

THIS TALKING STICK HELPED US LISTEN!



"The light of truth shineth from the faces of those who engage in consultation." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

## TACTFUL TALKING TOOL

**W**e got a new puppy today! He's a Bernese Mountain Dog and so cute! It was tough deciding who would feed and walk him, though. My little brother and sister started arguing and woke the puppy from his nap. Then I got an idea! I ran into my room and brought out my talking stick.

Okay, it doesn't really "talk," but a talking stick is a cool communication tool that's been used by

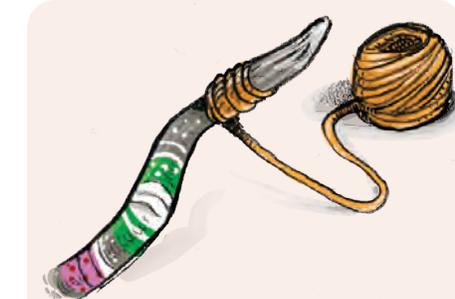
some American Indian tribes for centuries. Only the person holding the talking stick can speak, and everyone else listens closely. Then they pass the stick to others, one at a time. Everyone shares ideas.

The talking stick helped me and my siblings remember that God wants us to show respect, equality, and oneness. We agreed on a schedule to take turns caring for the puppy. And we chose a name: Pinecone!

## MAKE YOUR OWN TALKING STICK

**You'll Need:** A thick, smooth stick • acrylic paint • brushes • colorful string or yarn • scissors • beads • felt (optional)

- 1 Paint stick with colors, designs, and words that express your hopes for the conversation. In some American Indian tribes, an eagle represents truth, power, and grace, and the color green symbolizes nature, harmony, and healing. Add virtues like respect and peace.



- 2 When dry, tie colorful string or yarn around stick. Continue wrapping it around in a band of color. Cut string, leaving a long end. Tie a knot around stick to secure string.

- 3 Add beads to end of string and tie a knot to secure them. If you wish, add felt and more strings with beads.



## TIPS FOR TACTFUL TALKS

- Speak from your heart with positivity and avoid criticizing others.
- Listen to the person with the talking stick without interrupting. Try to understand their point of view.
- Keep an open mind and focus on learning from the group.
- It's okay if you disagree with others. Share your thoughts with courtesy. Try finding things you all agree on.
- If a decision needs to be made, ask each person to vote on a solution. Everyone supports the idea with the most votes.