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Mother's Day: Indian Style

Press Release
Chandler, AZ

The story of Mother's Day is a long one. It is not a recent holiday, nor is it the invention of card and gift makers. The first Mother's Day celebrations actually took place in ancient Greek and Rome.

Today, in most countries Mother's Day is celebrated May. In some countries, it is celebrated at a completely different time of the year. In the present time Mother's Day has come to be internationally recognized as the day to honor all mothers and thank them for the services they impart for the benefit of the individual child and consequently for the development of mankind. People take the day as an opportunity to pay tribute to their mothers and thank them for all of their love and support. The day is hugely popular and in several countries phone lines are tied up with calls to mothers. There is also a tradition of gifting flowers, cards, and other gifts to mothers. The festival has become commercialized to a great extent. Florists, card manufacturers, and gift shops see a huge business potential and make good money.

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The Chinmaya Mission Phoenix members celebrate Mother's Day by having children honor their mothers in a grand Matr Puja for Mother's Day. The program begins with a Matr Puja, thanking mothers for the unconditional love, nurturing, unselfishness, tenderness, compassion, patience, nobility, and self-sacrifice they give. The mothers, dressed in their finest, sit in chairs, and their children sit on the floor at their feet as they perform a complete Devi Puja. The children wash and place flowers at their mother's feet, and perform the entire puja with sincere devotion toward their mother. During the puja, all mothers close their eyes as they remember their mothers. The children sing the Matrstavnam composed by Swami Tejomayanandaji, Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide. The following are two verses of Matrstavnam and their respective meanings:

मतुराशिषा वन्दिता भुवि।	maturāṣiṣā vanditā bhuvī
सन्ति हि नरो नन्दिता दिवि॥	santi hi naro nanditā divi
<i>By mother's blessings alone, men become worshipful in this world and happy in the other world.</i>	
जननि तेऽप्यहं सर्वदा ऋणी।	janani te'pyaham sarvadā ṛṇī
भक्तिरस्तु मे निश्चला त्वयि॥	bhaktirastu me niścālā tvayi
<i>O mother! I remain ever indebted to you. May my devotion to you remain firm and deep.</i>	

The event is concluded with an aarti to the mother of all mothers, Mother Parvati, followed by prasadam.

Kush Mahajani is a student at the 8th grade Bala Vihar class of Chinmaya Mission, Phoenix chapter (www.chinmayaphoenix.org). Chinmaya Bala Vihar classes are conducted every Sunday at Sierra Vista Academy in Scottsdale. He wrote this article as part of his Balavihar curriculum.



IF YOU MEET THESE CRITERIA AND ARE WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY PLEASE CLICK ON THE FOLLOWING LINK:
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TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THIS STUDY, YOU MUST BE A MALE IMMIGRANT FROM INDIA WHO IS CURRENTLY EIGHTEEN YEARS OR OLDER. THIS STUDY ENTAILS COMPLETING A FEW QUESTIONNAIRES AND REQUIRES APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION OF PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROJECT!
Any questions or inquiries can be e-mailed to Nita Makhija at nita.makhija@student.shu.edu.

Information about Researcher and Purpose of the Study:
I am a doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Seton Hall University in New Jersey. As an Indian-American I am interested in learning how I can use my professional skills to help women in my community. Through my research I have learned that 40% of South Asian immigrant women report having had experienced intimate partner violence. For this reason I am conducting a research study entitled "Examining the Male Perspective of Intimate Partner Violence in the U.S. Indian Immigrant Community". This study aims to explore the beliefs Indian immigrant males to the U.S. hold about intimate partner violence, their acculturation experiences, their coping methods, and the stress they experience. This study will hopefully aid in gaining a better understanding of how violence against women in our cultural group can be prevented. **EVEN IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE TELL OTHERS YOU KNOW WHO DO MEET THE CRITERIA ABOUT THIS STUDY.**

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