

A STORY OF THE DREAMCATCHER

Long ago in the days of the ancestors, some of the children of the people were having strange, frightening dreams.

As the children talked to other children, the troubling dreams spread among them like a plague.

The parents of the children were concerned. The people wanted their children to be happy but they didn't know what to do.

The people went to talk to the shaman. The shaman listened patiently as the parents told him about their distress.

The shaman told the parents that he could help. But he would need to spend some time in counsel with the spirits before he would have a solution.

The shaman would have to enter the dream world to find the answer.

Upon entering the dream world the shaman was approached by the four elements: Air, Earth, Water and Fire.

Air had already heard of the parent's concern, and had carried the message on the wind to the other elements.

All the spirits in the dream world loved the children and wanted to help return the children to their state of peaceful sleep.

The elements and the shaman dreamed together for a long time. They finally came to understand that:

Air could carry the children's dreams.

Earth could hold the dreams within her hoop.

Water could wash and separate dreams - the wanted from the unwanted.

Fire could use the morning sun to burn up the unwanted dreams that are caught in the web.

Now all they needed was something to capture the dreams as they were carried by the air. Try as they might, the shaman and the elements could not think of a way to catch the dreams.

Grandmother Spider had been listening!

She said, "Beautiful, loving elements, I can help you as you help me every day." Grandmother Spider continued, "I can weave a special web that only wanted dreams can escape down to the dreamer."

And so she did, and the first Dreamcatcher was made.

The shaman brought the dreamcatcher with him when he made his journey back from the dream world.

All of the families of the people made dreamcatchers. The families hung them above where the children slept, in a place that was seen by the sun.

No longer were the children troubled by unwanted dreams. Instead they had happy dreams and peaceful sleep.

And so, at last, Great Spirit looked into the dreams of the children and smiled?