

While we're there ...
"At camp we create space for young people to encounter Christ"

Creating space involves removing distraction and setting and enforcing the boundaries.

Removing distractions

Camp clears the cultural clutter from young people's lives and gives them room to consider Jesus Christ. Without movies, TV and the internet to preoccupy their senses, without the demands of daily schedules and the relational ruts that sometimes characterise life at home, young people find new freedom to investigate the person of Christ and the claims He makes about Himself.

Note: When we get to camp, we check that all iPods, tablets, mobile phones etc are collected and put in a safe place until the end of the week. Prepare your cabin in advance for this. This is an instance when surprising your campers won't work in your favour.

The role of the Cabin Leader

"To lovingly help young people be drawn closer to Christ. He is the one that kids need to know, love and follow. All the leader's efforts should point toward this objective.

Stan Beard, 1990

Setting and enforcing boundaries

Property boundaries – the Camp Manager will outline the property boundaries shortly after you arrive. It is your responsibility to help keep campers within those boundaries at all times.

Note: One of the boundaries at camp involves creating space for campers to smoke. We recognise that young people who come to camp have not yet met the One with the power to break destructive patterns of behaviour. And since campers who smoke will find a way to support their habit, we provide a limited but safe area for them to smoke. It is essential for campers to smoke only in the designated area. You are the person primarily responsible to see that your campers adhere to this.

Program boundaries. Program boundaries include:

- Getting your cabin to meals, club and activities on time.
- Getting yourself to meals five minutes early
- Keep campers in the dining hall at the table until the program team give permission to leave
- Playing by the rules, even though it might make you look cool to do otherwise.
- Enthusiastically supporting the program and working to get your campers involved at all times.

Cabin courtesy. Cabin courtesy includes:

- Establishing a code of conduct in your cabin that includes respecting one another's property and privacy
- Helping campers work to keep the cabin relatively clean so stuff doesn't get lost and attitudes don't get cross
- Turning lights out at appointed 'lights out' times
- Respecting people in other cabins who are wanting to sleep and respecting their property and cabin space

It's not a bad idea to hold a brief meeting the first night of camp to establish the code of conduct for the cabin. You might tack this onto the end of the first cabin time, or have a separate meeting to discuss the rules. Give the campers the opportunity to suggest their own code of conduct, and then fill in the gaps as necessary.

Personal boundaries. John the Baptist said it best when the religious leaders asked him who he was and he answered, "I am not the Christ." YOU are not the Christ either. You have a

window young people can look through to see Jesus, but sometimes you need to close the blinds.

Take a nap. Get away by yourself. Talk with another adult. Be sure to make it to every cabin leaders meeting. Those times are created especially for you. If you find you are taking no time for yourself, then perhaps you are relying too much on your own strength, putting too much weight on your own importance in the lives of your campers. Perhaps it is time to tell yourself, "I am not the Christ."

By the way, you aren't the Holy Spirit either. It isn't your job to convict young people or to convert them to Christ. You are a tool the Holy Spirit can use to facilitate the process, but if you are manipulating, using guilt or pressure, you need to tell yourself, "I am not the Holy Spirit." Besides, you don't really want that job. The hours are killer.

One last thing: you are not a kid. No offence. You may look like a kid, you may feel like a kid, you may even act like a kid much of the time. But at least for this week of camp, YOU ARE NOT A KID. You are the adult. Take leadership from the start. Your campers expect you to act like an adult. They need you to act like an adult. It makes them feel secure to know someone else is in control. Be an adult.

OK, then. Stand up, put your right hand over your heart and repeat the Young Life leader's motto:

**I AM NOT THE CHRIST.
I AM NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT.
I AM NOT A KID.**

**I AM AN ADULT YOUNG LIFE LEADER
WHO IS PRIVILEGED TO POINT KIDS TO JESUS CHRIST
WITH INTEGRITY AND RESPECT.**



YoungLife Australia