

# **First Nations Public Library Week**

## **“Celebrating Our Culture and Language”**

### **Medicine Bag Instruction**

The purpose of this document is to guide First Nations librarians through the creation of a Medicine Bag. This is not a how to document but rather a programming idea that your library can participate in during First Nation Library Week.

As this is a sacred item, consulting an Elder for participation in addition to a traditional craftsperson/artist is recommended. The Medicine Bag is used to carry sacred items such as medicine. The creation of the Medicine bag is a very personal activity as one decorates based on symbols that are important to them.

If you do not have access to an Elder or traditional craftsperson, below is a list of materials based on the activity from the 2009 conference.

**Environment:** Ensure that there is a comfortable space for the participants to work. Before the starting of this activity, a smudge should be done.

**Participants:** This activity will require you to have enough material ready for your participants. It is a good idea to have a sign-up sheet. Another option would be to have the participants bring in their own deer hide to save on costs. This activity can be done with various ages within the community. It is a great activity to do with youth and Elders. This will promote traditional learning.

#### **Suggested Materials**

Deer Hide (2 - 12cm by 8 cm rectangles and one circle at least 10 cm in diameter)

Scissors

Hand Hole Punch

Markers

Beads

Template or ruler/pen

**Instructions** (To be used if you do not have access to traditional craftsperson)

Cut out template pieces and place on deer hide (make marks on dark side) or measure/cut two squares that are approximately 12 cm by 8 cm. Cut rounded edge (approximately 3 cm in from

end of one square. Apply glue to the sides of the dark side of the hide. Create leather lacing by cutting, in spiral formation, a circle until the circle is gone. Then cut lacing into two pieces. Use hand punch to put 14 holes around edges of bag. Use 1st piece to lace bag together. Be sure to put a knot in the beginning. Leave the top of the bag open. With 2nd piece, lace around the opening of the bag and secure. Tie a knot using both ends of the 2nd piece. (Drawstring format) Use scissors to cut fringe on the excess portion of hide. Once construction of Medicine bag is complete you may decorate it.

