

What is the social structure of the Iroquois Confederacy?

Children & Women's Councils

What were the roles and responsibilities of Children in the Iroquois Confederacy?

- Children were often around and listening when adults held discussions
- Discussions were part of daily life in longhouses
- Children grew up hearing about issues and learning how decisions were made
- Boys and girls both knew that they would have important roles in the Iroquois Confederacy when they grew up so they paid close attention.

What were the roles & responsibilities of Women in the Iroquois Confederacy?

Clan Mothers

- Clan mothers were the oldest and most respected women in their clans.
- Responsible for the clan's welfare and for maintaining harmony and balance within clans and nations
- They selected the Hoyenah (male leader of the Iroquois Confederacy).
- Could replace the Hoyaneh if they didn't follow the clan mother's wishes
- Advised the Hoyaneh on issues
- Had a strong indirect influence on decisions.

Women

- All women other than the clan mothers participated in women's councils
- They discussed issues and used consensus
- Participated in decision making for their nation
- They advised the clan mothers on issues
- The Great Law of Peace gave the clan mother ownership of the chieftainship title. This means that clan mothers had the responsibility of selecting the chiefs for their own clan. Clan mothers today have as much importance and respect as they did in the past.

What is the social structure of the Iroquois Confederacy?

Men's Councils

What were the roles and responsibilities of Men in the Iroquois Confederacy?

Men	Hoyaneh
• All of the men in the clan were included in the Men's Council • They discussed issues and used consensus • Participated in decision making for their nation • They advised the clan mothers on issues	• Male leaders of the Iroquois Confederacy • Means "Caretakers of the Peace" • Today they are called Chiefs • Chosen and advised by the clan mothers • Each nation had several • Met to make decisions for their nation • Used consensus • Represented their nation at Grand Council meetings



Mohawk



Seneca



Onondaga



Cayuga



Oneida