

## MAI Family Services

# News & Views

APRIL 2009

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## '09 So Far

Yes we can! MAI Family Services has adopted this motto in our zealous efforts to increase our awareness activities and improve our direct services this year.

We are undertaking quite a few new projects. We are launching our redesigned website in a few months! Keep an eye out for it. We've also developed an outreach package that serves as a detailed introduction to MAI Family Services. We will soon be out in

the community looking for collaboration. We are applying for state and federal grants to better assist our clients' needs. Our members and volunteers are undergoing trainings in healthy communication and domestic violence prevention. We will soon be offering them to community members and leaders. Look out for emails from us.

We are brainstorming new ideas for our annual fundraiser

in September and we hope to see you there!

We continue to work with the National Coalition of South Asian Organizations (NCSO). Two of our members will be attending an NCSO summit in Washington D.C. in April.

Lastly, we are very excited to welcome our new board members: Fatema Boxwala, Ram Date, Asha Reddy and Harsha Shah.

## Member Spotlight

MAI Family Services honored Anjali Guntur at the International Women's Day event as an Outstanding Leader in the Asian American Community. Anjali has been with MAI Family Services for the past nine years. She is an asset to MAI Family Services and we acknowledge that we are what we are because of her hard work, commitment and dedication.

### Q. What is your role in MAI Family Services?

A. As a clinical services coordinator, my job is to make sure that I update and maintain the referral directory and monitor all direct services provided to our clients.

### Q. How have you benefited from your involvement with MAI Family Services?

A. It is very satisfying to give back to my community. I am glad that I can make a difference in someone's life especially when that someone has no where else to turn to.

### Q. How does MAI Family Services need to improve to better serve its clients?

A. We have to acquire more funding so that we can effectively serve our clients. It becomes a challenge for us to meet all the financial needs of our clients (lawyer fees, transportation, food, childcare, etc.) since we depend solely on monetary donations from our community. Hopefully, this year we will acquire state and federal grants too.

### Q. What is the most important thing that you

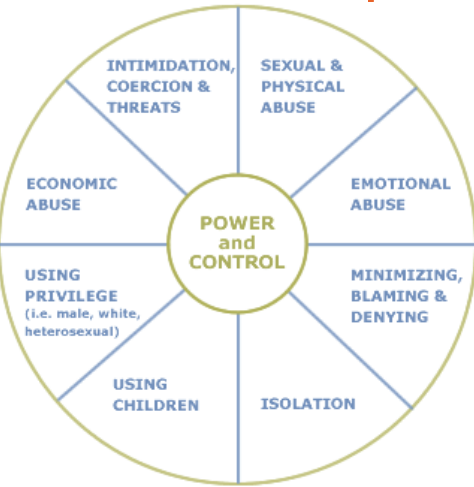
### think community members should know about MAI Family Services?

A. I think people should understand that it is okay to ask for help and that sometimes talking openly to a professional might help ease the problem or situation they are in. There is still taboo associated with seeking professional help in our community. Although counseling cannot guarantee results, and sometimes there may not be a quick fix to the problem, it is healthy and helpful to discuss issues with a third person. Someone whom you are not emotionally attached to can provide more objective and non-judgmental support.



Anjali receives an award at International Women's Day from Vice Chair Dipti Sharangapani.

# Domestic Violence Makes Headlines



The case of domestic violence between celebrities Rihanna and Chris Brown has sparked a great deal of media attention recently. However, domestic violence is a critical issue that affects many women. Domestic violence can happen to anyone of any socioeconomic background, race, age, ethnicity, religion, gender and sexual

orientation. Abuse is a pattern of coercive control that one person exercises over another. Battering is a behavior that physically harms, arouses fear, prevents a partner from doing what they wish or forces them to behave in ways they do not want.

the use of physical and sexual violence, threats and intimidation, emotional abuse and economic deprivation. (National Domestic Violence Hotline, <http://www.ndvh.org/get-educated/>).

At MAI Family Services we understand what a serious problem domestic violence is in the South Asian community of metro Detroit. Contact us to learn more.

# Call Summary

Our total number of helpline calls have increased since last year.

Between January and March, we counseled 14 new clients and 17 ongoing clients for a total of 148 hours. Most of these clients called for assistance

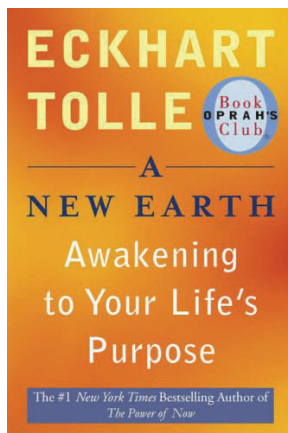
regarding domestic violence and marital conflict.

We spoke with 10 individuals regarding marketing, volunteering and collaborating for a total of 15 hours. In addition, volunteers have helped with transportation, food,

housing assistance and interpretation for our clients.

If anyone you know needs assistance, please encourage him/her to call our free helpline (888)664-8624 or email [info@maifs.org](mailto:info@maifs.org).

# Book Review



Eckhart Tolle's A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life's Purpose was featured in Oprah Winfrey's book club and became very popular. If you are looking to find peace within yourself

despite the negativity around you, then the book is for you. Eckhart Tolle speaks of our ego and how it will try to control our lives. Through narratives and personal experience, he

guides the reader on a journey to bring freedom from your ego.

# International Women's Day

International Women's Day (IWD) is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. IWD is celebrated on March 8th.

On March 21st, ten local Asian American organizations including MAI Family Services hosted an event "Empowering Women Towards Progress."

Kayhan Irani, an "artist" from



Irani performing a skit.

New York was the keynote speaker. Kayhan seeks to activate audiences and transform society through her art. She presented a skit from her one-woman show entitled "We've Come Undone" which highlights the lives of immigrant women post 9/11.

Each organization recognized the outstanding leadership of one woman from their community; we honored Anjali Guntur

MAI Family Services also participated in a fashion show showcasing traditional clothing from the

various Asian communities.

Thanks to our volunteer models: Fatema Arastu, Ali Arastu and Shona Spratt! We are grateful to our food committee volunteers: Geeta Rao and Meena Date! We would especially like to thank Mona Sashital for coordinating this event. Your hours of hard work were worth it!



MAI Family Services members and our volunteer models.

## Past Events

In January Usha Mangrulkar, Montessori founder/director gave workshop attendees tips on "Peaceful Parenting in Stressful Times." She discussed effective parenting and raising children in a multicultural environment.

Also in January, we participated in a poster session at the University of Michigan's South Asian Awareness network 2009 conference to

reach out to youth.

Our February workshop "Getting Your Resume to Work for You" with human resource management professional Lloyd Williams focused on how to make a resume more marketable in these tough economic times.

Our March workshop, "Healthy Living: Mind, Body & Spirit Connection" was a hands-on workshop with Dr. Aditi

Dave to learn about stress management, healthy foods and the power of the mind-body-spirit connection.

Last week, some of our members met with the Governor's Advisory Council on Asian Pacific American Affairs. It gave us an opportunity to network with other Asian organizations and to start a dialogue.

## Upcoming Events

### MAPI Auxiliary hosts Baishaki Mela Evening

Sunday, April 11th

6:30pm

Contact: alka@comcast.net

St. George Cultural Center

MAI Family Services is the primary beneficiary of this event. We are extremely thankful to MAPI Auxiliary for their generous support.

### Our Monthly Workshop in Collaboration with the Seniors of the Bharatiya Temple

Sunday, April 19th

2pm - 4:30pm

Bharatiya Temple in Troy

"Fifty + and concerned?"

Now, it's time to live life better" An interactive discussion with Gerontological Social Worker Chandana Sarkar.



## MAI Family Services

Suburban Shared Center  
32401 W. Eight Mile Rd.  
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**Support when you need it most.**

**We send out information about our monthly workshops, social events, fundraisers and events hosted by partner organizations to our email listserv. If you or anyone you know is interested in receiving emails from MAI Family Services, email [info@maifs.org](mailto:info@maifs.org) to sign up. Please type “Add to listserv” in the subject line.**

# We want your input

MAI Family Services has renewed our commitment to become a household name in metro Detroit. We want South Asian families and community members to readily recall our name and information when they or someone they know are in need of support. We also want to increase participation from South Asian community members at our monthly workshops and other events.

### **What steps should we take to become a household name?**

Please email [info@maifs.org](mailto:info@maifs.org) with your responses. We will publish responses in the next newsletter and try to incorporate your feedback into our plan of action.

MAI Family Services is actively seeking committed individuals to volunteer and/or serve as board members. If you are interested in learning more, please email [info@maifs.org](mailto:info@maifs.org).

