



Volunteering with Sakhi: A Short Guide

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Volunteering with Sakhi: A Short Guide

Our Philosophy

Sakhi has an average of fifty active volunteers at any given time. We rely on volunteers to help us fulfill Sakhi's mission, including provision of direct services, engagement of the community in the fight to end violence against women, as well as building Sakhi into a stronger organization.

Volunteering at Sakhi can be enriching, empowering, and fun - we encourage all volunteers to contribute their unique talents, skills, and knowledge to the organization. If you have the time, dedication, and desire to help us fulfill our mission, read on for details about our volunteer program.

Applications for the next volunteer training will be available shortly. The next training is the Community Outreach Volunteer Training and it will be in the spring of 2006. The deadline for submission of the application for the next training will be in early March. Please check our website in February to apply for the spring training. In the meantime, please join our Community Supporters e-mail listserve for updates about future training deadlines, as well as other upcoming events at Sakhi. To sign-up to the Sakhi Community list, please fill out the online form at <http://www.sakhi.org/change/getinvolved.php#mailinglists>. We send out announcements about once every 10 days.

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Information is organized in a question & answer format.

Volunteering with Sakhi: A Short Guide Volunteer Opportunities & Eligibility

What can I do as a volunteer?

Sakhi works to achieve its mission through several program arenas. Descriptions of the programs and how volunteers can help in each follows. Read about each program arena to learn more.

Direct Services

Domestic Violence Program

Providing survivors with support, information, and referrals to resources is one of the core features of Sakhi's work. The DV program staff provides ongoing support, case management, and referrals to health, emergency, legal, housing, and child welfare services.

Volunteers of this program area provide emotional support to survivors through sustained contact, accompanying survivors to court and public benefits offices, and facilitating activities for the children of survivors during support group and related events. Volunteers also maintain regular contact with DV staff to stay abreast of related issues and resources.

Women's Health Initiative

Through WHI, Sakhi offers a network of culturally and domestic violence-sensitive health professionals who provide services to survivors. WHI also provides classes, workshops, and resources to help women educate themselves about the many physical and emotional consequences that may accompany domestic violence.

WHI volunteers work with individual survivors by accompanying them to healthcare provider offices, providing ongoing support to survivors, and facilitating activities for the children of survivors during WHI classes and workshops. Volunteers also maintain regular contact with WHI staff to stay abreast of related issues and resources.

Economic Empowerment Program

Sakhi's EE programming works to empower survivors of violence in earning livelihoods and pursuing careers. We offer basic computer literacy courses which provide women instruction in résumé-writing, online job searches, English communication skills, and Microsoft Word and Excel proficiency. We also provide workshops focused on employee rights, starting small businesses, and financial literacy – including bank loans, budgeting, investments, retirement funds, and education savings accounts. Finally, Sakhi offers small grants to qualified survivors we have worked with for career and continuing education opportunities at accredited institutions.

Volunteers with the EE program work one-on-one with women during these workshops and other EE projects. Volunteers also facilitate activities for children during these workshops.

Community Engagement & Media Program

Sakhi is a social change organization. We believe that in order to build a violence-free society, we must engage all members of our community in the responsibility of condemning and eliminating domestic violence. In order to achieve this goal, Sakhi uses unique media tools - including an innovative, community-focused biannual newsletter, an interactive website, postcards, and educational videos - to call on the community to end violence. Each year, Sakhi organizes or participates in forums, meetings, conferences, marches, panels, and other outreach/education events. We also work with community-based partners, South Asian and mainstream media, schools, universities, religious institutions, and community and cultural centers to raise awareness about the issue of domestic violence.

Outreach volunteers assist Sakhi in its community engagement work by helping to plan Sakhi's various outreach events as well as by attending, tabling, and interacting with community members at these events, and assisting in the production of Sakhi's biannual newsletter and other media work.

Development & Fundraising

Every non-profit organization has to raise funds in order to carry out its work for the community. Sakhi is no different. We have a diverse, growing fundraising strategy that includes private foundation giving, corporate and government grants, as well as individual support. Sakhi is growing fast, and in order for the organization to grow in a healthy, sustainable way, our resources need to continue to come from a diverse group of organizations and community members.

Sakhi's Volunteer Development Committee is critical to our fundraising efforts. Committee members work to encourage other volunteers to contribute or attend fundraising events; encourage matching gifts from volunteers' employers; organize student & professional volunteers to engage South Asian cultural, professional, and religious associations in Sakhi's work; meet monthly to discuss fundraising issues including new funder prospects and smaller fundraising events; and volunteer in varying capacities at two of Sakhi's fundraising events.

Who is eligible to volunteer?

Sakhi's volunteers are primarily women in the New York metropolitan area as well as parts of New Jersey and Connecticut. We encourage volunteers from a range of backgrounds and especially those who speak South Asian languages and have daytime hours during the week. Currently, our core active volunteers are women of South Asian origin or those with South Asian language skills.

If you do not live in the New York metropolitan area, please look on our website to find a list of similar anti-domestic violence organizations in your state (U.S.).

Can men volunteer with Sakhi?

It is important for us to provide a safe space for the women we serve, and thus men are not currently participants in our Direct Services or Community Engagement and Media trainings. But we also believe that men are critical partners in the struggle to end violence against women, and for this reason, there are key ways in which we want men involved in the mission to end violence against women and in our families.

Men can volunteer their professional skills by joining Sakhi's [Legal](#) or [Health](#) Provider Networks. In addition, we seek men who show support through their participation in Sakhi's Create Change community engagement activities and fundraising activities. To get more information on how to get involved and sign up for our mailing list to get e-mails on supporting Sakhi events, please [click here](#).

In the long-term, when we have sufficient resources, we hope to expand our work to offer specific men's workshops on violence against women as well as a mentoring program for the children of survivors.

Volunteering with Sakhi: A Short Guide Volunteer Commitment

What will be required of me as a volunteer?

Sakhi requires volunteers to complete a mandatory training prior to volunteering and then abide by a one-year volunteer commitment to dedicate 6 to 10 hours per month through the year*. For a detailed breakdown of requirements, please read the following list:

Requirements for Volunteering with Sakhi:

1. The successful completion of the Volunteer Training for Community Engagement OR Direct Services;
2. A one-year commitment to volunteer at least 6 to 10 hours per month* with Sakhi;
3. Serving on a volunteer-committee dedicated to a specific project for the year;
4. Attendance of program and committee meetings;
5. Attendance at a minimum of one of the four marches/parades that Sakhi attends per year;
6. Volunteering at one of Sakhi's celebratory events, which include the Eid-Diwali Party (mid-November), the Annual Holiday Party (mid-winter), the Valentine's Day Party (mid-February), and the Annual Picnic (mid-summer); and,
7. Participating in one of the following events a minimum of three times in a six-month period (six times total):

Assisting with children's activities during support group, empowerment classes, or workshops;

or

Accompanying a survivor to court or public assistance office;

or

Tabling at Sakhi's outreach/fundraising events.

**On average: volunteer hours may be concentrated up to 15-20 hours in one month for alternating months or some such comparable schedule.*

What if I want to get involved but I do not have the time to be a volunteer?

If you do not have the time to be an active volunteer, we encourage you to become involved by attending Sakhi's events and activities. To stay informed of our work, use our website to sign on to Sakhi's Community Supporters E-mail Listserv by filling out the online form at <http://www.sakhi.org/change/getinvolved.php#mailinglists>.

You will be informed of volunteer trainings, application deadlines, as well as upcoming events such as our annual benefit gala and March Against Violence. We send e-mails to this listserv approximately one time a week.

Volunteering with Sakhi: A Short Guide Volunteer Training

How do I train to become a volunteer with Sakhi?

Sakhi conducts volunteer training in two focused sessions annually. The spring session is focused on the areas of community outreach and development. The fall session focuses on direct service program areas - domestic violence, economic empowerment, and women's health initiative.

Sakhi trains 25 individuals in each session. Individuals are selected on the basis of their completed placement surveys and on Sakhi's need for volunteers with specific time availability and language skills.

What do I do in order to sign up for the training?

Because each program area requires a different set of skills, it is in our mutual interest for you to determine which program best suits your skills and time availability. The volunteer application is designed to assist you in doing this.

Volunteer applications (including instructions and deadline information) can be downloaded from our website. **If you would like to get information on Sakhi's next volunteer training, please join our Community Supporters E-mail Listserv by filling out the online form at <http://www.sakhi.org/change/getinvolved.php#mailinglists> to receive updates about future trainings.**

The deadline for all completed applications for the next training has not yet been set. Please look for updates through our Community Supporters' list serve.

I want to start volunteering right away! What can I do?

You can begin supporting Sakhi this year by joining our Community Supporters listserv to get involved by learning, joining activities, and receiving updates about our many events. You can join by filling out the online form at <http://www.sakhi.org/change/getinvolved.php#mailinglists>. We would love to have you join us for our next training, but if you wish to begin volunteering right away, many other wonderful anti-domestic violence New York metropolitan area organizations are also looking for volunteers:

Manavi is a South Asian women's domestic violence center in New Jersey, and does work very similar to Sakhi.

Manavi
P.O. Box 3103
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Tel: (732) 435-1414

Fax: (732) 435-1411

E-mail: manavi@worldnet.att.net

Website: www.manavi.org

Safe Horizon is another organization that works with survivors of domestic violence, and it has locations and volunteer opportunities in all five boroughs. Please visit their website at www.safehorizon.org and click on the link "Volunteer" at the top right-hand part of the page.

The New York Asian Women's Center, a domestic violence shelter for Asian women, is also currently looking for volunteers. You can find more information about their volunteer program on their website www.nyawc.org, or you can call (212) 732-0054 x 27 to reach the volunteering program.

Sakhi partners with each of these organizations. We know that volunteers at any of these agencies will help to bolster the anti-domestic violence movement.

SAKHI for South Asian Women is a community-based organization in the New York metropolitan area committed to ending the exploitation and violence against women of South Asian origin. Recognizing oppression based on class, immigration status, religion and sexual orientation, we work to empower women, particularly survivors of domestic violence. SAKHI strives to create a voice and a safe environment for all South Asian women through outreach, advocacy, leadership development and organizing.

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