**Induction Ceremony**

**Longhouse-New & Returning Members-The White Feather**

**Overview:** Induction ceremonies are typically held in the beginning moons of the program year and are primarily to honor new membership but it is also good to have all members reaffirm their pledge to the program and each other as well. This ceremony is generally written to be used in a group setting, such as a Fall Longhouse Campout. The White Feather in this setting is meant to symbolize the virtues of patience and understanding. There are a number of props required as mentioned within. All returning fathers and children are expected to wear the Native Sons & Daughters headband to the ceremony. This should be announced and encouraged in advance.

New members will receive their headbands and patches at this ceremony. This can be accomplished by simply handing them the New Members Packet and having them open it to remove the headbands, or removing them from the packets in advance. Also, be sure to have additional headbands for the new member families with more than one child.

**Participants:**

* Chief: Ceremonial Leader
* Medicine Man (or Assistant Chief): Co-leader of ceremony
* Drumbeater
* (6) Young Braves (sons or daughters): Have been selected in advance to hold the symbol signs that form the artwork of the NSD headband while the meaning of the headband is explained. Another form could be one banner with the artwork of the headband, large enough for the gathering so see.
* Fire-starters: 2 Older Youth are chosen that area skilled enough to use a bow and arrow. 2 special arrows will be shot into the fire to light it. See within.

There is a symbolic article mentioned within that will be sacrificed at the council fire. The article is a wooden stick, about 12 inches long. It can be either a stick found around the camp, or perhaps a 1 x 2 that is provided. It is to be prepared by all the parents and children in advance of the ceremony. The stick will symbolize *impatience for children* and *selfishness for fathers*. It can be decorated in any way. It is a good idea to hold a Longhouse gathering much earlier in the day to and explain the requirements and meanings. The Longhouse may choose to set out a table of decorating supplies for members to use at will. The decorating of the stick can be an activity for parent & child.

**Relevant Ceremonial Pieces:**You may wish to incorporate this ceremony with other ceremonial components to form your full ceremony. The following are basic suggestions. Your creativity is your limit.

* Parade to Ceremonial Location
* Sacred Fire Lighting (section within)
* Officer Inductions
* Special Awards
* Ceremonial Closing

**CEREMONY**

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| SCENE: Central bonfire, unlit. The Chief and his children are inside teepee. The Medicine Man and his children are outside the teepee. Tribes gather at the end of the torch parade. Indian music or drumbeats will signal the tribes to gather. |
| Medicine Man | *Will light the stake torches around the teepee, He will also position the tribes as necessary in a semi-circle around the yet unlit bonfire, Big Braves in outer circle, Sons & Daughters inside circle. (Drumbeats or music stops)* |
| Medicine Man | Welcome! What you are about to see is the official induction of Old and New Big Braves and their Sons and daughters into the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse of the Native Sons & Daughters Program. An NSD Longhouse consists of Tribes made up of 5 to 10 fathers and their children. These Tribes have monthly meetings, do crafts, go hiking, camping, play together, and in general, increase the number of things a father and child can do together. In these hectic times, when fathers are busy earning a living, involved with church commitments or civic affairs, these fathers you see here, take the time to enjoy the privilege of having children and guiding them so that they may become good citizens with a proper respect for their world and their fellow man. They take very seriously the Native Sons & Daughters slogan "Pals Forever, Friends Always". Let us begin. |
| Drum Beater | Drumbeats begin.  |
|  | *The Chief and his children exit from the teepee and take their positions around the teepee. Drumbeats stop (Medicine Man to direct drumbeaters).* |
| Chief | *Gives the Longhouse salutation* |
| Medicine Man | Who Calls?? |
|  | I, Chief (**Indian Name**) have a request to make at this council of the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse. |
| Medicine Man | Chief, what is your request? |
| Chief | I speak for many Big Braves, Sons & Daughters who have heard the call of the Great Spirit. They have seen the power of the peace pipe. They have washed their hands of wrong-doing, buried their war clubs and weapons, and they wish to become brothers and sisters in the Native Sons & Daughters Program. |
| Medicine Man | Do they know the purpose of Native Sons & Daughters? |
| Chief | They do! Big Braves, Sons & Daughters, what is the Purpose? |
| Medicine Man | All Big Braves, Sons & Daughters, repeat after me…The purpose of the Native Sons & Daughters, [repeat]Is to foster the companionship, [repeat]of father and child. [repeat] |

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| Chief | Medicine Man (Indian Name), prepare these Big Braves, Sons & Daughters by having them recite the 6 AIMS |
| Med. Man | *(leads all in unison)*The Six Aims of the Native Sons & Daughters Program are… repeat after me:1. To be clean in body and pure in heart
2. To be Pals Forever-Friends Always, father and son
3. To love the sacred circle of the family
4. To listen while others speak
5. To love my neighbor as myself
6. To seek and preserve the beauty of the Great Spirit’s work in forest, field and stream
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| **FIRELIGHTING** | *The method in which the bonfire is to be lit, must be prepared in advance to keep the element of surprise. For safety reasons, and to avoid an embarrassing situation, the fire-lighting method chosen should have been tested several times before the actual ceremonial lighting. A back-up method should also be ready just in case. The ceremonial flaming arrows used here are merely for visual effect. There is a hidden electronic ignition system inside the fire so when the arrows reach the fire, the fire magically bursts to life.* |
| Chief | I call upon (Indian Name) our Medicine Man to light our council fire. |
| Medicine Man | Fire-starters, come forward. Prepare to offer the sign to the Great Spirit, as we call on him to light our council fire. *FIRE-STARTERS COME FORWARD AND PREPARE BOWS TO SHOOT SPECIAL ARROWS**MEDICINE MAN HOLDS A LIT TORCH*Oh Great Spirit, we call to you,Bring Life to this council fire, [ ***AIM ARROWS*** ]So that it's peaceful warmth can be shared, by all those present.Give us a sign of your presence...., [ ***LIGHT ARROWS*** ]Send us FIRE for peace and friendship. [ ***ARROWS FIRE*** ] |
|  | FIRE MAGICALLY COMES TO LIFE |
| **CONTINUE CEREMONY** |
| Chief | *(Shouts the Longhouse salutation several times)* |
| Chief | Medicine Man (Indian name), are these Braves, Sons & Daughters ready to accept the duties that come with membership in the Native Sons & Daughters? |
| Medicine Man | They are! Chief, these Braves, Sons & Daughters want to become our brothers and sisters, and they are READY! |

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| Chief | Let us call on the Great Spirit! *(Chiefs child comes forward with peace pipe)* (**Indian name**), my son/daughter, may I have the peace pipe?*(Child hands Pipe to Chief, Chief raises Pipe to the Sky and Prays…)* |
|  | Oh Great Spirit, master of life, creator of all, look upon these humble Braves, Sons & Daughters. Wash their hearts and minds. Let them feel the power of this pipe, symbol of peace, brotherhood, and all good council. |
|  | *(Chief hands pipe back to his child, child returns pipe to its place)* |
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|  | *(Prior to the ceremony, (a # of) volunteer children have been chosen to hold the signs depicting the symbols of the NSD headband)* |
| Chief | I now call forth the Sons & Daughters who have volunteered to show the symbols of our headband. |
| Drumbeater | *(Drumbeats start. The child volunteers are directed by the medicine man to assemble with the chief in front of the teepee. If portions of the headband are in signs, they are assembled in order. If the headband is a banner as a whole, they just hold it up stretched out. Once everyone is assembled, drumbeats stop.)* |
|  | *(While the following sequence about the meaning of the headband is read, the Medicine Man will point to the portion of the headband being described)* |
| Chief | The central symbol of our Native Sons & Daughters headband is the eye of the Great Spirit surrounded by the four winds of heaven. The designs on the left and right of the eye represent father and child, tribe, family, and the Native American symbolism tying it to The Six Aims. Outstanding accomplishments were recognized by the Indians, often in the form of feathers. The fact that the father and child achievements are united in the center of the design shows that fathers and children together, under the eye of the Great Spirit, are seeking to help each other strive to do many good deeds |
|  | On the left, The Great Spirit inspired and provided direction to the National Longhouse Council, who talked among themselves until they discovered the Native Sons and Daughters Programs. On the far left, they invited the dad, son, & daughter and the mom, son, & daughter to come join the new program with other families, so they could become a tribe, and enjoy the company of each one another, along with activities around a campfire. |

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| Chief | On the right, In the beginning, the Great Spirit created the *Earth Lodge*. He commanded there be light and called it *Day* to separate it from the darkness which He call *Night*. This was the first day. He then separated the *Sea* from the air and called the heavens *Sky*. This was the second day. On the third day, He raised an *Island* from the Sea and covered it with *Grass*, *Trees* and *Corn*. On the far right, on the fourth day, He placed lights in the Sky. A bright *Sun* for the Day and a dimmer *Moon* and *Stars* for the Night. On the fifth day, He placed the *Fish* in the Sea and the *White Hawk* in the Sky. On the sixth day, He provided *Antelope* and created *Man* and *Women* in His likeness to rule over what he had just created |
|  | *(Sign or Banner are removed and child volunteers return to their places)* |
| **THE CALLING AND HONORING OF NEW MEMBERS** |
| Medicine Man | Chief, there are new members among us that have not yet received their headbands. You must bestow this honor upon them before we continue. |
| Chief | (**Medicine Man Indian Name**) Please gather the New Members |
| Medicine Man  | All new Braves, Sons & Daughters, please come forward inside the circle to receive your official headband and of the Native Sons & Daughters Program. |
|  | *(Chief will now begin to walk around the circle to each new member, giving them their headband and patch. He will place the headband onto the heads of the children. An assistant may help with the distribution.)* |
| Chief | (*To Each New Member*) What is your Indian Name? [WAIT FOR RESPONSE][Indian Name] Receive these symbols of the I welcome you as a member of the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse*(Chief returns to front of teepee)* |
| Chief | New members…May you as fathers and children create many special memories together. The (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse officially welcomes you! |
|  | *(Chief & Medicine Man start an ovation for the new members)* |
| Medicine Man | New members, please return to the circle with your tribes, let us continue with the induction. |
| **CONTINUE MAIN INDUCTION** |
| Chief | We know the symbols of the headband to be of untold value to each father and child. But it will call for sacrifice from each one of you.Big Braves, there is a trait of character that may harm your success as Native Sons & Daughters. That trait is selfishness. When your Son or Daughter wants you to spend time with them, you must try to find the time. The years go by quickly, and it will not be long before these chances for time together have slipped away. Big Braves, will you sacrifice the trait of selfishness? |

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| Medicine Man | All Big Braves, raise your right hand and loudly repeat after me…(Along with hand sign) “**I WILL"**. |
| Chief | Sons & Daughters, your Big Brave fathers will sacrifice selfishness, which means they will do things with you, and take the time to play and talk with you. However, you must remember that sometimes they cannot be with and so you must be patient. You Little Braves and Princesses must sacrifice your impatience, and wait until you can be together with your father. Little Braves and Princesses, will you make this sacrifice? |
| Medicine Man | All Sons & Daughters, raise your right hand and loudly repeat after me…(Along with hand sign) “**I WILL”** |
| Chief | Earlier today, you Braves, Sons & Daughters took time to create a symbol to represent the selfishness and impatience that you will sacrifice here tonight. I now ask (**Medicine Man Indian Name**) to call forth the tribes one by one to offer their symbolic sacrifice to the Great Spirit. |
| Medicine Man | I will call the tribes of the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse one at a time. Please respond with a loud voice of spirit when your tribe is called…(*Loudly*) Is the (**Tribe Name)** tribe present? (*Wait for response)*Come forward near the fire with your sacrifice. Burning these symbols are a sign to the Great Spirit that you are sincere in making this sacrifice. I ask you now to throw your symbols of selfishness and impatience into the fire.*(Tribes throw their symbolic sacrifices into the fire)*(**Tribe Name**) Tribe, you may now return to your place in the circle.(*Repeat above for all Tribes (present) in the Longhouse)* |
| Chief | Great Spirit, accept our sacrifices. Look into the hearts of these Braves and their Sons & Daughters. Search their minds, for they have made this sacrifice with pure hearts and clean minds. Such sacrifices are acceptable to the Great Spirit. Now, Big Braves, you will no longer be selfish where you’re Sons & Daughters are concerned. Sons & Daughters, no longer will you be impatient with your Big Brave fathers.Braves, Son & Daughters, now that you have sacrificed your selfishness and impatience, all of you will now receive the white feather of patience and understanding, to symbolize the sacrifice you have just made.As you receive your feather, please hold it in hand until all have received theirs. |
|  | *(The children of the chief & medicine man will now walk around opposite sides of the circle passing out white feathers. When they return, the chief will present them with their white feather).* |

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| Chief | Sons and Daughters, turn and face your fathers. [WAIT] I ask you now to take your fathers feathers and place it into his headband. [WAIT]Big Braves, I ask you now to place your child's feather into their headband. [WAIT](**Medicine Man Indian Name**), please prepare these Braves and Princesses for Induction. |
| Medicine Man | Little Braves and Princesses, stand inside the circle and face your fathers. (WAIT)Join right hands with your fathers. (WAIT)All Braves and Princesses, place your left hand on the shoulder of the person to your left. (WAIT) |
| Chief | This position is symbolic. The right hands joined show the bond between father and child, the left hand on the shoulder of your fellow brave shows the unity of the tribes of the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse.(**Medicine Man Indian Name**), please lead all Braves, Sons & Daughters in reciting the oath.... |
| Medicine Man | All Braves, Sons & Daughters, repeat after me… We, fathers and children, / pledge ourselves, / to observe all the aims / of the Native Sons & Daughters, / and to foster the companionship, / of father and child, / in teepee, / tribe, / and longhouse, / under the four winds of heaven. |
| Chief | Big Braves, repeat after me… Pals Forever, / with my children, / Friends Always.Sons & Daughters, repeat after me…Pals Forever, / with my father, / Friends Always.I congratulate you on now being officially inducted into the (**Longhouse Name**) Longhouse of the Native Sons & Daughters.(*Chief & Medicine Man applaud the council*) |
| Chief | Native American people of long ago, as well as today, were and are a very proud people. Proud of their families, proud of their heritage. Proud and caring of their lands, and have a deep belief in the guidance of the Great Spirit.Earlier, you Braves, Sons & Daughters placed feathers in each other’s headbands. This passing of feathers symbolizes the passing of hopes, dreams, ideals, and heritage, from a father to his child. A father's prayer for his child's success in life.As Native Sons & Daughters, so to must we take pride in our fathers, our mothers, our families, our heritage. Realize that the time that fathers and children have together is a special once-in-a-lifetime gift. |
|  | (Insert additional Ceremonial Closing if desired) |
| Chief / ALL | *(Chief shouts the Longhouse salutation, then all repeat/shout in approval)* |

Contributed by: The Cheyenne Nation, Bedford, Ohio