



PEACEMAKING STATEMENT FATHER'S DAY

Hastiin dóó Azhé'e Ídljigi bee nanitin

There is a focus on fatherhood and fatherly duties as we mark this Father's Day. We think of what it means to be a father, from lifting up a child showing the miracle of birth to examining who we want to be in the eyes of our children. In the Diné creation story, the Twins sought out Father Sun and he gave them weapons and advice. Eventually they rid the world of monsters with his help. As we learn from the teachings of the Twins, solving our problems is a journey that requires mentoring, respect for each other and personal growth.

The story helps us to know that one of the responsibilities of men is to build their own skills and seek the advice of elders so they can help to overcome problems and contribute to the well-being of everyone in their community.

Fatherhood is an important part of manhood. While men and women have different roles, neither is greater or lesser than the other. Both deserve mutual respect. K'é teaches us that we have obligations to show our respect in the way we treat each other.

When Monster Slayer met his father the Sun, he was first denied, then tested, and eventually accepted. The Sun came to terms with his fatherhood by dutifully taking up fatherly duties. He learned the rewards of feeling the true bond of loving his children.

Many of our children are products of broken father-son father-daughter relationships. K'é was established by Changing Woman. She knew our children deserve the love and support gained through the extended relationship of Hastiin dóó Azhé'e Ídljigi. Each child has the benefit of being loved unconditionally, with father figure role models to guide them through adolescence and into adulthood. Changing Woman's teaching is that through K'é, traditional parenting was established and defines each role of father and mother.

When a boy becomes a man, his uncles and other male relatives speak to him about his responsibilities. They teach him to respect himself, have discipline and self-determination, and to respect women as the equals of men. He is told that he has responsibilities to his parents, to the family of his own he will have some day, to his Clan, and to his community. These teachings were given to us by the Holy People, and we are required to pass them on to our sons. This is not just at the moment of manhood. All of us have a responsibility to help our young men learn how to use these teachings in their daily life, and to reach out with our hands and our hearts when our young men lose their path.

New fathers often make fatherhood pledges with good intentions but some are not able to be all they wish to be. Well-intentioned sons sometimes become our unsuccessful fathers. Adulthood, fully being a man, is to recover from troubles or a broken heart and fulfill the promises that are made when men pledge to be a better father. Hastiin dóó Azhé'e Ídlíigi bee nazhnitin; Hooghan haz'áádóó dáádiníbaal nihiníltsooz dóó tl'óo'jì haz'ánígíí bee nazhnitin; Hooghan álnééh bee nazhnitin, Naaldlooshii naagháii, naalyéegi, baa'áháyáagi bee nanitin, dá'ák'eh haz'áagi bina'anish, k'éé'dílyééh bee nazhnitin, Táchééh haz'áa bee nazhnitin; Tsodizin dóó Sin bee nazhnitin; Hodíizin bee na'nitin; T'áá Hó' Ájít'éigo bee na'nitin.

Your rewards are the satisfaction of successful fatherhood. These rewards come to you through happy children who succeed in school, seek to walk in Beauty, and return your love—who are able to be successful mothers and fathers themselves because of the example you set for them. No one is born knowing how to be a good father. It takes willingness to learn, to ask for help, and to practice love and kindness for the mother of your children, and your children themselves. No father can do these things unless he is first a successful man who has found his place in the universe, who has learned to walk in Beauty. This is the K'é of fatherhood that should be celebrated and shared on Father's Day.