

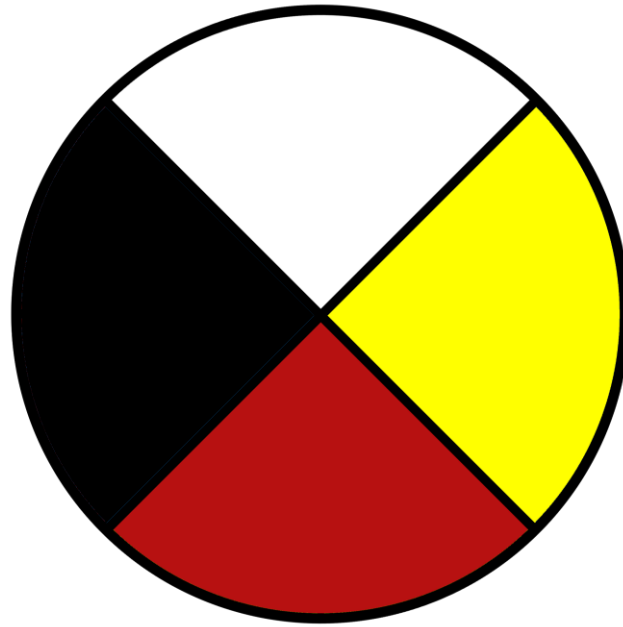
NITOTEMAK

BENT ARROW KINSHIP PROGRAM

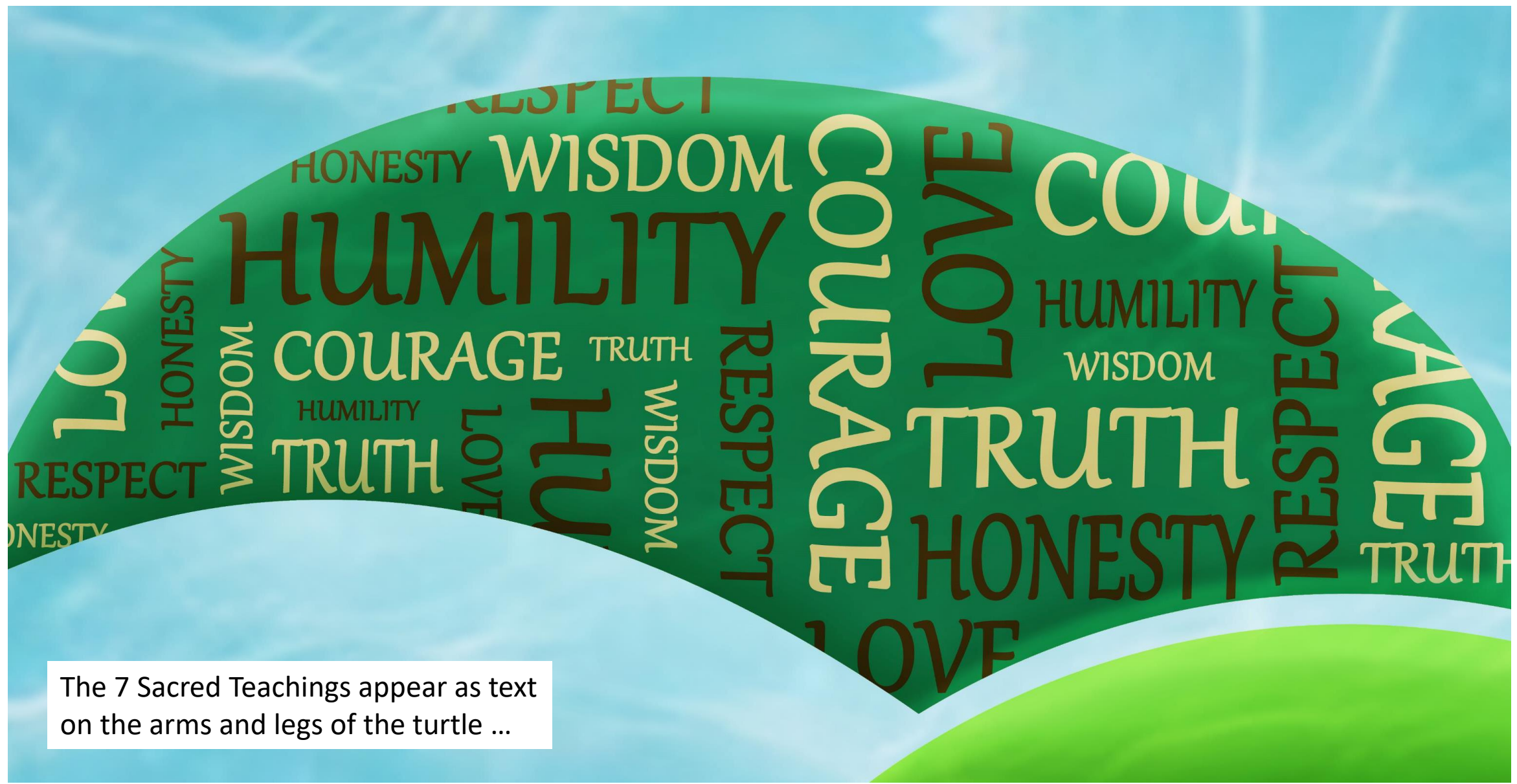
This map illustrates the journey of a child as they enter and move through the Bent Arrow Kinship Program:

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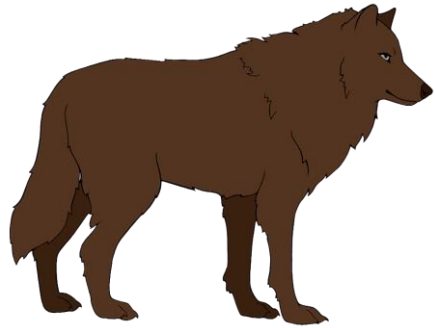




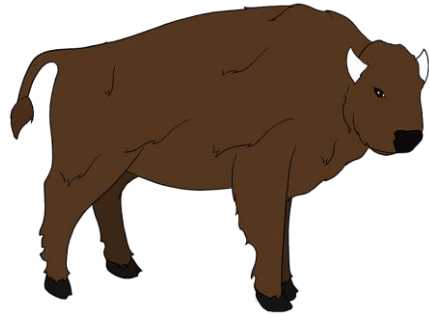
Several cultural elements were incorporated into the map. Teepees, found along the path, signify resources and supports available to the child and family. Medicine wheels, placed atop an image, highlight sacred practices and ceremonies. Grandfather rock, which is also found along the path, symbolizes connection to our ancestors.



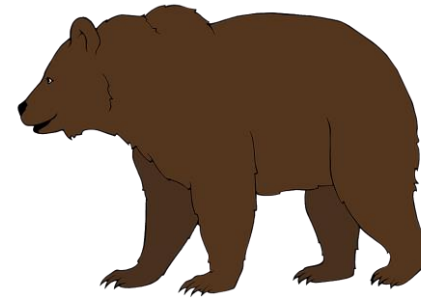
The 7 Sacred Teachings appear as text on the arms and legs of the turtle ...



Humility



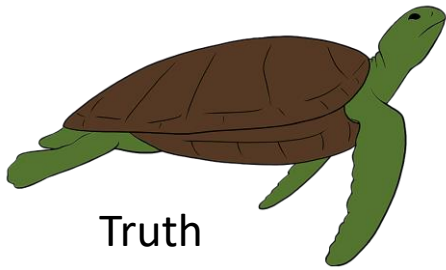
Respect



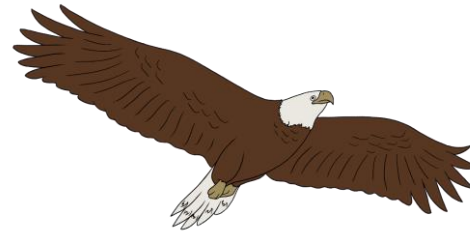
Courage



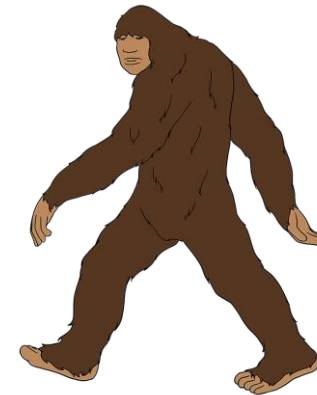
Wisdom



Truth



Love



Honesty

... and as animal icons on the path, near images where that quality is observed.

The overall layout of the map represents Turtle Island and is a reminder of cultural identity and deep connection to the earth.



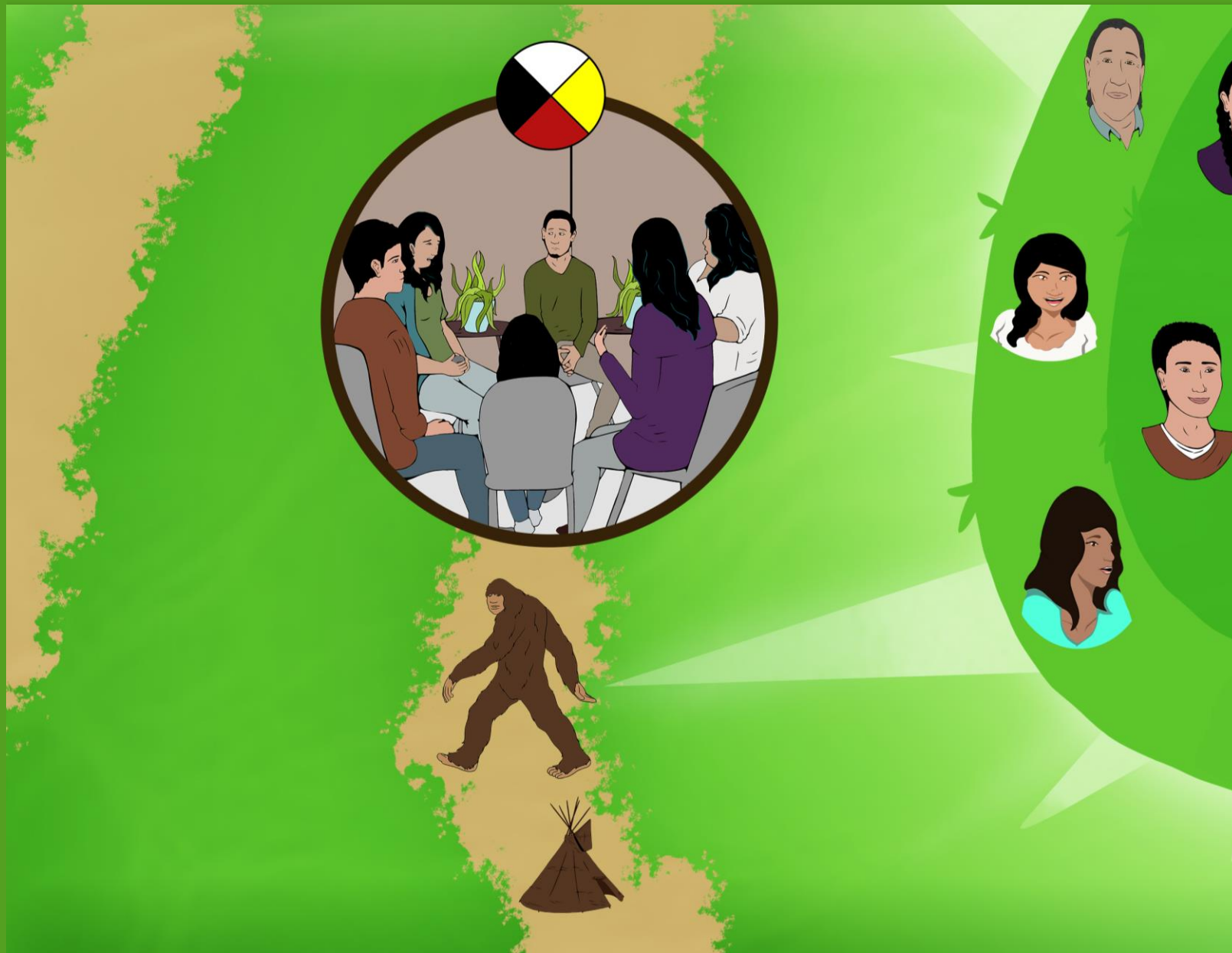


In the centre of the map we see the Awasis, where the child grows and develops in the mother's womb and prepares to enter the world. A sunburst, representing the life force and energy of the Awasis, emanates from the family tree. The tree informs of the child's lineage and represents the family's deep connection to the land, with roots that reach deep into Mother Earth. The family tree also symbolizes the Sundance model, with the child and its biological parents at the centre. The middle ring includes extended family members such as grandparents, siblings of the parents, and the child's cousins. The outer circle represents members of the community.

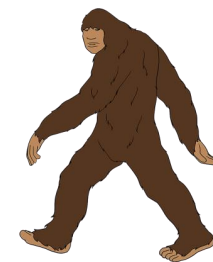


The bent arrow at the beginning of the path shows the direction of movement into and through the Nitotemak program.

As we travel along the path, the first image that we see is one of a child sitting alone at the foot of her bed, unable to receive all the care that she needs.



The next image is a Healing Circle, where we see family members coming together to determine what is best for the child. The teepee on the path leading up to the image represents support from Bent Arrow. The Sasquatch symbolizes the honesty that is required during this process, and the medicine wheel reminds us that this is a sacred practice.





In this image we see the child being removed from her home.

This image portrays the first kinship contact.

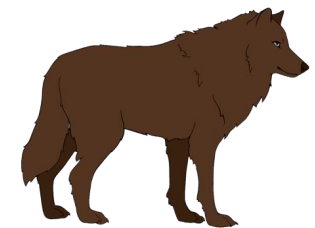




Next, we see the child settling into the kinship home.



Moving along the path, we see the child testing boundaries in the kinship home. The wolf, symbolizing humility, can be found on the path approaching that image.





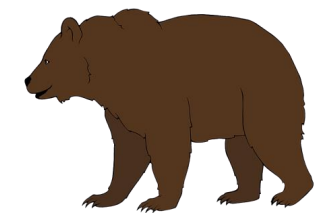
In this image we see an in-home visit. A kinship support worker (KSW) visits the caregiver and child monthly, making sure the family has everything they need. The KSW provides support and guidance to ensure the home is meeting safety and accreditation standards. This also includes meeting the child's mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs. There is also a focus on supporting the child's cultural identity. This could be by offering cultural supports, connection to the child's community, teachings or even bringing medicines to the visits. They also strive to build a strong support network around the caregiver, which includes the child's parents, so they have as much help as possible in caring for the child. The child will have a sense of belonging and connection to those that love them.



The following image represents various community supports available to the child and family.

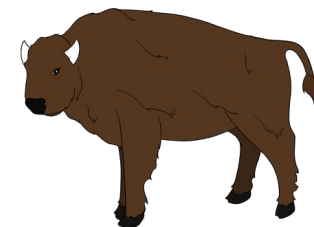


In this image we see the child meeting with a counsellor. The teepee represents external supports, and the bear reminds us of the courage that is necessary in this situation.





As an alternative to counselling, Elders often support families through trauma. This image shows an Elder from the community making dream catchers with the mom, dad, caregivers and child. This symbolizes how we connect children to Elders from their own communities, to learn our traditional teachings. The Buffalo and Beaver can be found on the path near this image representing respect and wisdom. The teepee and medicine wheel are also present, representing external supports and sacred practices.



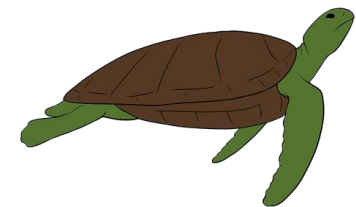


Here we see the caregiver meeting with the child's teacher at a parent-teacher conference. The Beaver near this image symbolizes wisdom.





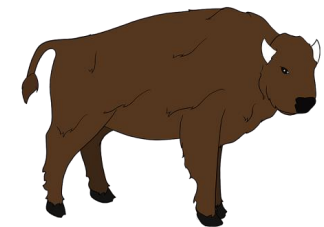
The next image portrays smudging before a meeting. The turtle, seen on the path approaching this image, represents truth, and the medicine wheel symbolizes a sacred practice.



STY RE TRUTH

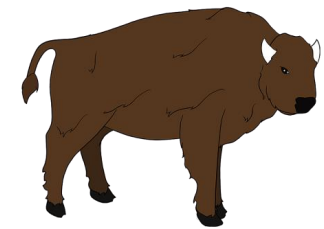


In this image we see a Round Dance, where the child, biological parents, kinship caregivers and others come together to celebrate. The medicine wheel indicates that this is a sacred ceremony, and the Buffalo is nearby symbolizing respect for cultural identity.





Next, we see a feast being shared by the family and extended family. The buffalo can be found on the path leading up to this image and symbolizes respect for family and culture.





The last image shows the child at a blanket ceremony, where the child is presented with an eagle feather and a star blanket. The eagle can be seen on the path near this image symbolizing love.





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