

## SESSION FOURTEEN

# Celebration Feast

## *Gitchi Ashangewin*

### SUMMARY:

---

The session activity focuses on celebrating the completion of the program and recognizing everyone's hard work and effort. It is a time to reflect on what you have learned over the past 14 sessions and think about how you can incorporate it into your lives on a daily basis. It is also a time to have fun and celebrate our achievements.

---

### SESSION OVERVIEW

- **FAMILY: Group Activity**  
Anishinabe Blanket Ceremony
- **FAMILY: Group Activity**  
Show and Tell
- **FAMILY: Group Activity**  
Raffle Prizes

### OBJECTIVES

**By the end of the session, we hope participants will:**

1. Have celebrated the conclusion of the 14 session program.
2. Have begun to incorporate what they have learned over the past 13 sessions into their daily living.
3. Received gifts of appreciation for their participation in the program.

### MATERIALS:

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blankets   | <input type="checkbox"/> Raffle Prizes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scrapbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> Certificates  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____      | <input type="checkbox"/> _____         |

### PREPARATION CHECKLIST:

- Ask one or more Guest Elders or spiritual leaders, at least one week in advance, to be present at the Celebration Feast and to lead the Blanket Ceremony.
- Invite community members and council members to the celebration feast.
- Arrange the room to accommodate the feast.
- Arrange areas for the scrapbooks to be seen.
- Prepare for the raffle drawing and arrange prizes.
- Make sure you have a copy of and have reviewed the detailed raffle instructions.

## As the Families Arrive



Welcome each family as they arrive. Have all participants (including guests) sign the "Session Sign In and Photo Consent" form. Give each returning family their workbooks and lanyards as they check in.

Ask the kids to put a sticker on the family Attendance Chart. Hand out a final attendance raffle ticket to each child as they sign in. Write their name on the ticket we keep and put it into the Raffle Jar.

## Welcome

**5 min**

Welcome everyone to the last session of the program.

*Boozhoo! Welcome to the celebration feast! We have worked together for the past 13 sessions and we will celebrate all of you, your families, and all of your hard work. We hope you have enjoyed your time learning and growing with us! We are very appreciative of your commitment and sharing our time with your families.*

*We are also happy to have additional family members and friends attend to celebrate with us. Would each of our youth participants please stand so we can recognize you?*

Ask each of the youth to introduce the friends and members of their family who are with them for the celebration feast.

*Thank you all for your attendance. We have spent a lot of time talking about Minobimaadiziwin and we know that our friends and family are a big part of living a "Good Way of Life."*

*We are going to have our celebration feast soon, while we are getting set up, please take a little time to look at the scrapbooks the families have created.*

## Show and Tell Activity

**15 min**

If families are willing, ask them to set out the scrapbooks for others to see. Let families know they will be walking around to look at each other's scrapbooks and share memories from throughout the program.

## Celebration Feast

**45 min**

Announce that it is now time for the meal. Offer tobacco and ask the Guest Elder for the blessing of the food. After the prayer is completed, remind families where the plates, silverware, and beverages may be found and where the garbage cans are located. Remind families to throw away their items and clean up their areas after they have finished eating.

Mingle with the families during the meal. Please spread out and sit with the families. After people have finished eating, make sure that the area is cleaned up and ask others to help if necessary. Set aside any leftover food and redirect the group to their seats.

## **Blanket Ceremony**

**25 min**

Have the group return to their seats for the Blanket Ceremony. Tell the families that information about the "**Anishinabe Blanket Ceremony**" can be found on **page 46** of the Adult Workbook and **page 54** of the Youth Workbook.

### *Anishinabe Blanket Ceremony*

*As a means of bonding between parents and child, a blanket ceremony is conducted when the child begins to enter his/her change of life or rites of passage (puberty). The people say that this is a very powerful time in a child's life. Young boys' voices change. Young girls begin to follow the cycle of the moon.*

*The mother presents a blanket to her son at this time. From one corner of the blanket, the mother cuts off a piece which she will keep. She then tells the son, "In time you will be leaving your family to go out on your own. Throughout your lifetime you may carry this blanket to many places. But this piece will always be mine to hold. This will be an everlasting bond between us."*

*The father presents a blanket to his daughter at this time. A small piece is cut from one corner and is kept by the father and the same words are told to her: "In time you will be leaving your family to go out on your own. Throughout your lifetime you may carry this blanket to many places. But this piece will always be mine to hold. This will be an everlasting bond between us."*

*As parents, we must learn to build a strong bond with our children as they are growing up, but when they start to be young adults, we must also learn to let go. We will always want to protect and guide our children, even when they are adults, but we must also let them protect and guide themselves. This is how they will learn to be responsible and rely on themselves for the decisions that will be made.*

Introduce the invited Guest Elder for the evening to conduct the Blanket Ceremony. The Guest Elder will give a short introduction and then ask the first family to come forward.

The Guest Elder will conduct the Blanket Ceremony with the first family while the facilitators hand out the certificates to families. Ask each family to come up individually to be honored. This continues until all the families have gone through the ceremony.

Some reservations have invited a drum group and held an Honor Dance to conclude this ceremony.



## **Raffle**

**30 min**

Have the raffle prizes and Raffle Jar set up for participants to see. Ask everyone to gather where you have the raffle prizes set up. Ask the Guest Elder to draw the names for the prizes. Explain to the participants that we will be distributing raffle prizes.

*Through the last thirteen weeks, the youth have been working very hard on their assignments and activities and they have been earning raffle tickets. Tonight we will have our Guest Elder draw names for the raffle prizes.*

## **Wrap-up and Closing Prayer**

**15 min**

Tell the families how sincerely you have appreciated their participation.

*This program would have never been possible without you. Thank you for sharing your lives with us the past three months. We appreciate each and every one of you so much! I hope you all learned some useful ideas that you carry forward into your everyday lives. Again, I sincerely want to say thank you for participating in this program. I hope everyone had a positive experience and enjoyed coming here week after week. The workbooks and booklets are yours to keep – so are the family lanyards and the scrapbooks.*

*Be sure to get your gift cards and sign your receipts before you leave!*

Have one adult from each family sign the \$20 visa gift card receipt (purple paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Have each eligible child sign the \$10 visa gift card receipt (blue paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Ask the Guest Elder to sign the \$50 visa gift card receipt (white paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Thank participants for their attendance and participation this week.

Complete the brief one-page 'Weekly Session Evaluation' form for your records. Remember to go online to the online fidelity survey <https://tinyurl.com/bzddddeval> to complete the overall weekly session evaluation BEFORE your next session.

Check to make sure that you have picked up all your supplies before leaving. Be sure that the area is clean and tidy. Check all bathrooms and eating areas to be sure that we aren't leaving any messes behind. Turn off lights and locks doors as directed by the facility.