



## Fact Sheet: Domestic Violence in Muslim Communities

June 2011

### 1. Demographics

- ◆ Muslims constitute 0.8% (2,454,000) of the U.S. adult population.<sup>1</sup>
- ◆ 65% of U.S. Muslims are foreign-born; 27% of them emigrated from South and Central Asia, including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup>
- ◆ 35% of Muslims in the U.S. self-identify as African American, the largest racial group within the community.<sup>3</sup>
- ◆ 18%, nearly one in five Muslim Americans, self-identify as Asian.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center Forum on Religion and Public Life. *Mapping the Global Muslim Population: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Muslim Population*. Washington, DC: Author; 2009.  
<http://pewforum.org/Muslim/Mapping-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx> (Retrieved 1-10-11)

<sup>2</sup> Pew Research Center. *Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream*. Washington, DC: Author; 2007.  
<http://pewresearch.org/assets/pdf/muslim-americans.pdf> (Retrieved 1-10-11)

<sup>3</sup> Gallup Center for Muslim Studies. *Muslim Americans: A National Portrait, An in-depth analysis of America's most diverse religious community*. Washington, DC: Author; 2009.  
<http://www.abudhabigallupcenter.com/File/144332/AmericanMuslimReport.pdf> (Retrieved 1-10-11)

### 2. Statistics

All the data in this section is re-printed, with permission, from Research by Peaceful Families Project: [www.peacefulfamilies.org/Abuse\\_Statistics.pdf](http://www.peacefulfamilies.org/Abuse_Statistics.pdf)

- ◆ **Prevalence:** A survey of 63 Muslim leaders showed that 10% of Muslims experienced physical abuse in their homes.

Alkhateeb, Sharifa. "Ending domestic violence in Muslim families." *Journal of Religion and Abuse* 1.44 (1999): 49-59.

- ◆ **Prevalence:** A study of 23 Muslim married female immigrants from Bangladesh residing in Houston, Texas revealed a 10% prevalence rate of spousal abuse.

Rianon, Nahid J., and Shelton, A. J. "Perception of spousal abuse expressed by married Bangladeshi immigrant women in Houston, Texas, U.S.A." *Journal of Immigrant Health* 5.1 (2003): 37-44.

- ◆ **Attitudes:** A study of 162 women and 40 men was conducted in 202 Arab-American homes (98% of whom were Muslim). Interviewees approved of a man slapping his wife under the following conditions: 34% of women and 33% of men if she insults him when

they are at home alone, 17% of women and 43% of men if she insults him in public, and 59% of both women and men if she hits him first in an argument.

Kulwicki, Anahid D., and Miller, June. "Domestic violence in the Arab American population: Transforming environmental conditions through community education." *Issues in Mental Health Nursing* 20 (1999): 199-215.

- ◆ **Experiences:** Quantitative and qualitative interviews conducted with the executive directors of 9 domestic violence organizations serving significant numbers of Muslim women found that of the 1,962 total Muslim women served annually, the average age was 32 years, and 85% were of immigrant background. The women experienced various forms of domestic violence including 82% emotional or verbal abuse, 65% financial abuse, 49% spiritual abuse, 74% physical abuse, and 30% sexual abuse.

Alkhateeb, Maha. "DV Organizations Serving Muslim Women: Preliminary Results of a 2009 Quantitative Survey." Peaceful Families Project. 2009. [www.peacefulfamilies.org/DVOrgsSurvey.pdf](http://www.peacefulfamilies.org/DVOrgsSurvey.pdf)

- ◆ **Shelter Residents:** A study of 57 closed-case files from an American Muslim women's shelter revealed that 37% had experienced multiple types of abuse, 23% experienced physical abuse, and 12% experienced emotional abuse.

Abdullah, Keilani. "A peaceful ideal, violent realities: A study on Muslim female domestic violence survivors." In: Maha B. Alkhateeb and Salma Elkadi Abugideiri (Eds.) *Change from within: Diverse perspectives on domestic violence in Muslim communities*. Great Falls, VA: Peaceful Families Project, 2007. 69-89.

- ◆ **Therapy Patients:** In a study of 190 Muslims seeking mental health counseling in Northern Virginia, 41% experienced domestic violence in the form of verbal, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. Victims were 71% adult females, 12% adult males, and 16% children. 60% of all clients experienced verbal or psychological abuse in their lifetime, 50% physical abuse, 14% sexual abuse, and 3% reported having a relative killed.

Abugideiri, Salma Elkadi. "Domestic violence among Muslims seeking mental health counseling." *Change from within: Diverse perspectives on domestic violence in Muslim communities*. Eds. Maha B. Alkhateeb and Salma Elkadi Abugideiri. Great Falls, VA: Peaceful Families Project, 2007. 91-115.

- ◆ **Role of Imams:** A study of 22 mosques in New York found that 96% of the participants perceived the imam as a counselor, and 74% had sought counseling from imams for safety issues.

Abu-Ras, Wahiba, Gheith, Ali and F. Cournos. "Religion and imams role in mental health promotion: A study at 22 mosques in New York City Muslim community." *Journal of Muslim Mental Health* 3.2 (2008): 157-78.

### 3. Selected Translated Materials

- ◆ **Creating a Safety Plan Arabic**  
The Peel Committee Against Woman Abuse, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada  
Website: [www.pcawa.org](http://www.pcawa.org), Email: [pcawa@pcawa.org](mailto:pcawa@pcawa.org), Tel: 905.282.9792  
Weblink: [www.pcawa.net/uploads/1/4/7/1/14711308/arabic20safety20plan-revised2020051.pdf](http://www.pcawa.net/uploads/1/4/7/1/14711308/arabic20safety20plan-revised2020051.pdf)
- ◆ **Earth Words: Abuse Information in over 110 Languages**  
Website: [www.hotpeachpages.net/lang/index.html](http://www.hotpeachpages.net/lang/index.html)
- ◆ **Legal Glossaries Arabic, Bangla, Hindi, Urdu**  
Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, California  
Website: [www.saccourt.ca.gov](http://www.saccourt.ca.gov), Tel: 916.874.6867  
Weblink: [www.saccourt.ca.gov/general/legal-glossaries/legal-glossaries.aspx](http://www.saccourt.ca.gov/general/legal-glossaries/legal-glossaries.aspx)

- ◆ **Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence Farsi | Persian**  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, Oakland, CA  
Website: [www.api-gbv.org](http://www.api-gbv.org), Email: [info@api-gbv.org](mailto:info@api-gbv.org), Tel: 415.568.3315

## 4. Other Resources

### National Domestic Violence Hotline

For crisis intervention, safety planning, information about domestic violence and referrals to local service providers, contact 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224. Assistance available in English and Spanish, as well as other languages through interpreter services.

### Domestic Violence in Muslim Communities Webpage

#### Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence

[www.api-gbv.org/violence/muslimwomen.php](http://www.api-gbv.org/violence/muslimwomen.php)

Webpage with resources on domestic violence against Muslim immigrants living in the U.S.

### KARAMAH Muslim Women Lawyers for Human Rights

KARAMAH is one of the central sources of scholarship on Islamic law  
<http://karamah.org>

### Peaceful Families Project | United Muslim Relief

[www.peacefulfamilies.org](http://www.peacefulfamilies.org) | [info@umrelief.org](mailto:info@umrelief.org)

For training and technical assistance on domestic violence among Muslim families and developing culturally sensitive programs to better serve Muslim communities.

- ◆ **Change From Within: Diverse Perspectives on Domestic Violence in Muslim Communities (2007)**  
Edited by Maha B. Alkhateeb and Salma Elkadi Abugideiri. Peaceful Families Project.  
[www.peacefulfamilies.org/publications.html](http://www.peacefulfamilies.org/publications.html)
- ◆ **Muslim Power and Control Wheel**  
Peaceful Families Project, Great Falls, VA  
Website: [www.peacefulfamilies.org](http://www.peacefulfamilies.org), Email: [info@peacefulfamilies.org](mailto:info@peacefulfamilies.org)  
Weblink: [www.peacefulfamilies.org/dvwheel.html](http://www.peacefulfamilies.org/dvwheel.html)

## Bibliographies

- ◆ **Bibliography on Gender, Domestic Violence & Muslim Women**  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence  
[www.api-gbv.org/violence/muslimwomen.php](http://www.api-gbv.org/violence/muslimwomen.php)
- ◆ **Bibliography on Muslim Women and Domestic Violence: Three Key Topics**  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence  
[www.api-gbv.org/muslimbiliokeytopics](http://www.api-gbv.org/muslimbiliokeytopics)

## Directories

- ◆ **International Directories**  
Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center, [www.866uswomen.org](http://www.866uswomen.org)  
Hot Peach Pages, International Directory of Domestic Violence Agencies,  
[www.hotpeachpages.net](http://www.hotpeachpages.net)

- ◆ **National Directory**  
Directory of Domestic Violence Programs Serving Asians & Pacific Islanders,  
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence, [api-gbv.org](http://api-gbv.org)

### **Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence**

For questions, information, publications and technical assistance, contact the Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence at 415-568-3315, [info@api-gbv.org](mailto:info@api-gbv.org), [www.api-gbv.org](http://www.api-gbv.org)



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# Lifetime Spiral of Gender Violence



Translated versions of the Lifetime Spiral in Chinese, Farsi, Korean, Punjabi, Tagalog and Vietnamese available at [api-gbv.org](http://api-gbv.org) January 2002. Revised 2010.

From the aborting of female fetuses to intimate homicide, girls and women may encounter numerous oppressions during infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and as elders. Some of these are confined to one stage in the lifecycle, some continue into subsequent stages.

The Lifetime Spiral reveals patterns of victimization by enumerating the types of violence, vulnerabilities, and harms women and girls face. It also implicitly shows the presence of different abusers located over the lifecourse. A grandmother may withhold nutritious food for a baby girl, a brother may perpetrate incest, a priest may molest a teen girl, a father may insist on a forced marriage, a college student may date rape a classmate, a co-worker may engage in sexual harassment, a husband may batter during pregnancy, a brother- or sister-in-law may stalk, a family may silence or shame, a community may ostracize homosexuals, an ex-boyfriend may kill.

In addition to physical, sexual, economic and emotional abuses; violence is about living in a climate of fear, shame, coercive control, and devaluation. It is often experienced in the context of additional oppressions based on race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, type of labor performed, level of education, class position, disability, and immigration or refugee status. Raising awareness about the historical nature of gender violence confronts victim-blaming, informs advocacy, and empowers survivors.



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# ماریج خشونت خانوادگی

## مؤسسه مقابله با خشونت جنسیتی در آسیا و جزایر اقیانوس آرام

خشونت خانوادگی تنها یکی از انواع خشونت بر علیه زنان است. از سقط جنین زنان گرفته تا قتل‌های خانگی، دختران و زنان در زیر فشار انواع آزار در دوران نوزادی، کودکی، نوجوانی، بلوغ، و پیری زندگی می‌کنند. برخی آزارها به یک دوره از زندگی زن محدود می‌شود؛ برخی دیگر به دوره‌ها بعدی نیز تسری می‌یابد. خشونت بر علیه زن تنها جسمی، جنسی، اقتصادی و حسی نیست بلکه قرار دادن او در شرایط ترس درمانده‌گی، ناکامی، خفقان و ناامیدی را نیز شامل می‌شود. زنان در آسیا و جزایر اقیانوس آرام زیر فشارهای روحی شرم و بی‌اعتباری می‌زیند. خشونت جنسی در قالب تبعیض‌های نژادی، قومی، سیّتی، شغلی، تحصیلی طبقاتی، هویت جنسیتی، گرایش جنسیتی، و ناتوانی‌های جسمی رخ می‌نماید. مهاجرت یا پناهندگی نیز خشونت‌های دیگری را دامن می‌زند.

ماریج آزار جنسیتی به توصیف انواع بالقوه خشونت در طول عمر زن می‌پردازد. اگر زنان قربانی خشونت بتوانند از این نمودار برای شناخت انواع آزار استفاده کنند. ممکن است از مقصر دانستن خود بپرهیزند. با برانگیختن آگاهی در مورد جوهره تاریخی خشونت جنسیتی، لااقل می‌توانیم از میزان سرزنش قربانیان بکاهیم.



ماریج خشونت

مؤسسه مقابله با خشونت جنسیتی در آسیا و جزایر اقیانوس آرام، بهمن‌ماه ۱۳۸۴

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