

National Longhouse Support Materials

Keeping the Native Indian Theme Alive In Your Program



An outline of topics and ideas to promote and uplift the use of the
Native Indian Theme within Native Sons and Daughters Programs®



Keeping the Native Indian Theme Alive



Presented here is an outline of topics and ideas to promote and uplift the use of the Native Indian Theme within Native Sons and Daughters Programs®. Many of these ideas are explained in further detail in the Native Sons & Daughters Members Handbook or Program Manual.

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Understanding How it Began:

- Harold Keltner meets Joe Friday: Keltner meets Ojibwa Indian Joe Friday in Temagami, Ontario in the early 1920's. Their new formed friendship sparks an idea to connect a Native Indian Theme to a parent-child activity format. Original program starts in 1926 and lasts until 2002.
- March 2002, a decision is made among dedicated regional volunteers to form a new program.
- Late 2002, Native Indian theme heritage and legacy is gifted by the Keltner and Friday families to newly formed National Longhouse, for use in its Native Sons and Daughters Programs.

Respectful Use of the Indian Theme:

- The prime use of the Indian theme is a common medium and common interest for parent & child to develop bonds and memories together.
- The Indian theme is the use of a living culture.
- Use of the Indian Theme can be Fun, Teaching, Bonding and Respectful all at the same time.
- Plan ahead to use it respectfully in all ways.

The Indian Theme: Central to Many Program Activities:

Indian Names:

- A key ritual for new members to choose an Indian Name. Stress the importance of this ritual.
- Use Indian Names whenever possible in Tribal and Longhouse functions.

Tribe Meetings:

Rituals:

Six Aims:

- Derived from the parental teachings of the Ojibway culture. Gifted to NSD Programs by the Friday family.
- A foundation for many aspects of life.
- Reward the learning of the Aims.

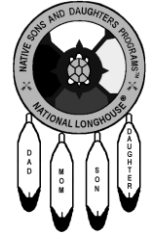
Prayers:

- Simple non-denominational Native Indian prayers teach respect.
- Offer a focus to concentrate and contemplate.
- Prayers as a tribe or group can build spirit.

Opening & Closing Rituals & Misc:

- Opening & Closing rituals add to the pageantry of a meeting.
- Opening: Sets the tone for the body of the meeting
- Closing: Allow reflection on a special time shared together.
- Talking Stick ritual: When in a setting where only one person at a time is supposed to speak, use this ritual to encourage respect for the one person talking.

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Tribe Meetings cont.

Native Indian Crafts:

- A way in which to learn about specific tribes/cultures or a more general view of Native Indian culture.
- Can be very simple to very complex.
- A great medium for parent-child interaction.
- Help children learn patience and achievement.

Stories:

- An important part to a meeting that can teach a lesson.
- A good story-teller is a key to success.

Tribal Invitations:

- Although originally meant to be created by hand, you can make invitations in a digital medium and still maintain the tradition.

Ceremonies/ Council Fire Ceremonies:

- Honor the Great Spirit as an important part of ceremonies.
- Thank Mother Earth and Father Sky for all gifts.
- Honor the natural surroundings.
- Include children as an important part of ceremonies.
- Include Tribal recognition.
- Use feathers or other Native culture related items as an honoring. Arrowheads, beads, etc...
- Create special and mystical fire lightings. The Great Spirit brings fire. The Flaming Arrow, etc.
- Use Indian Names only.
- Outdoors whenever possible. Nature adds to the mystery. A starry night is priceless.
- Include a little bit of "ceremony" at as many Longhouse events as possible.
- Honor the flag, the symbol of your country.
- The drumbeat is the heartbeat of mother Earth. Use the drum in openings and closings.

Regalia:

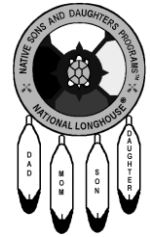
Research your Tribe or Longhouse name to spur ideas in creating/crafting regalia and as a method of respect toward the culture of that tribe or nation.

- Headdress: Many styles and types.
- Vests & Costume: Simple vests to elaborate costumes. Constantly encourage the use whatever vest, apparel or regalia your program uses.
- Headbands & Feathers: Encourage the use of the NSD headband. Make it cool to wear it.
- Coup Sticks: A program unto itself. Awards that can be mounted to the stick.
- Tribal Totems: Each parent/child creates a piece. It is assembled at Tribe Meetings.
- Tribal Shields or Banners: A way to proudly display the name of your Tribe at Longhouse events, especially campouts and ceremonies.
- Personal or Family Shields.

Stories

- Find that special person that has a talent to bring a story alive in front of a group. A good story-teller is a key to success.
- Use Indian Stories with a lesson when possible.

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Tribal Property

- Develop property as a tribe.
- Parent/child sharing in each project.
- Tribal Shields
- Tribal Totems

Longhouse Property: A Longhouse may choose to maintain its own property to use during campouts, gatherings, main events & ceremonies. Each contains some element of the Indian Theme.

- Teepees
- Totems
- Drums
- Parade Banners

Awards: Awards programs can easily center on the Native Indian theme. Aside from traditional patches, here are other suggestions:

- Feathers
- Beads
- Bear claws

Tribe Events and Longhouse Events

- Bring at least a little bit of the Indian theme into each event just to keep it visible.

Nature Studies

- Native Americans have lived in nature for many centuries. Nature is and was a central part to their culture and to their survival. Nature studies are an easy way to relate to the Indian Theme.
 - Trails walks & trail challenges
 - Animal tracking/plaster casting
 - Forest, Field and Stream

Leadership Council Meetings

- Use a bit of ceremony to open and close meetings.
- You must set the example. If leadership is not serious and excited about the theme, membership will sense that.
- Honor the flag, the symbol of your country.
- The drumbeat is the heartbeat of mother Earth. Use the drum in openings and closings.
- Challenge adult leadership to learn and call each other by Indian name.

Main Ingredients:

- ***You must be excited about it for others to be excited about it!***
- ***Make outward use of it!***
- ***Do your research before implementing new rituals!***
- ***Avoid the typical stereotypes!***

This listing could go on and on... your own creativity, curiosity and drive are your limits.

Tonkahay!, Yahetey!, Numway!, Yatahey!, KlaHowYa!