

**South Asian Youth (SAY):**  
**Working towards Eliminating Violence Faced by Women-Identified People**  
(Edited 2015)

## **Herstory**

SAY was originally a group of young individuals rooted in the South Asian Women's Community Centre (SAWCC). The group was first formed as a result of young women in Parc-Extension discussing realities of violence in public spaces and within interpersonal relationships. The first Day of Action against violence against Women was held on September 24th, 2011. The subsequent basis of unity was then formed, and continues to be used for SAY organising.

## **Basis of Unity**

- We are against violence against Women-identified people, whether it is interpersonal or state violence.
- We recognise that interpersonal violence includes:
  - Interactions in a private or public space that make someone feel objectified, attacked, violated, or unsafe
  - Interactions in a private or public space that restrict one's movement or forces one to modify their behavior in an attempt to avoid the possibility of being verbally/physically harassed or abused
  - Rape (including in a marriage, common law union, intimate partner relationship)
  - Violence in intimate relationships (e.g. family, partner, co-workers, friends)
  - Having one's movements and actions being controlled and monitored
  - Bullying, harassment or assault as a result of one's sexual orientation or gender (e.g. being Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transsexual/gender or Queer)
- We recognise that state violence includes:
  - The on-going effects of colonialism as it affects Indigenous Women and their land
  - Canadian Border Services Agents (CBSA) coming into the community to detain non-status Women and their family/community members
  - Preventing women from migrating after they have been forced off their lands
  - Police racially profiling youth in the community
  - Discrimination or attacks against people who do not identify as a man or woman (i.e. they identify as gender non-conforming)
  - Discrimination based on one's sexual orientation and institutional sexism and racism (e.g. at work, public health care institutions, in schools and academic institutions)
  - Federal and Provincial government policies and austerity measures that ultimately prevent Women, particularly Poor Women of Colour from accessing public services
  - Discriminatory immigration and refugee policies which marginalize Women and their families, keeping them in poverty and near-slave like conditions.

- The effects of globalization (e.g. neo-liberal policies) which are driving down wages and safe working conditions for women, and putting them in increasingly desperate conditions (e.g. live-in-caregivers, temporary foreign workers).
  - All forms of poverty including: unemployment; no/inadequate access to welfare; pertinent resources and services; inadequate access to public, safe and healthy housing; public transport; education; healthcare.
- We are a group of mainly racialised young Women. We recognise the importance of understanding our diverse identities and experiences. We organise collectively while respecting the diversity and importance of each individual.
  - We acknowledge the importance of working with allies, particularly with men in respective communities.
  - We recognise that violence against Women is endemic in our society, irrespective of geographical location.
  - We recognise that Women can wear/not wear what they want.
  - We recognise that the way a Woman dresses is never an invitation to be sexually harassed or raped.
  - We recognise that interpersonal violence, irrespective of the person causing harm, is unacceptable.
  - We feel strongly that it is important to facilitate processes that allow Women to deal with physical and emotional trauma that occurs as a result of the violence we face.
  - We feel strongly that it is crucial to prevent and eliminate interpersonal violence while also fighting against state violence as it affects Women and our communities. In order to eliminate interpersonal violence, we must also organise towards ending state-violence and vice versa.
  - Our vision is to build a society in which women and marginalised communities here in Montreal and around the world no longer face violence, a society where Women can self-determine our lives, a society based on mutual-respect, dignity and justice for all.