

EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRACTICES TO SERVE ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

Domestic Violence Awareness Month 2018

Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence
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October 2018

Acknowledgements

- ▶ Survivors teach and inspire us!
- ▶ Our movement provides a powerful and solid infrastructure
- ▶ Our communities sustain us and our hopes
- ▶ Women leaders, advocates, activists serve as agents of change
- ▶ Asian/Pacific Islander (API) advocates have anchored cultural frameworks to address domestic and gender violence in the unique *A-Z Advocacy Model*
- ▶ FVPSA: Family Violence Prevention & Services Act funds national resource centers & state coalitions for training, technical assistance, research, publications; and services (1,239 shelters, 247 non-shelter programs, 146 Tribal programs served 1.28 million victims in 2017)

Culture of Gender-Based Violence

Violence against women, girls and marginalized identities is perpetuated by cultural beliefs and norms that devalue them; and legitimized, obscured or denied by familial and social institutions, which:

- ▶ normalize or minimize abuse
- ▶ blame victims and excuse abusers
- ▶ ignore gender bias, sexism, misogyny
- ▶ promote aggressive masculinity
- ▶ institutionalize women's devaluation of other women
- ▶ use men's roles & achievements to exonerate, excuse, deny the impact of their behavior

Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence



Lifetime Spiral shows:

1. **Historical nature of gender-based violence** and that sexism and misogyny are foundational, violence isn't accidental
2. **Types of abuses** girls and women are vulnerable to, or experience at different stages
3. **Different perpetrators are located across lifecourse**
4. **Help-seeking can be influenced by** positive and negative experiences/attempts in the past

Ethnic & Identity-Specific Cultures

- ▶ **All** ethnic groups have cultural identities; gender norms
- ▶ **Strengths:** Cultural identities contain the histories of a people that include traditions, struggles, achievements, triumphs. Cultures nourish pride, resilience, belonging, intersectional identities, connection to community
- ▶ **Harms:** Cultures prescribe and maintain traditional patriarchal gender norms and roles; define 'transgressions' from these norms; and patrol the boundaries of what is and isn't culturally acceptable, enforcing compliance by violence, rejection, fear, or even "*death by a thousand paper cuts*"

How has DV Awareness Influenced Cultural Changes for Asians/Pacific Islanders?

- ▶ Denial “domestic violence is not a problem in our community” → 150+ CBOs/programs all over the U.S. designed by and for Asians/Pacific Islanders
- ▶ Silence to preserve family honor → women, youth, LGBTQ survivors telling their stories of abuse, trauma, resilience
- ▶ Victim-blaming → making shame change sides
- ▶ Frozen culture → new/existing generations, activists, advocates, communities keep re-defining culture
- ▶ Traditional family structure → Women, men, GNC (gender non-conforming) members pushing back on old norms
- ▶ Rigid gender roles → sharing responsibility of 1st (jobs) 2nd (parenting/housework) 3rd (emotional labor) shifts ⁷

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER (API) HOMES

- ▶ The presence of domestic violence tell us about the presence of inequality in the relationship, the extent of the violence tells us about the extent of the inequality

Domestic Violence Is a Pattern

Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviors intended to gain or maintain power and control over a partner to intimidate, frighten, terrorize, humiliate, blame, injure. It includes:

- ▶ Violent acts resulting in injuries, and even death
- ▶ Sexism, misogyny, devaluation, humiliation resulting in a climate of subjugation
- ▶ Coercive control are abuses marked by their 'routine' nature to establish fear, dependence, domination
- ▶ Systematic, repeated, oppressions resulting in complex trauma

Domestic violence is not couples conflict

Domestic violence is not caused by stress

Domestic Violence: 1 in 3 Women

Studies from **different countries** show that the percentage of women 15 to 49 years old who've **experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner** in their lifetime ranges from

15% to **71%**

26% - 80% men perpetrated physical & sexual violence against a partner (Men surveyed in 6 Asian/Pacific Islander countries)



Among ever-partnered men, lifetime prevalence of perpetration of physical and/or sexual partner violence ranged from 26 percent to 80 percent.

Domestic Violence in Asian Homes: Extent of the Problem

- 41-61% experienced domestic violence
- 64% of Indians/Pakistanis, 56% of Filipinas report intimate sexual violence
- 68% of Filipinas & 50% of Indian/Pakistani women report being stalked
- 78% of homicide victims were women, 83% of perpetrators were men
- Childhood Exposure
Being hit regularly as kids:
 - 80% of Koreans
 - 79% of South Asians
 - 72% of Vietnamese
 - 70% of Cambodians
 - 61% of ChineseWitnessing Homicide
 - 60 (of 63) non-fatal child victims were ear or eye witnesses to maternal homicide

Differing Dynamics: (1) Physical Violence

- ❑ **Multiple Abusers-Single Victim** Battering and coercive control in extended family home by male & female in-laws, ex-wives, natal family member
- ❑ **Stalking:** Monitoring activities and visitors, cyber-stalking; exercising abusive controls from afar
- ❑ **Withholding Necessities:** Food, healthcare, medication, climate-appropriate clothing, daily-use items (like soap)
- ❑ **Transnational Abandonment:** Wife &/or kids abandoned in home country or in the U.S. without any resources
- ❑ **Marry & Dump:** Brides dumped by husbands (sometimes, untraceable) who file almost immediately for divorce
- ❑ **Abusive International Marriages:** Older men marrying very young women/teens

Evidence-informed Advocacy: Multiple Abusers

- ❑ **Impact of Multiple Perpetrators**
 - More injuries, controls, victim-blaming, family collusion
 - Diminished credibility in systems, less help-seeking
 - Children are fearful of extended family; isolated from mother
- ❑ **Intervention Implications**
 - ✓ *The Question is the Intervention:* Women are not lying, denying, minimizing, protecting their abuser
 - ✓ Determining if there are multiple abusers and what tactics they use greatly enhances safety planning
 - ✓ Accompanying relatives cannot be assumed as being survivor's support network
 - ✓ Legal remedies should be designed to address safety from multiple abusers
 - ✓ Train police, legal, health, social services, etc. to assess/ask

Differing Dynamics: (2) Emotional Abuse

- ▶ **'Push' factors** out of the relationship by abuser and/or in-laws more frequently than 'pull' factors back into the home
- ▶ **Coercive Control** micro-controls marked by frequency, 'routine' nature; surveillance
- ▶ **Severe isolation** by inhibiting contact with family in the home country and other support systems
- ▶ **Using religion & culture** to justify abuse, to enforce nexus of shame and public disclosure → silence victims, blame them for dishonor to family, exile survivors from community
- ▶ **Natal family pressures** to tolerate abuse & stay in marriage, and refusing to help her if she leaves/returns home
- ▶ **Stigmatizing divorced women** and mothers
- ▶ **Demaneing widows**, exploiting their dependence on family₁₅

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Evidence-informed Advocacy: Emotional Abuse

Intervention Implications: Understanding How 'Push' Factors and 'Culture' Affect:

- ✓ Push factors shrink space for decision-making, autonomy → Acknowledge/ assess severity of push factors
- ✓ Children → Plan early how mother & children will leave/stay together, in case mother is pushed out
- ✓ Survivors feel afraid and trapped by coercive controls → Don't make assumptions about empowerment, autonomy
- ✓ Religion is used to force silence, obedience, sacrifice → Provide accurate information to counter such views
- ✓ Help-seeking → Prepare survivors to navigate systems, supportive family, community and professional resources

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Differing Dynamics: (3) Sexual Violence

- ▶ Reproductive coercion, particularly given son preference
- ▶ Being forced to watch and imitate pornography
- ▶ Infidelity, women being forced to tolerate it
- ▶ Women accused of/punished for alleged infidelity
- ▶ Bodily humiliation/body shaming (also by female in-laws)
- ▶ Exposure to HIV, STIs by transnational husbands /partners with second families or engaged in sex tourism
- ▶ Sexual violence in home countries: family, community & system responses are used by batterers to demean, reject, silence, blame or further violate intimate partner
- ▶ Extreme sexual neglect and coldness, jealousy

Evidence-informed Advocacy: Sexual Abuse

Intervention Implications: Identifying Impact of API Cultures:

- ✓ High levels of victim-blaming/shaming → unpacking survivors' responses within API patriarchal contexts and addressing them in trauma-informed frameworks
- ✓ Victims coerced into community/family-designed 'solutions' → recognize coercion, validate its traumatic impact on victims
- ✓ Family rejection → identify contexts such as SA by state actors or male in-laws; LGBTQ identity; dating prohibitions for teens
- ✓ Overlooking/ignoring injuries → dispelling ignorance &/or shame about body, anatomy
- ✓ Silence enforced to protect family 'honor' → acknowledge that silence can be self-protective
- ✓ Advocate discomfort can be barrier to survivor disclosure → identifying and training on causes: such as personal histories, internalized cultural biases, SA vocabulary in API languages

Differing Dynamics (4) Immigration Status

Abuses Connected to Immigration/Refugee Status

- ▶ Refusing or neglecting to file paperwork for status changes
- ▶ Escalated deportation & other threats in current climate; reporting undocumented survivors' locations to ICE
- ▶ Using survivors' lack of English proficiency to manipulate systems, claim victimization
- ▶ Exploiting refugees' triple trauma from conflict-transit-resettlement stages to silence DV victimization
- ▶ Blocking access to support, assistance, benefits, services, job training, English-learning, etc.
- ▶ Controlling economic resources
- ▶ Making false accusations against survivors

Evidence-informed Advocacy for Immigrant/Refugee Survivors

Safety Planning Means:

- ✓ Leaving may not be option because:
 - Individual, family, community histories inform decision-making
 - Life-and-death assessments of danger are collective (not individual)
 - Deep, irrevocable losses connected to trauma of leaving/fleeing
 - Fears of being exiled from/losing connection to community
- ✓ Considering impact of immigration enforcement on victim services and protections:
 - Harboring and transportation: addressing the legal obligations of CBOs serving undocumented survivors and criminalizing the sheltering of undocumented immigrants
 - Responding to immigration agents detaining survivors
 - Public charge: how utilizing government benefits –food, housing, healthcare– may jeopardize adjustment of status or applying for entry into U.S.

Other Dynamics of Domestic Violence

(5) Abuse Directed at Mothers

- ▶ Disrupting maternal child bonding
- ▶ Threatened or permanent loss of custody/access to children
- ▶ False allegations of child abuse
- ▶ Stigmatizing divorced, single mothers

(6) Abuse in LGBTQ/Trans Relationships

- ▶ Risks and harms for outed victims are elevated in homophobic communities
- ▶ Elevated systems-generated risks for trans survivors are exploited by their abusers/family members

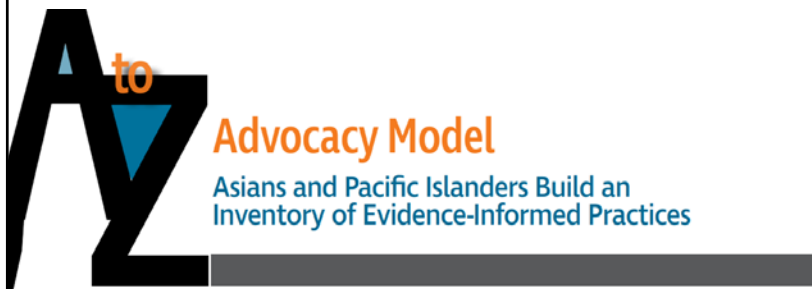
Other Dynamics: (7) Elder Abuse


- ▶ Domestic violence by partner
- ▶ Multiple perpetrators, single victim
- ▶ Abusers can be family or non-family care givers
- ▶ Multiple types of abuses, including sexual
- ▶ Hyper-exploitation for household labor, childcare, etc.
- ▶ Demeaning and isolating widows
- ▶ Withholding food, medications, community connections
- ▶ Coerced 'suicide pacts', 'mercy killings', family unwillingness to investigate domestic violence related homicides by elderly parent

THUS, Addressing API-Specific Dynamics Means:

- ▶ Safety from multiple perpetrators
- ▶ Knowing how 'push' factors affect women's decisions, autonomy
- ▶ Identifying and responding to trends e.g., marry-&-dump
- ▶ How immigration status is a tool of abuse and current policies & procedures impact survivor safety and service utilization
- ▶ Breaking the nexus of public disclosure & shame heaped on victims, but not on perpetrators
- ▶ Maintaining survivors' connections to community, overseas family
- ▶ Addressing family- community- and systems-generated trauma due to fleeing conflict zones, home countries, and extreme loss
- ▶ Confronting community leaders to be part of the solution instead of the problem
- ▶ Working with our communities to challenge and change traditional gender roles to build gender equality

A-Z Advocacy Model is an inventory of evidence-informed practices in response to existing/new trends in gender violence and inter- and intra-API cultural and linguistic diversity. It is anchored in 5 principles.






Evidence-informed practices to address API-specific DV trends/dynamics

PRINCIPLE #1 : Survivor-centered advocacy is based on a culturally-specific definition and analysis of DV and related barriers

What does this mean for survivors? They don't have to:

- Explain cultural & familial contexts of abuse and community-generated barriers
- Feel scrutinized because they are not acculturated
- Fear their disclosures will be sensationalized to confirm racist stereotypes
- Distrust that interventions will disrupt their connection to community

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Evidence-informed practice to address API-specific DV trends/dynamics

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS: Even small CBOs offer a wide range of services to survivors and are disproportionately relied on by mainstream programs.

Of 160 API-serving programs:

- 51% provide some type of shelter/housing
- 86% provide 18 types of support services: top 2 being case management and interpretation
- 88% provide some type of legal services: top 3 being court accompaniment, protection orders, and immigration law assistance

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Evidence-informed practice to serve API survivors of gender violence

PRINCIPLE #2: Integrating impacts of lifecourse abuse and positive & negative help-seeking experiences has expanded a culturally-specific inventory of practices

What does this mean for survivors?


- Culturally-specific services can reinforce DV survivors' trust in their advocate, resulting in help-seeking for undisclosed histories of abuse over the lifecourse
- Increased access and mitigated barriers because services are not compartmentalized
- Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence shows historical nature of abuse and its culturally-specific impacts on trauma, help-seeking, resilience, healing



Over 90 types of abuses addressed

One hundred and sixty agencies were surveyed to identify which of the following types of gender-based violence they address with culturally-specific programming for API survivors. Of these agencies:

- 95% address domestic violence
- 69% address sexual violence / sexual assault
- 44% address stalking
- 44% address abuse by in-laws
- 43% address elder abuse
- 37% address child abuse
- 36% address forced marriage (of minors or young adults by their parents)
- 35% address international trafficking
- 28% address dating/hook up violence affecting teens and young adults
- 48% address LGBTQ intimate partner violence ⁴⁰
- 22% address transnational abandonment ⁴¹
- 19% address Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking (DMST)
- 13% address abusive international marriages/relationships in Hmong communities ⁴²




Evidence-informed practice to serve diversity of API survivors

PRINCIPLE #3: Services are designed to address ethnic & language diversity within and among APIs

What does this mean for survivors?

- Survivors know they are not lumped into a single ‘Asian’ category and advocates can differentiate their cultural contexts and language needs
 - Of 56 API ethnicities served by 160 programs, 41 were Asian, 15 were Pacific Islander
- Intra-API diversity is also well-understood
 - E.g. In each of South Asia’s 6 countries and vast diaspora, there are multiple intersectional intra-ethnic, religious, language, etc., differences
- Bilingual/multilingual and bi-literate advocates increase access to, and navigation within, systems
- Survivors w/limited English proficiency are respected

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Language Services

Of the 121 languages that services are provided in by 160 programs:

- 75 are Asian and Pacific Islander languages
- 46 are non-API languages

Of 160 programs:

- 91% provide bilingual or multilingual services in languages other than English
- 89% provide services in one or more Asian and Pacific Islander languages
- 54% provide services in five or more Asian and Pacific Islander languages
- 26% provide services in ten or more Asian and Pacific Islander languages
- 5% provide services in twenty or more Asian and Pacific Islander languages
- 38% contract for telephonic or in-person interpretation for languages they lack the capacity to provide

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Language Access: Key Interpretation Reminders

1. Bi-lingual speakers vs trained interpreters have different skills/roles
2. Interpretation is most often in consecutive mode, sometimes in simultaneous mode
3. Basic rules: use first person; do not summarize; do not answer questions but interpret them all
4. Do not use 'culturally acceptable' ways of addressing sexual assault
5. Interpreters are not cultural experts or linguists and should not be asked to or give opinions about cultural practices or meanings
6. Immigrant/refugee deaf survivors may not know ASL, they need relay sign language interpretation
7. Interpreters specialize in medical or court/legal interpretation
8. If possible, work with interpreters trained about domestic violence, sexual assault: they are familiar with the dynamics and vocabulary
9. Learn to identify and address poor interpretation right away

What Kind of Cultures Do We Want?

We want cultures

... where gender parity/gender democracy, not gender violence, is the norm

... where relationships of power are replaced by relationships of meaning



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This content was funded by a grant number 90EV0430 from the Dept of Health and Human Services (DHHS); Administration for Children and Families (ACF); Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF); Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB). The viewpoints contained in it are solely the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the official views or policies of ACF/ACYF/FYSB.