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# Breakaway Camp Leaders Manual

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# Breakaway Camp Leaders Manual

## *Breakaway Kids Camps*

Our mission is to provide a fun environment where relationships are built and the gospel is shared so that lives are changed eternally.

Breakaway Kids Camps are Interdenominational Christian Holiday Camps for Kids located 2 hours south of Sydney, NSW. Australia.

The camps are held at Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre - Ryans Lane Fitzroy Falls, NSW Australia, during the January School Holidays. There is a Junior Camp for Primary Schoolers (Years 3-6) and a Senior Camp for High Schoolers (Years 7-12). There are also Summer and Winter Camps for Underprivileged Children. We aim to provide opportunities for young people to develop mentally, physically, socially and spiritually in a healthy natural environment.

The camp team consist of Christian men and women who relate well to young people and who care for their well-being. They give their time on a voluntary basis

## *Introduction*

Welcome to the Breakaway Kids Camps Leaders Manual. This Manual has been put together so that you can be better prepared for Breakaway Camps and more aware of your roles and responsibilities. It has lots of ideas for what to do and how to do it. Each year new sections are added depending on what we have learned along the way.

Breakaway Camp is tough, challenging and yet rewarding. Expect to meet God while you are at camp. If you are a first time leader, quiz an experienced leader before you go to camp. If you have any feedback about camp, talk to any of those below and we will try to help.

The directors for Breakaway are: -

Junior Breakaway Directors: Dan & Fernne Johnston <a href="mailto:fernnedan@breakawaycamp.org.au">fernnedan@breakawaycamp.org.au</a>	Senior Breakaway Director : Andrew Barrs <a href="mailto:andrew@breakawaycamp.org.au">andrew@breakawaycamp.org.au</a>
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Enjoy,

- Andrew Barrs -

## The Breakaway Mission

*Our Mission is to provide a fun environment where relationships are built and the gospel is shared so that lives are changed eternally.*

The Breakaway Mission statement was developed by the team in 2001. This statement qualifies what we do and don't do at Breakaway Camp. There are four main aspects of our ministry that are highlighted in the mission statement: -

### How We Provide a Fun Environment

We provide a safe, fun environment in which campers can express themselves.

### How We Build Relationships

Our relationships will model Christ's love.

Our relationships will be built upon effective communication within suitable boundaries.

### How We Share the Gospel

We share the gospel by creatively using the talents God has given us.

We share the gospel by teaching from the Bible and serving like Christ.

### How Lives Are Changed Eternally

God will change lives eternally by his Holy Spirit through empowering the leaders.

We will persevere in prayer and ongoing follow-up.



## How did Breakaway Begin?

The Fitzroy Falls camping ministry began on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1978. Martin and Robyn Reurich began the Fitzroy Falls Summer Camps for children in need in 1979 as a ministry of their Conference Centre.

Roy Buckingham - an Anglican minister from Lithgow who ran camps for kids in need from his area - directed the first camp. A charity and committee was formed to organise and fund the camps. They began with 120 children and 30 leaders over ten days (aah!!!)

A year later Selywn Sexton (from the Open Air Campaigners (OAC)) was later approached to help run camps for kids who weren't in financial need. This became Breakaway Camp.

Breakaway camps were set up to share the gospel with all kids. The name came from the idea that the kids take a break away from the everyday to come to camp and focus on God.

The camps for kids in need were expanded to include a camp in May and August—now they are just in Winter and Summer.

In 1997, Selwyn moved to Africa as a missionary. Martin and Robyn decided that they had enough experienced leaders to run Breakaway themselves. Now they use their own leaders to run camps.

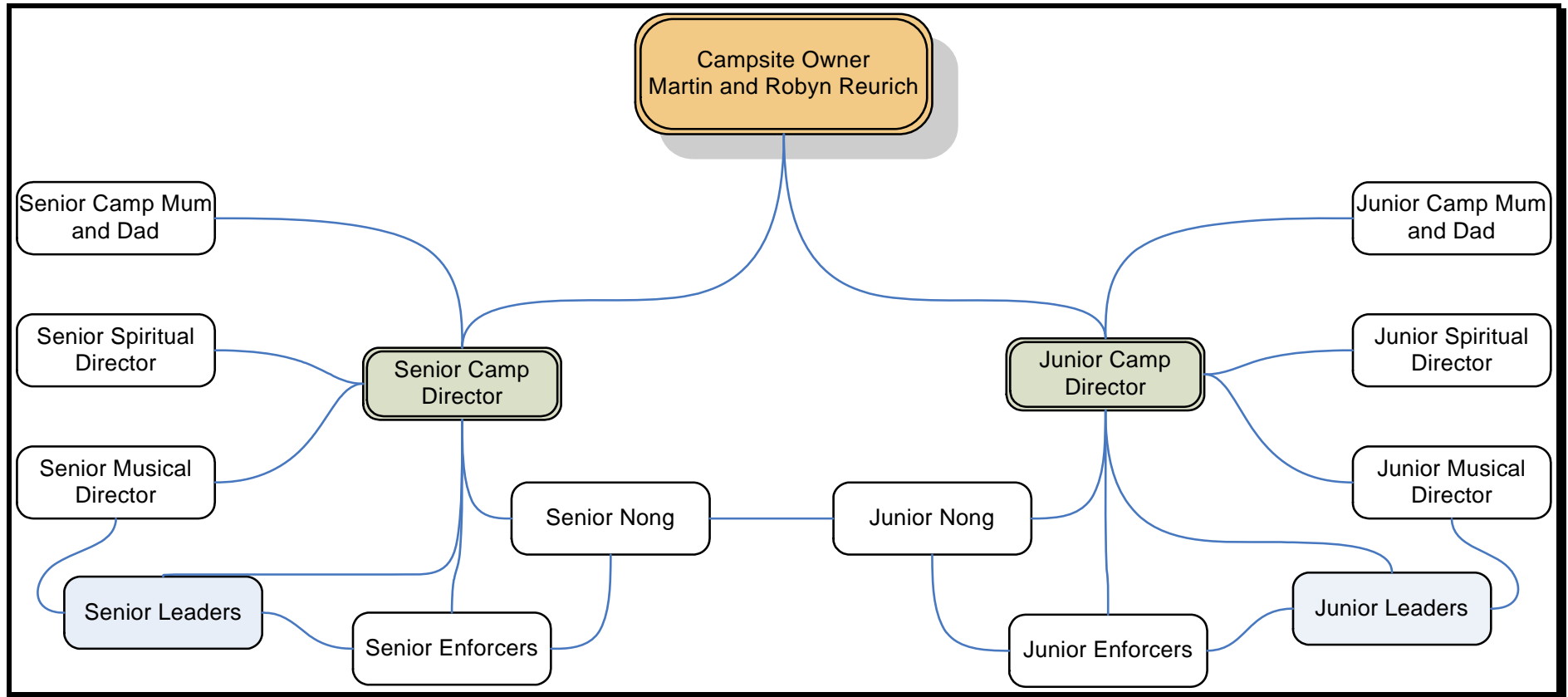
In 2003, another branch of these camps was introduced in the form of the Spring Adventure Camp.

As time has gone by, Martin and Robyn have passed the baton on to their son Luke and his wife Amanda.

They have given the majority of the organising to the camp directors and their team but remain as overseers of the whole programme.

Both the Summer and Winter camps for underprivileged children and the Breakaway camps fall under the banner of the Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre. Often campers are sponsored by other people and sometimes the Summer Camp funding is used to send people to Breakaway Camps.

## Breakaway Family Tree



## Roles and Responsibilities...

### *Luke and Amanda Reurich*

The Breakaway Camp ministry began as a vision of Robyn and Martin Reurich. Martin and Robyn have since handed over the management of the Campsite to their son Luke and his wife Amanda. Luke and Amanda's role and responsibilities include: -

- Advertising.
- Catering.
- Financial Administration.
- Liaising with DOCS and other sponsoring organisations.

The camp directors report to Luke and Amanda.

Luke and Amanda liaise with the Summer Camp charity committee.

### *Fitzroy Falls Summer Camp for Underprivileged Children Charity Committee*

The Camp committee oversee the Summer and Winter camps for underprivileged children. They are a charitable organisation and are able to sponsor kids to go to the Breakaway camps. They often get kids who are sponsored by organisations such as DOCS, Barnardos, Anglicare, Burnside and other organisations.

### *Camp Director*

The camp director has responsibility over the operational areas of camp: -

- Programme.
- Leadership development.
- Spiritual programme.
- Discipline.
- Camp preparation.

### *Camp Parents*

Camp parents are usually experienced parents. Their responsibilities are wide and varied: -

- They provide spiritual input for the leaders by leading bible studies during the morning leader's meetings.
- They help keep the director sane by being a sounding board for any issues.
- They look for the quiet kid who needs special attention.
- They jump in wherever they see a need. For example if a leader needs a break.
- They join cabin groups for cabin time.
- They provide feedback to the director.

### *Enforcers*

Enforcers are a small team of experienced leaders who help support the director in operational areas: -

- Organise games.
- Enforce discipline.
- Mentor other leaders.

### *Musical Director*

Camp directors choose the musical director. They are people who are experienced, gifted & passionate about music. Responsibilities: -

- Choosing worship songs for camp.
- Coordinating the worship team.
- Arranging practise time during camp.

## Leaders

The Leaders fill the most important role at camp. This is what your role is all about: -

*You are a shepherd called by God (see Psalm 78:70-72).* Thus: -

### God Chose You

- Shepherds don't chose themselves, and they are not elected by a popular vote from the sheep

### We Are Servants

- A Christian Leader is primarily a servant (see Mark 10:43)

There are two requirements of a Shepherd

- Integrity of Heart
- Skilful Hands

If you want to maintain your "integrity of heart," then there are three relationships you must nurture: -

### 1/ Know Jesus, Your Shepherd

- Jesus gives you life (See Revelation 7:17)
- Jesus calls you and watches over you (See 1 Peter 2:25)
- Jesus rewards you (See 1 Peter 5:2,4)

### 2/ Know Your Own Heart

Only you know yourself: -

- Be a genuine, authentic Christian (See Matthew 7:15)
- It is dangerous to have no Christian substance (See Jude 1:12)
- It is dangerous to have the wrong motives (See 1 Peter 5:2-3; Mark 10:42-44)

### 3/ Know Your Sheep (See John 10:2-4)

How do you know your sheep?

#### a) Find Your Sheep

- Don't be like Little Bo Peep who lost her sheep and didn't know where to find them. She left them alone hoping they would come home wagging their tails behind them.
- A good leader will have a heart for the unsaved (See Luke 15:4-7) and will actively seek out and build relationships with the young people.

#### b) Feed Your Sheep

As leaders, we must teach the young people the word of God (See Mark 6:34; Luke 24:27). Thus: -

- We must find out what God's word really means
- Apply Gods word to our own lives first
- Then help the young people to apply it in their own life.

#### c) Guard your Sheep

- As leaders we must guard the young people from going astray (See Ezekiel 34:11-16; Acts 20:28-31; John 10:7-13)
- This means a leaders job is not over after one week of camp. Be prepared to keep in contact with the young people for some time to come.



## Be Prepared Before Camp

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### *Prayer Preparation*

The success of these camps rides on our prayers. Please take time to prepare yourself spiritually before and during camp. Consider asking some faithful prayer warriors of your church to pray for yourself and the ministry while you are at camp. Here are some ideas about what you and others can pray for before, during, and after camp: -

- That the message of Christ is proclaimed lovingly and faithfully.
- That we will be committed to doing our best - including preparation before the camps.
- That we each depend on God and not on ourselves in everything.
- That we would have a concern for the children's lives and be able to put aside our own needs.
- That we would focus on building a godly relationship with the children.
- That we would search for opportunities to share God's love with the children (Particularly those in our room groups).
- That ill health and accidents will stay away and that we will persevere through all.
- That we would be fair and loving when disciplining.
- That as leaders we might share love and unity.
- That this will lead to children making commitments to Christ and us standing with them in heaven.
- Pray for the leaders of the camp - the cooks - the Reurichs - the camp parents - the speakers during the spiritual sessions.
- That we will be diligent in following up the kids after the camps.

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### *Preparation for Storytelling*

At camp we use storytelling in both the morning sessions and at nighttime within the cabin groups. They can allow us to tell the gospel in a form that is easily digested.

At nighttime stories are very helpful. Tell a fairy tale. Stories are a fantastic tool for putting kids to sleep. (No - really - hearing the sound of snoring during one of your elaborate stories is a very positive sign! They will ask you what they missed the following morning). Where possible it is good to weave a biblical

moral into the tale. A serialised story, ending each night on a cliffhanger can be used as a motivator to get the kids into bed and to stop them from wanting to talk all night long. You will find that kids love to be told a good story, regardless of age group (Andrew has had 18 year-olds asking for a bedtime story).

New stories are important so throughout the year leading up to camp, be on the lookout for potential story ideas.

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### *Memory Verse Preparation*

The aim of a memory verse is to implant the word of God in the

children's hearts. Thus remembering and understanding is important! When teaching a memory verse, we need to

begin by getting the children to work out what the verse is, then memorise it (eg. Repetition of the Verse), and finally understand the meaning of the verse. If you are preparing a memory verse for morning session, here are some ideas to help you: -

- Pass the Parcel
- Send a "letter"
- Word Scrambles
- Jigsaw Puzzle
- Dot-to-Dot
- Symbols / Codes
- Hide Words around the Room
- Candle Wax - create a hidden message
- Words on shapes: clothes, crowns, or a design relevant to the verse.
- Find a word - on paper or hidden around the campsite / room
- Make up a song, add a section for each new verse
- Make up a chant
- Hidden treasure with a map to follow

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### ***Worship Music Preparation***

Music is one of the best ways for people of all ages to learn. We can use it to teach biblical truths and to direct the children towards a right response to the gospel. We also model how to praise and worship God.

Perhaps many years from now, a child will remember a song they were taught, think about its meaning, and seek to know more or become a Christian.

Music builds enthusiasm. It backs up the spiritual message presented. It introduces the campers to Christian worship.

At Breakaway we are blessed with some excellent musicians and musical directors.

If you are ever called upon for worship leading, the following ideas are helpful: -

#### ***Choosing Songs***

There are three criteria you should look for when choosing songs: biblical truthfulness, relevancy, and musicality.

#### ***Truthful***

Songs need to be scripturally sound and age appropriate. Any images they

contain need to be within the children's understanding and experience.

It is essential to recognise words that may be abstract or confusing and either explain them or choose a different song that expresses truth in a more age-appropriate way.

#### ***Relevant***

Many of the children at camp are not yet Christians.

Therefore it may be misleading for us to encourage them to sing songs that proclaim they have eternal life and use phrases such as "I'm saved". Also be careful of jargon such as, "Blood of the Lamb," "Our God is an awesome God who reigns (rains?)" - they may have other connotations. We can, however,

1. Teach Truths about God
2. Teach them to think Biblically about their position before God; and
3. Teach them how to respond to God appropriately.

We need to seek out (or write?) songs that do these things, and leave those that do not.

## ***Musical***

A difficult melody or a boring song results in non-participating children. If the music is too difficult for the musicians, the confusion will be communicated to the kids.

## ***Instrument Preparation***

It goes without saying that if you are able to play a musical instrument, please bring it along. And be prepared to practise the music before the camps and during the camp. At all times be enthusiastic in your performance and have fun. While we are having fun at the front, the young

people will become more relaxed (but don't distract the kids from the message being presented).

If you are altogether unmusical, then it is still important that we learn the words of the songs. Singing in public is altogether foreign in our Australian culture. Most non-church and many church kids will not want to sing in front of their friends. They will sit there and exclaim, "This is boring!" We must be enthusiastic in our worship. This will encourage the young people to join us. Then they will be able to experience the joy of worshipping Jesus through song.

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## ***What Leaders Should Bring to Camp***

- Wet Weather Gear and WARM OLD CLOTHES
- Deck of Cards; Board Games etc. To amuse kids if it rains.
- Your STORY!! Memory Verse, Dramas, Games etc.
- A Craft for 10 kids
- A torch
- Stories to tell the kids at night
- Extra Soap for toilet basin.
- Female leaders would do well to bring some extra feminine hygiene products for those girls in your room who don't bring theirs.
- Sleeping Bag, Pillow, Toiletries, Spare Clothes, Swimmers, Undies, Spare Pair of Shoes, Medication, Bible, Pen & Paper, etc.
- Leaders are asked to bring along \$\$ for their own accommodation and food at camp. Each year this figure is different and announced prior to camp.
- Remember to leave your valuables in your car, at home or in the cash box with the 'bank' to avoid tempting kids.

## What To Be Aware Of At Camp

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### *Room Cleaning*

Rooms are cleaned and checked each morning...

- The children must do all the cleaning.
- Hang the towels up to dry.
- Vacuuming, Window Cleaning and floor mopping can be done as needed or when cleaning equipment is available.
- Flush the toilet.
- Take all wet clothes out of the bags.
- Open the windows to air the room.
- Fold the blankets.
- All bins must be emptied into the bigger bin outside.
- Spread out the shower curtain.
- Turn all lights off.

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### *Wet Beds*

Look at the children's forms to identify potential bed-wetters and place a plastic sheet (subtly) on their bed to protect the mattress. Put sheet over the plastic so that it is not noticeable.

Ensure repeat bed wetters do not drink anything after dinner

Make sure everyone in the room goes to the toilet before bed. Inclusiveness avoids embarrassment.

Check the beds after the kids have left for breakfast.

Remember Andrew's three golden bedtime rules: -

- a) Teeth
- b) PJ's

c) Go have a squirt.

If you find a wet bed: -

Be discreet.

Ensure the child has a shower and changes all their clothes (you would be surprised how rarely this happens).

Wash wet clothes, bed-sheets etc. and return these by the end of the day. Try not to let the other kids notice.

If the mattress is wet, take it out to air and replace it with another.

If you cannot handle wet beds, talk to Camp Mum and Dad and they will be happy to help.

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### *When Kids Are Without Stuff*

Talk to the Camp Directors if kids are not equipped with clothes, a toothbrush, or comb etc. They will help as much as possible. Encourage the children to keep their valuables

either locked away or kept in the cash box 'bank'. Things sometimes go missing. Do not mind things for kids - because when they get lost, you are responsible.

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### *What Happens At Night Time*

First - ensure the young people observe good hygiene. Teeth need to be cleaned. A toilet run must be

organised. Young people should change into their own PJ's.

Remember Andrew's three golden bedtime rules: -

- a) Teeth
- b) PJ's
- c) Go have a squirt.

*While there is a leader's supper - a leader needs to be with the room at all times. No leaders should leave the room until the young people are settled.*

Nighttime is a good time for bonding with the young people. Stories can be told. Testimonies can be shared. Discussion about the day's events can be relived. A revisit of the spiritual programme is good.

**BUT**

All kids hate going to sleep. They soon learn how to keep discussion going with you so that they avoid sleep. They will try to keep talking into the wee hours. Discussion must be kept low - so as to not disturb the next room. A nighttime curfew is set for the benefit of both you and the children. If children continue to talk, warn them once then send them outside for 5 minutes (ensure they have a warm blanket). When it is time for them to return to the room, ensure they understand why they were sent out. It is a good idea to make a bargain with them not to disrupt the room again that night. Often an enforcer will be outside to pick up any kids thrown out.

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## ***Dining Hall Etiquette***

The Dining Hall etiquette needs attention because of the great number of hungry kids that want to be fed at the same time.

### ***Before Mealtimes***

We encourage the kids to line up outside the dining hall before breakfast, lunch and dinner. Often kids may not want to get up, get dressed, showered, finish playing or whatever before a meal. Therefore we employ a male and female "flagpole" leader. The task of the "flagpole" is to hide somewhere and the kids will find him and her. Once found - they will march the kids in single file to the dining hall door. The flagpole will then say / sing grace with the kids. Often, the last kid in the line is given a fun "punishment" for being last.

### ***Leader's Responsibilities at Mealtimes***

Meanwhile the other leaders will go directly to the dining hall - say grace - serve themselves and position themselves on every table. This is so that we will have more control during

mealtimes. The leaders will be served first and get seconds first for this reason. Leaders will be appointed each mealtime to serve the kids their food. Leaders are responsible for the kid's behaviour on their table. The leaders will also clean up the tables and take the kids stuff away. An enforcer will police the meal times and will tell people when they are able to go for seconds etc.

### ***Rules during mealtime***

Once inside and seated, kids are not allowed get up until they are finished and their table is cleared to the leaders satisfaction (except for toilet runs of course).

Food is NOT to be thrown.

The enforcer on dining patrol can make up any rule he / she likes and we all have to follow it.

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## ***Principles for Running Games***

Games are for the enjoyment of all. Therefore "involvement" of all is vital for the success of a game. Games are best when there is no winner or loser - only competitors having fun.

As a team leader, it is important to hype up your team even if they are coming last. Your team is the best - no matter what. While team unity and enthusiasm is important, do not put down individuals in opposing teams. Encourage those who are not athletic and give the quiet members of your team positions of importance in the

games. Share the captaincy or goalkeepers position around.

Some games result in team points resulting in winners and losers. This serves to engender competitiveness but may also serve negatively for some children. Some children may consider themselves "losers." Do not allow this attitude to foster. Give such a child an achievable activity to win. Please also check out the "Breakaway Games Book" for game ideas.

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## ***First Aid***

Accidents will happen. Be prepared. At camp we will assign a leader (or two) to be our First Aid Officer. They will be holders of a current Senior First Aid Certificate. If you are nearby when an accident occurs, **TAKE CONTROL**. Send another child to get a First Aid Officer. Meanwhile **DRABC**:

**D - Check for Danger.** Before coming to the aid of another, make sure there is no possible danger for you. Therefore, turn off the power if there is a live current; kill the snake if it is still lurking; put your shoes on if there is glass all over the ground; move the other kids away from the danger if required.

**R - Check for a Response.** Call out to them. Ask their name. Ask where it hurts. Ask what happened. If there has been a head injury, they may be incoherent (stay with them until the first aid officer arrives). If they respond OK, then check for other injuries (Check limbs for breaks, bites etc.). Determine how serious it really is. Kids can be real actors sometimes.

**A - Check their Airways.** If they do not respond, check that there is nothing in their mouth that is

stopping them from breathing. If there is something, clear it out.

**B - Check for Breathing.** If there is still no response but the airway is clear, check that they are breathing. Put your cheek next to their mouth - feel for a breeze, put your hand on their chest - feel for the chest rising and falling. If they are not breathing, you must breathe for them. Cover their mouth with your mouth and give them 5 quick breaths (ensure that the air is getting in - by checking that the chest is rising and falling)

**C - Check for Circulation.** If there is still no response but the airway is clear and there is no breathing (you have given them 5 quick breaths), Check their pulse. If no pulse, then you are going to have to manually pump their chest (prayer always helps too). Your hands go over the lower half of the sternum and give 5 measured pumps (no faster than your own heartbeat), then 2 breaths (as before), then 5 measured pumps etc. Until the patient revives - check the pulse again every 2 minutes.

Every First Aid incident should be logged in the First Aid Log Book (located in the First Aid Kit).

Room leaders are given the responsibility of the medication for the campers in their room.

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## General Rules for Camp

For more Information, please see the Breakaway Camp Discipline Manual

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### Senior Camp

#### Respect

At Senior Camp there is only one rule - "**RESPECT**". This can be divided into three areas: -

##### a) RESPECT YOURSELF

For example: -

- Be Safe
- Don't be Stupid

##### b) RESPECT OTHERS

For example: -

- Do Not Bully
- Listen to your Leaders

##### c) RESPECT OTHER PEOPLES STUFF

For example: -

- Do not touch that which is not yours

- Don't trash the Property

A Good Rule of thumb is this: -

When about to do something that may not be allowed, ask yourself this, "Would Andrew approve?" If your answer is: -

- "Yes," then go for it.
- "No," then don't.
- "I Don't Know," then err on the safe side - Don't.

If you are wrong in your assessment, then Andrew reserves the right to correct you.

---

### Junior Camp

#### Rules for Kids

- Do what a leader tells you, first time.
- No touching musical instruments or puppets. The stage is off limits.
- Take note of out of bound areas, and don't go beyond these without a leader. Kids must remain in sight of the buildings.
- No iPhones, iPods, MP3 Players, pocket-knives, matches, lighters, alcohol, martial arts equipment, laser pointers, illegal drugs, or guns allowed.
- No food or eating in rooms.
- Respect other people's property.

#### Rules for Leaders

- We are here for God. This means that the children's needs come before our own. Our primary aim is to share the gospel while setting the example of Christ.
- Arrange a Time-Out BEFORE you break down.
- Support your fellow leaders - We are a team (ie. enforce the rules and follow them yourself). Don't contradict each other.
- Have your share of children around you at all times (except during Time-Out) otherwise someone else will have them all.
- Don't scream or shout at a child or lay a finger on them in anger.
- When with a single child, ensure another leader is present.

- If a child approaches you for a hug it is OK but do not approach a child for one. Be wary of a child becoming too affectionate or clingy.
- Leaders' sleepers exist - but should not prevent leaders getting enough sleep to be effective for the kids. A curfew is always set. One leader needs to remain in the room with the kids at all times. No leader will leave the room until the kids are settled.
- Relationships among leaders often occur - but please nurture these relationships outside of camp. At camp, you are here for the kids.

As a team we need to remain focussed on what our objectives are: -

- Creating a Fun camp.
- Build appropriate Relationships with the kids
- Present the Gospel
- Lives will be changed

To do this it is essential that we function well as a unified team.

- Make sure that you try to include every leader and not form cliques. Make it a goal to talk during camp

to those leaders who you don't know well. Be supportive of all leaders. Take time to listen to each other. Treat each other with respect. Be tactful with one another. If there is a problem, work it out. Don't harbour a grudge. Don't gossip. Wear sunscreen. All very obvious I know but...

- At times camp can be extremely tiring, stressful and busy. It is particularly at these times that we need to be mindful of our own actions and attitudes. Don't forget to ask for timeout when needed!

### *Rules for Everyone*

- No swearing fighting or name-calling.
- Shoes need to be worn at all times (except when trampolining or swimming)
- Trampoline with a leader present - No shoes - One person at a time.
- No fires without an OK
- No boys in girls' rooms and no girls in boys' rooms.

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## *Discipline*

Over the years, we have picked up some very useful ideas about how to maintain order and control amongst the kids at camp. These ideas have been collated into our companion manual, "Breakaway Discipline Manual." Please refer to this manual for more useful ideas.

### **How to avoid trouble when disciplining**

- *PRAY* for your kids and pray about your own attitude and responses toward them.
- *BE TOUGH* at the beginning of camp and *BECOME MORE LENIENT* as the camp progresses.
- Get to *KNOW THE KIDS*. Their respect for you makes them want to do the right thing.
- Keep them busy and *MAKE THINGS EXCITING* for them.
- When teaching - *BE PREPARED* and know your material. Use your time wisely.
- *BE REASONABLE* - let them know what is expected of them.
- *BE CONSISTENT*
- *DON'T "BOSS"* the kids; work with them.
- *REMOVE* the cause of disruptive behaviour where possible.

- If you give a warning - you must **FOLLOW UP** (eg. If you say, "Next person to speak goes outside for 5 minutes." Make sure that you do it.)
- **SHOW LOVE** - have a loving attitude. Be aware of the child's needs.
- **PUNISH IN PRIVATE** (not in front of the other kids) - always discuss why it was done.
- **DO NOT BREAK THE RULES YOURSELF** - You must be a good example for the kids to follow.



## Hints for Sharing the Gospel at Camp

What is the Gospel? What is the Message we are presenting? As we come from a diverse range of denominational backgrounds, these questions may have different answers.

We have collated some thought provoking lessons in our "Breakaway Gospel for Kids" manual. In this manual, we aim to answer these questions along with how to effectively present the gospel to these kids.

Below are some fundamental truths that we hold when presenting the gospel to kids.

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### *Child Evangelism Principles*

At Breakaway Camp, we seek to maintain a balanced and realistic approach to child evangelism. There are errors at two extremes in ministry with children. There is the error of demanding too much - of expecting a level of understanding and response more appropriate to an adult. And there is the error of expecting too little - of putting off any challenge to respond to Christian truth until the child has attained an age of full responsibility, whenever that may be. These positive principles, however, can be affirmed in evangelistic and nurture ministry amongst children: -

- In most children, the transition from birth to adulthood is a process of gradual development, often punctuated by a number of surges at various points.
- As they grow, they are becoming more and more responsible for their own life and choices.
- We believe that children should be presented with the Christian message at any age in a way that is in keeping with their current development and that they may be expected to respond at their own level.
- We believe that even though the response a child makes towards Christ may not be a 'saving' response, it is nevertheless a response towards Christ and needs to be recognised, welcomed and

affirmed as such. Because children are easily manipulated, special care is needed in leading children to Christ.

The following principles are acknowledged in helping children to commitment.

### **Conversion Is the Work of the Holy Spirit**

It must be God's Spirit who is moving the child - not the force of the leader's personality, or the pressure of other children. While it is the leader's responsibility to challenge a child to follow Jesus, mass public appeals or the emotional manipulation of a child's mind have no place at camp. Where possible, deal only with individual children, and allow the child to set the pace. Thoughtful questioning leads the child to express his or her understanding. Therefore we must not stereotype responses but help the child to make the response to which the Spirit is leading them at the time (even if it is one we do not expect - this takes maturity and discernment in the leader). At Breakaway Camp we make public appeals at the morning sessions but then we aim to disciple the children one on one and determine their individual situation with God.

## **Conversion Occurs Through the Proclamation of the Gospel**

If children are to respond to Christ, they need to be well taught in the Scriptures. Therefore teaching the Christian message together with its implications in practical life and service is the basic component of our ministry with children. Without that secure base, commitment is likely to be superficial.

## **Jesus Always Highlighted the Cost of Following Him**

A child must be faced with the cost in practical terms (*Luke 9:23 - "Take up your cross"*). Allow them to consider the following examples: -

- Make a regular time to pray and read the Bible.
- Obeying parents and teachers and helping others.

- Linking up with a Sunday school or Christian Youth Group.
- Being willing to be known as a Christian at School. Possibly subject to ridicule.
- Non-Christian family expectations (eg. Dramatic changes overnight - no more sinning etc.)

## **Our responsibility**

If we call children to commitment, then we must accept responsibility for the nurture of each of the children. If possible introduce the child to a local caring church. Make opportunity to discuss their spiritual walk, and be sure the child knows what to do when they feel they have failed God. It is extremely important to follow up the children in your room with emails, birthday cards, etc. after camp is over.

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## ***What Are The Essential Components Of The Gospel Message?***

A Study of the Evangelistic Sermons in the book of Acts shows us what the Apostles thought the gospel message was. The sermons can be found in: -

- Acts 2:14-40 - Peter at Pentecost
- Acts 3:12-26 - Peter to the Jews
- Acts 4:8-12 - Peter to the Jewish Council
- Acts 5:29-32 - Peter to Temple Captain
- Acts 10:34-43 - Peter to Cornelius and Family
- Acts 13:16-41 - Paul to Jews at Antioch
- Acts 14:15-17 - Paul to Farmers at Lystra
- Acts 17:22-31 - Paul to Areopagus in Athens
- Acts 26:2-23 - Paul to King Agrippa

Each message was presented differently because each message was presented to a different audience. Therefore, the message presented depends on the culture of the target audience.

Note that at the sermon at Athens, Paul does not even mention Jesus - but he does have to explain the nature of God and the nature of humanity and their need for salvation.

At the sermon to the Jewish Council, however, Peter assumes that the audience already understands their need for salvation.

A deeper look at Acts 5:29-32 reveals the following essential components of the gospel message: -

**1) God Has Revealed Himself**

- Firstly through History (Prophets and Patriarchs)
- Secondly through Jesus

**2) The Essential Facts About Jesus Are: -**

- He was killed (crucified)
- He was raised to life (resurrection)

**3) God Has Thereby Made Jesus: -**

- Prince (Lord and Judge)
- Saviour

**4) God Is Asking Us To: -**

- Repent
- Obey

**5) He Will Then Give To Us: -**

- Forgiveness (through the blood of Jesus)
- Holy Spirit to enable us to live a new life.



## What Happens After Camp?

### *Follow Up*

Leading a child to Christ at camp is an enormous blessing and privilege. However, all the good work is often undone by not following up each child. It cannot be emphasised enough the importance of following up the kids. Children are encouraged to return to camp next year if they are sensitively followed up throughout the year. They may decide to commit to Christ at a later camp.

### **Facebook, Myspace, MSN, SMS, Email, Snail Mail?**

In today's world, kids and leaders have many options to communicate. Many of these methods of communication could also get us into a lot of trouble.

At Breakaway, we feel follow-up communication between leaders and kids is important. BUT we also feel it is important to protect our leaders and the kids.

Any communication that is not logged (copied) is open to misunderstanding. Kids could make accusations that will ruin a leaders life. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE keep copies of all communications between leaders and kids.

Although it may seem old-fashioned nowadays, receiving a letter in the mail can make anyone feel special. Birthday and Christmas cards are an awesome way to communicate with the young people.

### **How Often Do I Need to Write?**

It's up to you. The more you write, the more Christ is proclaimed in that child's life. Write a letter immediately after camp. Then aim to at least send a birthday and Christmas card.

### **When Do I Start Writing?**

Start the day after camp. Do this before you forget and so you can

reinforce everything they learnt on camp.

### **What Do I Write?**

Try the usual - 'How are you?' 'How is your family?' 'How is school?' etc. Letters often sound similar.

Make references to camp - remember what they liked. Comment on things they did (eg. Their part in a play). Talk about the next camp. Talk about the gospel. You could write them a story that may have a gospel twist to it. Alternate letters with cards as this means less writing. Send Christian stickers and bookmarks etc. Always respond to a letter that they send you.

### **How Long Should The Letter Be?**

Consider the age of the kids. Younger kids have short attention spans and limited reading ability, so make it short.

### **How Personal Should It Be?**

For legal reasons you need to be cautious. Try to keep a copy of what you write, so that you can know what you have written, and as a record if misunderstandings occur.

When writing to a child of the opposite sex, ensure you include a name of a leader of the same sex as the child (with their permission).

Parents have complained when a male leader was writing to a girl. They did not appreciate his concern for her. In

another case, a parent took offence to a guy leader writing "love" to the boy he wrote to. It is important to get to know the parents (eg. at camp when they drop off and pick up their kids - or during the follow up process) to avoid misunderstandings.

## **What About Parents / Guardians?**

Naturally, during any contact you have with parents and guardians, you should present yourself in a trustworthy, polite manner. Remember that when you write to a child, their parent / guardian will probably read the letter too - so be sensitive. There is great opportunity for you to share the gospel with the parent / guardian as well. Encourage the children to obey their parents / guardians because it is what God said to do - and it also makes the parent / guardian happy.

Ensure you introduce yourself to the parent / guardian when they drop off or pick up their child.

Tell them that you hope to write to their child. Gain their consent. This helps parents / guardians to put a face to names on letters later.

## **How Do I Integrate the Gospel into the Letters?**

Ask questions like: - "What have you been learning at Sunday School or Scripture?" Or tell them what you have been learning at church. You can send Christian stickers, bookmarks, cards etc. Use Christmas and Easter to full advantage.

## **Why Don't They Write Back?**

There are many reasons. Their parent / guardian may not give them a stamp. The parent / guardian may be preventing them. They may be embarrassed by poor writing skills. They may not care. They may not

have time (kids think they are busy too).

You may never know when you are going to hear from a child. A leader who had been faithfully sending birthday cards to a child got a letter 2 years after camp. The child had moved to Queensland and wrote to tell about the move and what had been happening in his life. Don't despair if no letter arrives straight away. The correspondence still continues.

## **Any Other Hints?**

Keep the letters the children write to you so you can remember the things they tell you. Self-addressed envelopes can be a great financial help to the children. If you can, send one with each letter or every second letter. Thus the child knows that you want them to write to you.

If a child makes a commitment with you, or is from your room then tell the Camp Director so they can do extra follow-up with them to compliment your own.

## And Finally...

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### *Debriefing*

Talk to other leaders you trust. Just sharing a problem with someone else can make an enormous difference. Ask yourself these questions: -

- What happened (I felt, they said etc)
- In response to this what am I feeling?
- What does this mean while I'm on camp? If it is an issue that you are unable to immediately deal with

because of the responsibilities of being on camp, write it down in a journal so that it is not forgotten or left unresolved.

- Remember that as human beings we were designed for relationship. If we are relating to people it will affect us. As a result of this don't isolate yourself.

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### *Looking for New Leaders*

We are always looking for appropriate new leaders for the Breakaway Camps.

Please ask your Christian friends if they want to be involved in the important work of sharing the gospel with these children. We ask that your friends be regular church attendees and be active in their home church. They would need to complete the application form and come to the preparation meetings.

We would encourage them to commit to appropriate follow up for the 12 months after the camp. As the young people get older, they often want to become leaders themselves.

The following are our guidelines in addition to above (of course, the Camp Director has the final say on who comes as a leader): -

- We would like the Senior Campers to have a year off Senior Camp before becoming a leader at Senior Camp. They can, meanwhile, be a leader at Junior Camp. (A leader requires respect from the campers if their ministry is to be successful. In the past, many of those who were campers one year and leader the next, were treated by the other kids with disrespect as they still saw them as a camper. This is also not fair on the new leader).

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### *Getting Other Christians Involved*

Your church may want to pray for the camps as they happen, and for the ongoing work of follow up and preparation between the camps. After camp you can ask a friend to pray regularly for your room group. You can also hang up a photo to remind yourself to pray for the children regularly. We also need to pray for their Scripture and Sunday

School teachers as they continue to proclaim God's word to the kids

## ***How to find Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre***

### ***Fitzroy Falls Christian Conference Centre***

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