



# NATIVES



## **A Dream Catcher**

In ancient Ojibwa culture a dream catcher is meant to protect new born babies and young children while they sleep.

Native Americans believe that the night air is filled with dreams both good and bad. The dream catcher when hung over or near your bed swinging freely in the air, catches the dreams as they flow by.

The good dreams know how to pass through the dream catcher, slipping through the outer holes and slide down the soft feathers so gently that many times the sleeper does not know that he/she is dreaming.

The bad dreams not knowing the way get tangled in the dream catcher and perish with the first light of the new day.

Dream catchers are not meant to last forever, but instead are intended to dry out and collapse over time as the child enters adulthood.

## **The Lore Behind**

Long ago when the word was sound, an old Lakota spiritual leader was on a high mountain and had a vision. In his vision, Iktomi, the great trickster and searcher of wisdom, appeared in the form of a spider. Iktomi spoke to him in a sacred language.

As he spoke, Iktomi the spider picked up the elder's willow hoop which had feathers, horsehair, beads and offerings on it, and began to spin a web. He spoke to the elder about the cycles of life, how we begin our lives as infants, move on through childhood and on to adulthood. Finally we go to old age where we must be taken care of as infants, completing the cycle.

But, Iktomi said as he continued to spin his web, in each time of life there are many forces, some good and some bad. If you listen to the good forces, they will steer you in the right direction. But, if you listen to the bad forces, they'll steer you in the wrong direction and may hurt you. So these forces can help, or can interfere with the harmony of Nature. While the spider spoke, he continued to weave his web.

When Iktomi finished speaking, he gave the elder the web and said, The web is a perfect circle with a hole in the center. Use the web to help your people reach their goals, making good use of their ideas, dreams and visions. If you believe in the great spirit, the web will filter your good ideas and the bad ones will be trapped and will not pass.