a flashy dresser or was at a bar. Women will generally be aware of these attitudes and advocates have to be aware of their own and their community's victim-blaming attitudes as well.
- With sexual violence, most of the attention is negatively focused on the abused (i.e. Is she being truthful? Why was she there in the first place?, etc.), and shifting attention to the perpetrator, particularly a known one, is met with a lot of resistance.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

c. Agency Level Preparations

c1. Policies and procedures

- Determine the level and extent of services the agency will provide.
- Establish a procedure for facilitated referrals, with follow-up and case coordination, and/or interpretation if needed.
- Develop protocols for mandatory reporting when a minor is a victim and have procedures about including the mother, or the non-abusive caretaker in making the report.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

c2. Staff training

- Interpretation: training on the guidelines for domestic violence advocates who may provide informal interpretation (e.g., repeating a question a client asks, such as "what is rape crisis counseling?" and interpreting the answer instead of explaining the term). Formal interpretation refers to the use of trained, court-certified interpreters which is the first option, but in many circumstances, API advocates are asked to provide oral translation.
- Staff meetings and in-service trainings in domestic violence programs should include and integrate topics on sexual violence.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

c3. Collaboration with sexual assault/rape crisis programs

- Develop a relationship with local sexual violence service programs for crisis intervention services and to make referrals.
- Design cross-trainings on domestic violence and sexual assault to increase learning and case collaboration amongst staff of both agencies.
- Hold cultural competency trainings to sensitize sexual assault programs about Asian and Pacific Islander and immigrant communities and the domestic violence agency's approach to serving them.
- Establish protocols for collaboration on cases.
- Educate advocates about state-specific legal issues related regarding confidentiality in sexual assault cases. For example, in some states, the 'first witness' has to testify, so a domestic violence advocates who first receives a disclosure cannot claim confidentiality.
- VAWA Petitions: histories of sexual violence may need documentation if a VAWA petition is being prepared for a battered woman. Advocates can therefore expect to collaborate with attorney filing in this petition.

c4. Support, supervision and self-care for advocates

- Identify the difficulties domestic violence advocates face in doing this work.
- Identify the issues Asian and Pacific Islander domestic violence advocates face in doing this work.

- Establish ways for staff and volunteers to get peer support.
- Train supervisors on sexual violence to enable them to address staff needs and concerns and understand how trauma is triggered for staff.
- Provide structured supervision on sexual violence.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

d. Services and Referrals

d1. Crisis services and referrals

- If a battered woman is in a current crisis because of sexual assault, her advocate needs to determine if it's best to refer her out or to address the crisis within the agency. This depends on the nature of the crisis and what is important to the woman – an advocate from her ethnic group or a sexual assault counselor. The two advocates can work together with her if she needs both.
- A domestic violence advocate must be clear (to herself/himself and the client) about what services she/he can provide.
- Assess who else needs help and referrals and help the client make connections to how others are affected. For example, how are her children dealing with their mother's rape? Or, if they witnessed her rape, they may be ashamed or fearful and stay away from home, or may become withdrawn about their own problems.
- Identify the extent of the role an advocate can play as an interpreter for the other agencies involved.

- Sensitize the client to culture and gender issues in dealing with crisis. For example, if there has been incest and the family sends 18 year old daughter to stay with an 'auntie' and keeps the 19 old year old son at home. This sends a message to the daughter that she shouldn't be in the home or that they are more protective of the son (abuser) than daughter (victim).



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

d2. Non-crisis interventions for past experiences of sexual violence

- Provide a space to talk about these issues that is not necessarily a space to go into problem-solving mode. Remember, many battered women say that they want to talk about sexual violence but their advocates don't.
- Assess what else a client needs and explore strategies for healing. For example, she may:
 1. Want to join a support group,
 2. Confide to her intimate partner about her experiences,
 3. Confide to family members, an adult daughter she is close to, or her sisters, etc., about what happened to her, or
 4. Confront someone who harmed her, stayed silent or blamed her.

- Sensitize the client to culture and gender issues, explore what reactions her family and community members might have. For example, if there's collective silence about collective trauma (sexual violence after a natural disaster), there may be victim-blaming instead of support; or if she discloses that she was trafficked by her parents, she will not be believed.



TRAINER'S NOTATIONS:

SEXUAL VIOLENCE & API WOMEN

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum
Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence
www.apiahf.org/apidvinstitute

Sexual Violence

This is a critical issue affecting Asian and Pacific Islander battered women. We are working to understand and analyze the kinds of sexual violence API women face; the contexts that increase their vulnerability (e.g., coming from conflict zones or refugee camps); the intersections of sexual violence and domestic violence; issues regarding access to services; and to identify resources, individuals, programs, and advocates addressing sexual violence in API communities. The information we have enumerated on the types of sexual violence, vulnerable women, and potentially dangerous settings can apply to many women, not only to Asians and Pacific Islanders. This makes our work applicable to advocacy for victims and survivors in any community.

We distinguish between experiences of, and vulnerabilities to sexual violence. Hence we start with two questions:

- What kinds of sexual violence do women in various Asian and Pacific Islander communities experience?
- What particular contexts increase their vulnerability?

Definition

Sexual violence includes sexual actions and threats that are experienced as invasive to the body and violate bodily integrity.

—*World Health Organization Report, 2002*

Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

—*Jewkes, Sen and Garcia-Moreno WHO Report 2002*

Types of Sexual Violence

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Child Sexual Assault (CSA) ■ Coerced (forced) sex (***) ■ Coerced sexual initiation (***) ■ Custodial rapes: in police stations, jails, etc., (***) ■ Cyber assaults, cyber stalking and cyber predators (***) ■ Date rape/Drug facilitated rape ■ Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) ■ Forced marriages, including marriage of children (***) ■ Gang rapes ■ Ignorance about sexuality, anatomy, sex, or sexual safety (e.g. birth control is deliberately maintained by parents to 'protect' girls). Such ignorance can cause serious harm in the face of predatory behavior. (***) ■ Incestuous Sexual Assault (ISA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Marriage related sexual violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Abandonment, physical and/or sexual abandonment of wives/brides ◆ Infidelity ◆ Marital rape ◆ Polygamy: one man has several wives – whether through legal or 'cultural' marriages (listed as sexual violence because the culture or the husband forces women to accept this arrangement) ◆ Polyandry: one woman has several husbands (listed as sexual violence if a woman is forced into this arrangement) ◆ Temporary marriage: practiced in parts of West Asia as a way to legitimize sexual relations between non-married couples (over the dating period, for example) or with a prostitute (for the length of the encounter). (***) ◆ Marriage by capture: practiced in parts of Southeast Asia, a woman is 'captured' by potential husband and kept captive for a few days before 'consenting' to marry him. (***)
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(continued)

Types of Sexual Violence continued...

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repeated molestation by known assailants or by strangers in crowded public spaces (e.g. buses). In India, this is termed 'eve-teasing'. ■ Neglect/coldness: extreme sexual neglect or coldly going through the motions of sex (***) ■ Pornographic-related violence: being forced to watch and mimic pornographic acts ■ Rape by a known assailant or by a stranger ■ Rape and its aftermath, which can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Victim-blaming ◆ Being forced to marry rapist or someone else right away ◆ Abandonment or violence by the victim's family towards the victim ◆ If a pregnancy results from the rape, family may send her to their home country permanently, force her to carry the pregnancy, give up child for adoption, or force her to have an abortion ■ Sexual harassment in workplaces, places of worship, homes, schools, or university campuses. (***) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Survival or transactional sex: women having sex in exchange for necessities like food, children's clothes, a place to stay, etc., and not necessarily with multiple men (this is not the same as sex work). (***) ■ Unprotected sex (forced) leading to an unwanted pregnancy, HIV, or STI exposure. This can affect women with trans-national partners who travel between the U.S. and home countries frequently. (***) ■ Virginity examinations and attendant surgeries to ensure that her hymen is in tact (e.g., sewing up a torn hymen). In fact, ruptured hymens do not necessarily bleed - referred to medically as a compliant hymen. (***) ■ Voyeurism, includes flashing, peeping, or using technology. ■ Wife inheritance: also called fraternal polyandry where a widow must marry her dead husband's brother. (***) ■ Witnessing rape: children or family forced to watch (or know it is happening) and how it affects both victim and witness.
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Vulnerable Women & Girls and Potentially Dangerous Settings

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Actresses ■ Athletes ■ Battered women ■ College campuses ■ Disaster zones (e.g., tsunami in SE Asia, earthquakes in Pakistan) (***) ■ Domestic workers (***) ■ Elderly ■ Healthcare settings ■ High schools (can include predatory behavior from teachers, coaches, other authority figures) ■ Homeless women and kids ■ Immigration processes/unsafe travels (***) ■ Incarcerated women ■ International Marriage Bureaus: women married through IMB services (***) ■ Lesbians, Bisexual and Transgender individuals, including teens and young women (***) ■ Mentally disabled or mentally ill ■ Military wives/partners and women in the vicinity of military bases (***) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Models ■ Those in police custody/jails (particularly in home countries) (***) ■ Poor women and the exploitation of female poverty in the form of adoption, trafficking, and transactional sex. ■ Pregnant women ■ Prostituted women, teens, and children/sex workers ■ Refugees in war or post-war camps (***) ■ Religious and cultural minorities (***) ■ Sexual abuse by clergy/clerics ■ Stalked women ■ Teens: pregnant, sexually-active teens, or runaways (***) ■ Trafficked women ■ Wartime vulnerabilities (e.g., civil or international wars) (***) ■ Women with disabilities ■ Workers in exploitative settings
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Let us know if you want to add something.

About the API Institute on Domestic Violence

Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence

The Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence is a national resource center and clearinghouse on gender violence in API communities. It serves a national network of advocates, community members, organizations, service agencies, professionals, researchers, policy advocates, and activists from community and social justice organizations working to eliminate violence against API women. The API Institute's goals focus on strengthening advocacy, organizing communities, and addressing systems change.

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum

The API Institute is part of the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum, a national policy organization advocating for the health and well-being of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. APIAHF envisions a multi-cultural society where Asian American and Pacific Islander communities are included and represented in health, political, social and economic areas, and where there is social justice for all.

Please contact us for information or technical assistance

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MULTI-LEVEL PREPARATIONS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS SEXUAL VIOLENCE

1. Advocate Level Preparations

a. Understanding advocate discomfort

- Advocate discomfort is a significant barrier to addressing battered women's experiences or vulnerabilities to sexual violence. In our experience, we hear conflicting accounts: API battered women express their readiness to disclose sexual violence but, advocate discomfort inhibited them. API advocates mention that for many API battered women it's not culturally appropriate and/or age-appropriate for an older client to discuss sexual violence with a younger advocate. Hence, surfacing advocate discomfort is important to strengthening advocacy.
- Our own ignorance about sexuality and anatomy affects our ability to ask about sexual violence.
- We need to address our own misconceptions, stereotypes, and projections about sexual violence.
- Battered women notice and are affected by the levels of advocate discomfort and will hold off on disclosing histories of sexual violence.

b. Language: vocabulary, terms, interpretation/translation

- Lack of adequate language skills or knowledge of the correct vocabulary are often cited by advocates as the reason for not addressing sexual violence with victims. **However, the language and terms we use need to be figured out in the languages we speak when interacting with clients, even for those whose primary language is English.** Advocates will need to discuss the following

issues to address their own discomfort and prepare themselves for interventions about sexual violence.

- Consider and discuss the vocabulary and terms for sex used in different cultures and/or languages of the populations served. For example, there are direct and indirect terms for asking the same question and either or both can be used based on contexts and language, such as "Did you have sex together?" or "Did you go with him?"
- Establish the vocabulary to be used for terms of sexual coercion. Questions like "Did you want to have sex? Did he force himself on you? Did you have to go with him?" have different implications and meanings for victims of sexual assault.
- Discuss and understand whether clinical terms and technical language such as 'sexual intercourse', or colloquial, everyday terms like 'sleeping with' will be more effective. This applies to English and any other language.
- Acknowledge areas of ignorance or gaps in knowledge and learn how to address them with a client or get staff support. For example, acts of sex or sexual assault can be described using unfamiliar terms (in English or another language). Advocates can ask a victim/survivor to explain what happened instead of trying to cover their confusion or ignorance.
- Ignorance about anatomy, naming parts of the body and/or using anatomical terms affect advocates' comfort levels. It is helpful to establish if words, gestures, or drawings will be used and not to hide behind formal or clinical terms for body parts that can make a victim/survivor feel blamed for their ignorance.

c. Advocates' own reactions, experiences and vulnerabilities

- Asking questions about sexual violence will bring up reactions from advocates that can include dissociating, having flashbacks, feeling fear of the perpetrator, or feeling disgusted by the details of the story. It is important to identify the possible range of feelings and understand how they may be rooted in one's own personal experiences and/or family histories.
- Disclosing one's own experiences to a client should not be used as a strategy to build rapport or show a victim/survivor that you understand what happened to her. Such sharing can be burdensome for her. However, a shared ethnic or

cultural history can make for deeper understanding (e.g., a refugee client who has fled a conflict zone where sexual violence has been used will expect that an advocate from the same region understands her better). This bond should not be seen by an advocate as an invitation to self-disclosure.

- Just as domestic violence advocates who are themselves survivors of intimate partner violence figure out how to deal with the effects this can have on their day-to-day work, advocates also need to understand how their own history of sexual violence will affect their discomfort levels.

2. Survivor/Victim and Community Level Preparations

a. Learning client histories, vulnerabilities and experiences

- Just as domestic violence programs serving API communities understand the cultural needs of the battered women they serve, the same approach applies to sexual violence. Programs should educate themselves about the vulnerabilities and histories that apply to the client communities served. For example, college students are vulnerable to drug facilitated rape, but first generation refugees could have experienced violence in refugee camps.
- Identifying which ethnic-specific types of sexual violence apply informs prevention and intervention. For example, forced marriages of young girls would indicate coerced sexual initiation; or an ethnic group that practices wife inheritance and has fled a civil war may have a high of incidence of polygamy where women of a wide age range are married to a younger man (the surviving brother who was too young to fight in the war).
- Learning the history of the ethnic groups served helps identify the barriers survivors of sexual violence may face within their own communities (e.g., women victimized by war-time rapes and their children can be ostracized from their community). If such incidents of rape happened during civil war, the rapists could be accepted members of the community, and their victims would have to cope with this trauma.
- Listen for clues about sexual violence that women drop if they don't want to address it directly. They may be trying to assess how you'll handle the information before disclose more. For example, someone may ask., "Have you seen those shows on TV where naked people are doing dirty things?" could be

a clue that her partner watches pornography, that she is forced to watch it, and/or she has to mimic the pornographic acts.

- Develop a picture of the individual battered women and based on her socio-cultural and immigration history, consider her vulnerabilities and possible victimization based on the list developed by the API Institute on Domestic Violence. For example, given the revelations about clergy abuse by Catholic priests, consider if a Catholic woman may have experienced this form of abuse.
- Distinguish between (a) a history of sexual violence, (b) current crises caused by recent assault, and (c) a history or crises for others in the family (i.e. mother, sister, daughter, etc.) that the client deals with. This then informs interventions and referrals needed.

b. Community responses

- Anticipate what community responses can be expected based on cultural norms. For example, will a victim find support or will she be blamed? Could a young girl be forced to marry her rapist?
- Understand how community responses may be different if the violence happened recently, or many years ago in the home country.
- Anticipate what community attitudes will be towards perpetrators. Will they confront or tacitly support perpetrators? For example, how are perpetrators of war-time rapes, living in their midst, treated?
- Clan, religious, or other community leaders wield power in the community and influence community attitudes towards gender violence, towards victims and towards abusers. Their authority needs to be understood in devising community based responses that support victims and survivors. Also, advocates must be aware of beliefs that might harm victims of sexual violence.
- Victims/survivors and advocates hear many cultural excuses that for example, justify victim-blaming, and they may sometimes knowingly or unknowingly agree with such attitudes. Advocates need to be prepared to counter cultural defenses that justify violence against women.
- Advocates can face barriers and ostracism within their own ethnic communities in terms of bringing up the issue of sexual violence, so the impact of doing so has to be considered. For example, what are the spaces in which one can speak up about child molesters, landlords who rape women, predatory monks, etc?

What does it mean to 'speak up' about them and how will victims/survivors be affected?

c. Victim-blaming

- Victim-blaming around sexual violence (compared to domestic violence) can often run deeper because sexual assault may not even be seen as violence, but rather as a sexual encounter.
- Victim-blaming uses the circumstances of an assault and a victim's appearance as a measure of who is a 'good', or credible victim (i.e. modestly dressed, shy, assaulted at home, etc.), compared to a victim lacking credibility because she is a flashy dresser or was at a bar. Women will generally be aware of these attitudes and advocates have to be aware of their own and their community's victim-blaming attitudes as well.
- With sexual violence, most of the attention is negatively focused on the abused (i.e. Is she being truthful? Why was she there in the first place?, etc.), and shifting attention to the perpetrator, particularly a known one, is met with a lot of resistance.

3. Agency level preparations

a. Policies and procedures

- Determine the level and extent of services the agency will provide.
- Establish a procedure for facilitated referrals, with follow-up and case coordination, and/or interpretation if needed.
- Develop protocols for mandatory reporting when a minor is a victim and have procedures about including the mother, or the non-abusive caretaker in making the report.

b. Staff training

- Interpretation: training on the guidelines for domestic violence advocates who may provide informal interpretation (e.g., repeating a question a client asks, such as "what is rape crisis counseling?" and interpreting the answer instead of explaining the term). Formal interpretation refers to the use of trained, court-

certified interpreters which is the first option, but in many circumstances, API advocates are asked to provide oral translation.

- Staff meetings and in-service trainings in domestic violence programs should include and integrate topics on sexual violence.

c. Collaboration with rape crisis/sexual assault programs

- Develop a relationship with local sexual violence service programs for crisis intervention services and to make referrals.
- Design cross-trainings on domestic violence and sexual assault to increase learning and case collaboration amongst staff of both agencies.
- Hold cultural competency trainings to sensitize sexual assault programs about Asian and Pacific Islander and immigrant communities and the domestic violence agency's approach to serving them.
- Establish protocols for collaboration on cases.
- Educate advocates about state-specific legal issues related regarding confidentiality in sexual assault cases. For example, in some states, the 'first witness' has to testify, so a domestic violence advocates who first receives a disclosure cannot claim confidentiality.
- VAWA Petitions: histories of sexual violence may need documentation if a VAWA petition is being prepared for a battered woman. Advocates can therefore expect to collaborate with attorney filing in this petition.

d. Support, self-care and supervision for advocates

- Identify the difficulties domestic violence advocates face in doing this work.
- Identify the issues Asian and Pacific Islander domestic violence advocates face in doing this work.
- Establish ways for staff and volunteers to get peer support.
- Train supervisors on sexual violence to enable them to address staff needs and concerns and understand how trauma is triggered for staff.
- Provide structured supervision on sexual violence.

4. Services and Referrals

a. Crisis services and referrals

- If a battered woman is in a current crisis because of sexual assault, her advocate needs to determine if it's best to refer her out or to address the crisis within the agency. This depends on the nature of the crisis and what is important to the woman – an advocate from her ethnic group or a sexual assault counselor. The two advocates can work together with her if she needs both.
- A domestic violence advocate must be clear (to herself/himself and the client) about what services she/he can provide.
- Assess who else needs help and referrals and help the client make connections to how others are affected. For example, how are her children dealing with their mother's rape? Or, if they witnessed her rape, they may be ashamed or fearful and stay away from home, or may become withdrawn about their own problems.
- Identify the extent of the role an advocate can play as an interpreter for the other agencies involved.
- Sensitize the client to culture and gender issues in dealing with crisis. For example, if there has been incest and the family sends 18 year old daughter to stay with an 'auntie' and keeps the 19 old year old son at home. This sends a message to the daughter that she shouldn't be in the home or that they are more protective of the son (abuser) than daughter (victim).

b. Non-crisis interventions for past experiences of sexual violence

- Provide a space to talk about these issues that is not necessarily a space to go into problem-solving mode. Remember, many battered women say that they want to talk about sexual violence but their advocates don't.
- Assess what else a client needs and explore strategies for healing. For example, she may:
 - a. Want to join a support group,
 - b. Confide to her intimate partner about her experiences,

Sexual Violence HANDOUT #2

- c. Confide to family members, an adult daughter she is close to, or her sisters, etc., about what happened to her, or
 - d. Confront someone who harmed her, stayed silent or blamed her.
- Sensitize the client to culture and gender issues, explore what reactions her family and community members might have. For example, if there's collective silence about collective trauma (sexual violence after a natural disaster), there may be victim-blaming instead of support; or if she discloses that she was trafficked by her parents, she will not be believed.

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