

Toward a Healthier, Safer Community

Survey Report on Violence in Asian Immigrant Homes



KOREAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN NEED (KAN-WIN) 여성 핫라인



Table of Contents

About KAN-WIN	3
About this Report	4
Methodology	5
Community Context & Limitations	6
Who Took this Survey?	7
How Serious Is Domestic Violence In Our Community?	8
Witnessing Violence At Home	9
What Causes Domestic Violence?	10
Is Domestic Violence a Societal Issue?	11
What We Learned from Korean Survey Takers	12-13
How to Prevent Violence In Our Community	14
“Talk about it!”	15
Recommendations	16-17
When You Are in Danger	18
Where to Go for Help	19
Acknowledgments	20



About KAN-WIN

Established in 1990, KAN-WIN is a non-for-profit community organization based in Chicago and Des Plaines, Illinois, committed to building a safe and healthy community free from violence. KAN-WIN's services include, but are not limited to, the following:

Crisis Intervention

- **24-Hour Hotline: 773-583-0880**
- Safety planning & emergency medical/legal/housing advocacy

Transitional Case Management & Long-Term Empowerment Services

- Ongoing medical, legal, and social services advocacy
- Transitional housing program
- Individual counseling & support group
- Financial literacy education and other economic empowerment services
- Children's program

Community Education & Outreach

- 40-Hour Domestic Violence Services Training
- Prevention education

For questions or concerns about this Survey Report,
please contact us at our office:
773.583.1392 or 847.299.1392 or info@kanwin.org



About this Report

This Survey Report describes the major findings from KAN-WIN's Community Needs Assessment Survey. As we at KAN-WIN celebrated our 20th anniversary in 2010, we vowed to increase our knowledge and understanding of our community's needs and explore effective means to end gender-based violence.

To that end, we launched a **major grassroots effort** to administer the Community Needs Assessment Survey project. The goals of the project were:

- To gain a sense of our immigrant community members' understanding & attitude toward domestic violence;
- To glean ideas for intervention & prevention strategies; and
- To identify gaps in services available for immigrant victims of violence.

As you will see throughout this Survey Report, we learned that:

1. The majority of the survey participants either have had personal experience or have known someone who has experienced domestic violence.
2. Many community members strongly desired to learn more about this critical issue and how to prevent domestic violence.

Based on the Report findings, KAN-WIN pledges to:

1. Continue to build up a wider network of community members to engage in a **deeper conversation** about how to make our community safer and healthier; and
2. Mobilize all possible means to **reach women and families struggling with violence** at home and in their relationships who do not yet know about the help & services available for them.



Methodology

This **grassroots community-based survey** project was a result of a collaborative effort by KAN-WIN staff, board, volunteers, and community partners.

During 2010-2013, these individuals worked to plan, outreach, and conduct the survey, putting in countless hours and efforts into making this project happen. The steps taken in the project include:

1. **Development** of survey by KAN-WIN staff with input from volunteers with research expertise: after several rounds of revisions, the survey was finalized with 42 questions about each respondent's background, knowledge base & attitude regarding domestic violence, ideas about prevention, etc.
2. **Outreach** to distribute and collect survey results: KAN-WIN staff & volunteers distributed the survey in person and online. For the online survey, Survey Monkey was used. For in-person distribution, staff and volunteers went out to community-based organizations, churches and other gathering places for Asian immigrants to distribute and collect completed surveys. All together, we collected surveys from **359 participants**.
3. **Analyze** survey results: KAN-WIN staff & volunteers with research expertise reviewed the collected data from the survey and analyzed the data to learn about the findings and produce this Survey Report.



Community Context & Limitations

As this project was a **grassroots effort** and KAN-WIN's very first research project, we certainly experienced several limitations and challenges.

First: Recruiting survey participants was administered through staff and volunteers' networks of contacts and via community outreach. Despite a great effort to collect a large sample of participants from many different social and cultural settings, some participants may have been more informed of gender-based violence issues through KAN-WIN's community education programs.

Second: Since most participants identified themselves as Korean, the survey results are likely a strong representation of the Korean immigrant population. Further information and analysis is required for an accurate representation of the Asian immigrant population as a whole.

Third: Though we had a great amount of input from volunteer researchers, we believe we would have benefited from a professional researcher's lead in this project. Staff, however, did their best to conduct the survey in a strategic and methodological manner with input from volunteer researchers.

While we are proud to have completed this survey in the context of the community we serve, we hope to garner more professional expertise and investment in the near future for more in-depth and broad representation of the prevalence & impact of gender-based violence in the Asian immigrant community.

KAN-WIN would welcome the opportunity to collaborate on future research projects to further understand the needs of our community!



Who Took this Survey?

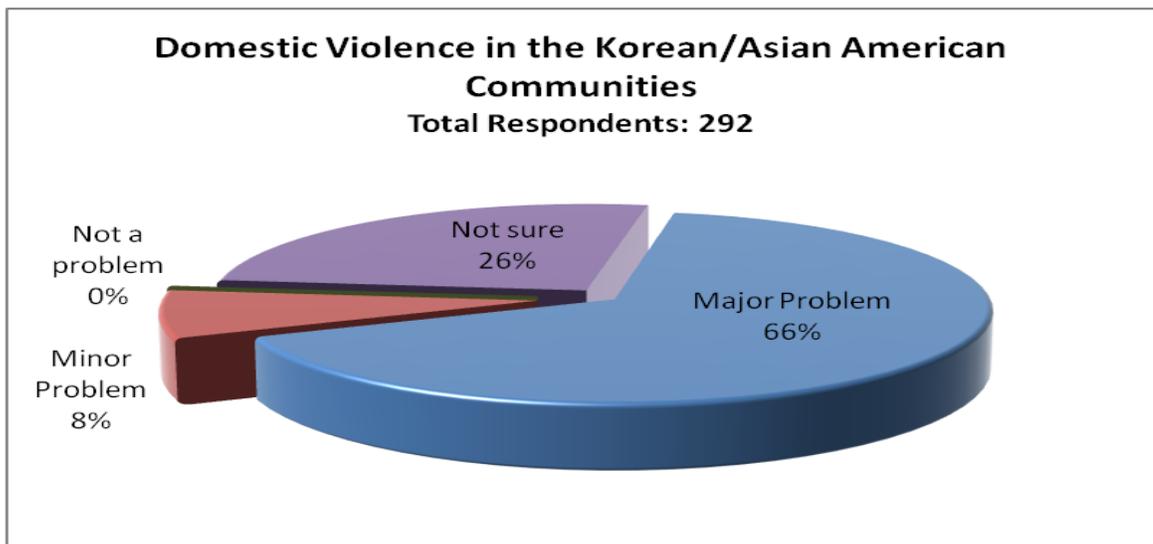
The survey was completed by **359 Asian immigrants** residing in the greater Chicago area. Of these participants:

- 77% were women and 23% were men
- 21.2% were between the ages of 14 and 29
- 48.4% were between the ages of 30 and 59
- 29% were 60 or older
- 69.4% indicated that they were born in Korea; 30.6% indicated that they were born in the U.S. OR an Asian country other than Korea.
- 63% completed the survey in Korean; 37% completed the survey in English.
- 32% have lived in the U.S. for less than 10 years.
- 19.1% have lived in the U.S. between 11 and 20 years.
- 48.9% have lived in the U.S. for more than 20 years.

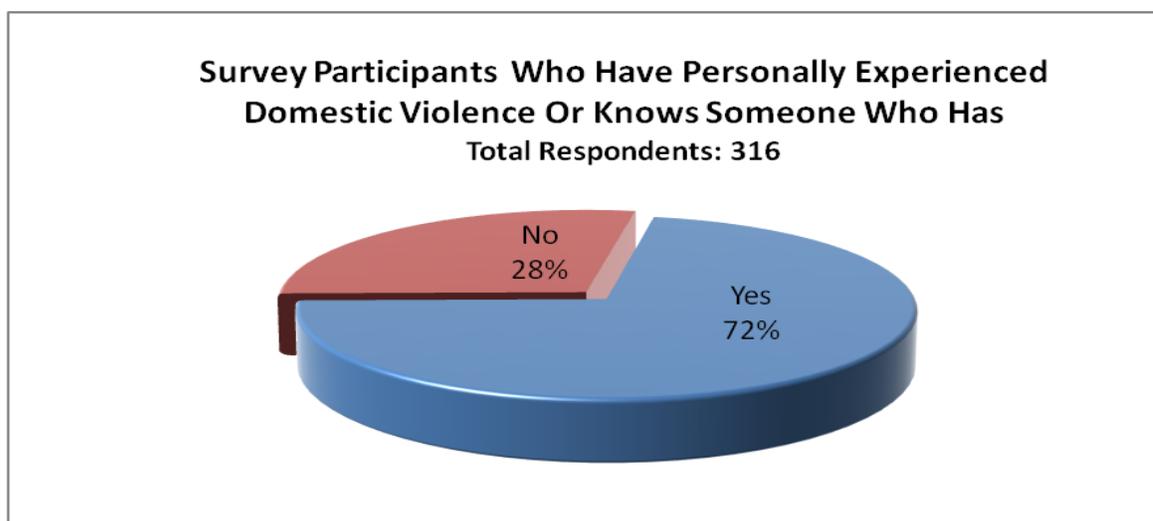


How Serious is Domestic Violence in Our Community?

- 63% of survey respondents believed that domestic violence is a major problem in Korean/Asian communities in Illinois.

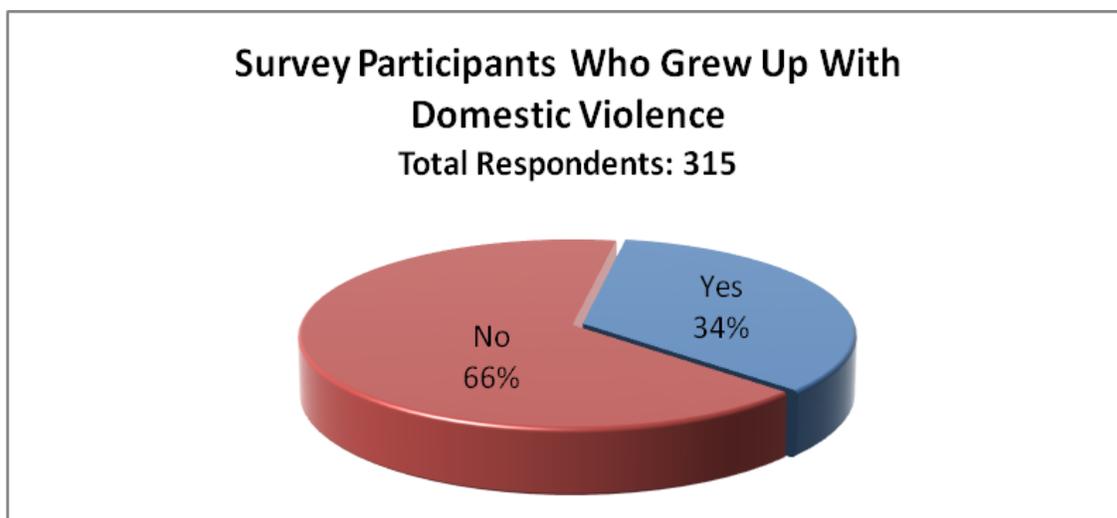


- 72% of respondents had either personally experienced domestic violence or knew someone who had.



Witnessing Violence at Home

- 34% of respondents indicated that they grew up witnessing domestic violence at home.
- In a follow-up question, 36% of above respondents indicated that they have relational issues, such as trusting others, building intimate relationships, etc.



- These respondents strongly believed that violence was wrong, and that it was wrong for one parent to become angry & abusive towards the other parent.
- Unfortunately, 92% of them said that their parents did not receive any help when violence occurred at home. 53% said that their parents did not receive support from their family, relatives, friends, or community members while seeking safety.



What Causes Domestic Violence?

We asked the respondents their opinion on what causes domestic violence. The most frequent responses were:

“Lack of anger management by one partner”

“Lack of communication between partners”

“Lack of understanding between partners”

“Differences in partners’ personalities”

“Lack of love between partners”

“Victims let the violence happen.”

“Lack of coping skills”

“Alcoholism”

“Stress”

There is a strong consensus among experts, including the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office on Violence Against Women, that domestic violence is:

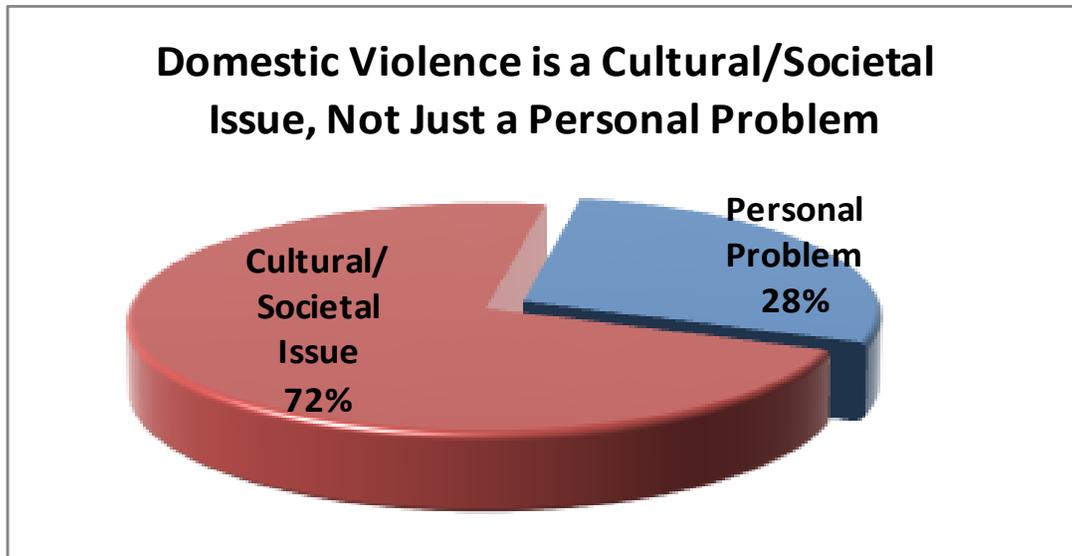
“pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power & control over another intimate partner with abuse that could be physical, sexual, emotional or psychological.”

*In other words, domestic violence is **NOT CAUSED** by mental illness, alcohol & drugs, anger, stress, or behavior of the victim. While these factors may contribute to the violence, they are not the cause of it.*

We believe a crucial factor in preventing domestic violence is the belief that no one has the right to control his or her intimate partner or family member through violence under any circumstances!

Is Domestic Violence a Societal Issue?

Many respondents thought that domestic violence is a cultural/societal issue, not simply a personal problem.



However, respondents were divided about whether they should get involved in another couple's domestic violence problems.





What We Learned from Korean Survey Takers

63% of the participants took the survey in Korean. Of those, **97%** said that they were born in Korea and were most comfortable with the Korean language. These factors indicated that the participants who took the survey in Korean possessed a cultural background rooted in Korea.

So, we looked closely into how they responded to certain questions in comparison to those who took the survey in English. We found some major differences in their perspectives.

- **First**, Korean-language respondents seemed to highly prioritize the importance of family being kept together as a unit. This perspective was most frequently found in open-ended questions. Meanwhile, English-language respondents did not mention this perspective in their open-ended questions.
- **Second**, Korean-language respondents consistently offered the following strategies to deal with domestic violence:
 - Enduring pain & struggles;
 - Avoiding confrontations; and
 - Maintaining harmony in the relationship and the family.

On the contrary, English-language respondents stressed the importance of victims seeking freedom from violence.



What We Learned from Korean Survey Takers- continued

- **Third**, of the Korean-language respondents who indicated that they witnessed domestic violence in their childhood, 53% said they feel they need to endure abusive relationships in the way their parents did. The overwhelming majority of the English-language respondents responded in the opposite manner—91% said they do not feel they need to endure abusive relationships.
- **Fourth**, many Korean-language respondents seemed to believe that victims can stop the abuse. 60% of the respondents said that individuals can control their abusers' behavior and believed that victims can stop the abuse by watching what he or she says. 45% said that victims are just as responsible for the violence issue as the offender. English-language respondents responded differently, with 78% saying that victims **CANNOT** control the abusers' behavior.

From the above findings, we could see that many Korean-respondents cherished family unity and the virtue of long-suffering & patience. These values are deeply rooted in the Korean culture & history. However, we also saw that many respondents may have been inadvertently blaming the victim in domestic violence situations, as they seemed to hold victims as well as the abusers responsible for the abuse.



How to Prevent Violence in Our Community

Respondents were asked various questions about how to stop and prevent domestic violence in our community. Below were some of the most frequent responses.

- **How do you think that victims of domestic violence should handle abuse?**

“Call the police.” “Seek help from family and friends”

“Seek help from the community or professionals.”

“Endure the pain and struggles.” “Avoid confrontation.”

“Leave the relationship.”

- **What do you think that abusers who engage in domestic violence should do to stop abuse?**

“Get counseling.” “Be accountable for your actions.”

“Find ways to get professional help.” “Accept that you need help.”

- **What will YOU do if YOU Witnessed Domestic Violence?**

“I don’t know.” “Call the police.”

“Intervene somehow.” “Tell the victim to get help.”

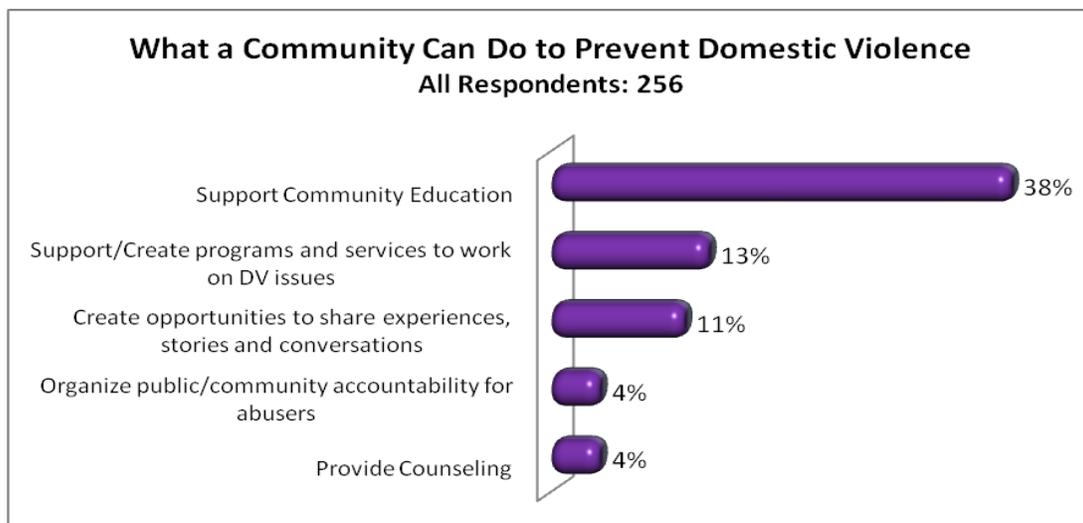
Many participants expressed interest in helping a victim but did not know exactly how. And even though most participants said they would call the police in the case they were to witness domestic violence (65% of total respondents) it is our experience at KAN-WIN that many of our community members hesitate to reach out to law enforcement, perhaps out of fear, distrust or lack of knowledge about the U.S. justice system.



“Talk About it”

When asked what the community can and should do to prevent domestic violence, the overwhelming majority of the respondents recommended more **education and spreading awareness about the issue in the community.**

“Talk about it!” as one respondent wrote in his or her response.



Many expressed that victims AND abusers need help. They were also honest about not knowing what to do if they were to witness domestic violence. Finally, the majority of the respondents wanted to **LEARN MORE** about this issue.

From this, we were able to learn that our community needs:

- Public education for **everyone** to raise awareness about this issue.
- **Culturally competent services** for immigrant victims.
- Expert help available to **abusers**—through counseling, batterer’s intervention programs, and education.



Recommendations

After reviewing and analyzing the findings from our Community Needs Assessment Survey, we want to make the following recommendations for our community to strive toward building healthier and safer lives.

Recommendation 1

Discuss and define domestic violence in ways that will allow Korean/Asian Americans of all generations and diverse backgrounds to relate, understand, and empathize

Inter-generational and community-wide dialogue and storytelling should be held around questions such as: what is domestic violence? What does it look like in Korean and other Asian cultures? How do everyday people understand and treat the issue? Why does it happen? These types of questions should be addressed in culturally meaningful contexts, which can facilitate a common understanding about what domestic violence is and to begin to change the culture of how domestic and sexual violence is dealt with among Korean and Asian Americans.

Recommendation 2

Increase community education opportunities for the community members.

Many survey participants expressed that they themselves and other community members do not necessarily know how to define healthy relationships in order to help with the effort to spread awareness and educate community members. Survey participants stressed the importance of a prevention program that includes visual demonstrations of topics, such as open and direct communication, resolving conflicts, and positive reinforcements through use of role play and media.



Recommendations

Recommendation 3

Develop a program to help batterers stop their violent behavior

A majority of the survey participants suggested that batterers receive counseling and treatment, though currently such services and programs are lacking within the Korean and Asian American community in the Chicago area and the Midwest.

Recommendation 4

Identify, document, and develop Korean and Asian American community examples of holding abusers accountable

A majority of survey participants responded that domestic violence can be stopped when abusers are held accountable. Specific examples, however, were not included in the responses. What would community accountability of abusers look like? What systems need to be in place? What are the cultural values that must be respected and utilized to help accountability facilitate real change? Documentation of past practices and continued effort to develop methods to hold abusers accountable can greatly contribute to healing of families and communities.

KAN-WIN is looking forward to working with our community members to spread awareness about these important issues that affect the health and well-being of our families and children!



When You Are in Danger

- If you are in immediate danger, call **911**! If you cannot speak English, request an interpreter by saying:

“I am in danger. I don’t speak English.

I speak (insert your native language). I need an interpreter.”

- Call KAN-WIN at **773-583-0880** for emergency legal & medical advocacy, shelter referrals, and interpretation.
- Consider your safety first! If possible, develop a **SAFETY PLAN** in advance. Set aside an overnight bag in a safe place, including important documents (passport, immigration papers, children’s birth certificates, etc.), cash, and keys.
- Seek medical attention for any injuries.
- Preserve any evidence: Take photos of any physical injuries, obtain copies of medical and police reports, and get statements from witnesses.



Where to Go for Help

You can call **KAN-WIN's 24-hour hotline.**

773-583-0880

You can call **Chicago's Domestic Violence Help Line.**

877-863-6338

If you need **emergency shelter**, contact **KAN-WIN** or below agencies:

- Apna Ghar (Chicago): 800-717-0757
- Connections for Abused Women and their Children (Chicago): 773-278-4566
- Family Rescue (Chicago): 800-360-6619
- Neopolitan Lighthouse (Chicago): 773-722-0005
- Community Crisis Center (Elgin, IL): 847-697-2380
- Wings (Palatine, IL): 847-221-5680
- Family Shelter Service (Wheaton, IL): 630-469-5650
- Guardian Angel Community Services (Joliet, IL): 815-729-1228
- Mutual Ground (Aurora, IL): 630-897-0080

If you are a victim of **sexual assault**, contact **KAN-WIN** or:

- Chicago Rape Crisis Center Hotline: 888-293-2080
- Rape Victim Advocates: 312-443-9603
- Northwest Center Against Sexual Assault: 888-802-8890

**There are MORE agencies that can HELP!!
For referrals, please call KAN-WIN.**



Acknowledgements

KAN-WIN board and staff members would like to acknowledge community members and organizations for their support in completing the Community Needs Assessment Survey project. Their roles included: assisting with developing the survey, translating the survey into Korean, providing access to recruit survey respondents, inputting survey data, analyzing the survey data results, and writing and editing this Survey Report.

KAN-WIN extends a heartfelt thank you to the following community members and organizations:

- ***Hanul Family Alliance***
- ***Korean American Community Services***
- ***Korean American Resource and Cultural Center***
- ***Korean Martyrs' Catholic Church***
- ***Mattox Beckman***, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer, Illinois Institute of Technology
- ***Inhe Choi***, Independent Consultant
- ***Eun Ko***, Associate Professor, National-Louis University
- ***Helen Um***, Researcher, Ewha Womans University
- ***KAN-WIN Staff & Volunteers:***
 - Youngju Ji, Executive Director
 - Ji Hye Kim, Associate Director
 - Hye Shin Park, Former Program Director
 - Marina Kim, Volunteer
 - Yoonah Kim, Volunteer
 - Michelle Woo, Volunteer