



Lutheran Church
SOUTH AUSTRALIA / NORTHERN TERRITORY



Lutheran Church
of Australia

Interim Guidelines for Camps in the LCA SA/NT District in regard to Deliverance and other Spiritually-Intensive Ministry

Background

There was an incident involving 'deliverance ministry' at the 2009 YPout camp that resulted in a lengthy Police investigation and 8 of the participants being charged with criminal offences. These charges were eventually not proceeded with. We expect that in due course the LCA will clarify its statements, policies and procedures in regard to deliverance ministry in the Church and provide new resources. In the meantime the SA/NT District needs to ensure that everyone involved in youth and children's ministry understands the policies and approach of the Church and that appropriate boundaries are in place. These interim guidelines will operate until the LCA clarifies the situation for the whole Church.

The Church currently has relevant statements in its **ChildSafe** materials and in the chapter in **Rites & Resources for Pastoral Care** titled 'Spiritual Oppression' (pp138-145).

Camps are Places for Spiritual Ministry!

Camps and other regional gatherings are places where God is at work through his people as we study the word, pray for one another and minister to each other's needs. We encourage leaders to pray for others and to provide counsel in an appropriate manner. We want our camps to be places where participants deepen their walk with Jesus, where fears and failings are healed and participants are equipped for service using the gifts that God has given them. Sometimes that will happen during sessions that take some time or over a number of encounters during a camp. In general:

- A camp is not an appropriate context in which to conduct deliverance ministry, prolonged prayer counselling or other spiritually-intensive ministry.
- Intensity also involves the length of time over which such personal ministry is conducted.
- Where the recipient of ministry is under the age of 18, **ChildSafe**, legal and Church requirements must be followed.

There is no neat way of laying down rules as to how long is too long and how deep is too deep in the context of a camp. Where leaders are presented with issues that may require additional time and expertise, and maybe even professional help, it is best to arrange for follow-up after the camp, where parents, the person's pastor and other people can be involved as appropriate. This is especially true when the person is under 18 or has other needs that call into question their ability to consent to ministry. These principles are designed to help leaders decide how best to proceed when they feel that there are demonic forces at work or where more intensive ministry appears to be needed.

Ask the question: ***Is this too intensive for a camp situation and best left to another time?***

Some Biblical Perspectives

- We are the baptised children of God. This doesn't mean that the evil one can't have a go at us but it does mean that we take our baptism seriously and with Luther throw it back in the face of the evil one when he attacks us. (1 John 4:4) The fundamental question is "Whose am I?" This is a question of ownership. We can begin to discuss other issues once we are clear that through the gifts of baptism and faith in Jesus Christ we belong to God.
- The biblical emphasis is on Christ's victory not on the works of the enemy.
- Conflict with the evil one is won or lost in the realm of truth, not power.
- The evil one is not our only enemy; there is also the world and our own sinful human flesh.
- Demonic oppression and possession is real. Scripture is clear on this. Fundamentally the evil one is an accuser, a liar and a murderer. He accuses us of sinning and being under God's condemnation, of not being good enough Christians or having a strong enough faith; he lies to us seeking to get us to make him the focus of our attention and to give him credit for power he does not have; and he seeks our eternal death. He is a slanderer who loves to denigrate pastors, church leaders, congregations and church bodies. He is cunning and if he can get Christians to do his work for him he will.

Deliverance Ministry at LCA SA/NT Camps and other Contexts

When confronted by something which may well be demonic the following principles apply. Say, for example, that during a small group Bible study one of the young people begins to speak in a strange voice shouting out blasphemous comments about Jesus. The person falls to the ground and starts thrashing around knocking things over. The other youth are watching with fear. What do you do?

Principles	
<p>1. Know where you stand with Christ and why you are secure in him.</p>	<p>a) You are a baptised child of God. You belong to Christ. Col 1:13 b) You are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. Eph 2:6 c) We remain weak but God's extraordinary power is at work in us and through us. 2 Cor 4:7-10; 1 Cor 10:12 d) The war has been won. Christ has defeated Satan and all his minions. We declare his victory. Rom 8:31-39</p>
<p>2. Get help! Call the camp pastor or a local pastor to help.</p> <p>Follow <i>ChildSafe</i> procedures and if someone is in immediate physical danger dial 000 & remember to also ring the hotline 0447 890 296</p>	<p>a) In the spiritual realm it is important to respect and involve spiritual authority. We tend to focus on gifting and expertise. The biblical emphasis falls much more strongly on authority and authorisation or appointment. This is important for the safety of all concerned. Matt 7:29, 10:1; Mk 3:15; Lk 10:19. See also Acts 19:13-16. b) It is not that only pastors can do this but that they have been specifically set apart by Christ through the Church for public ministry in God's name. c) Follow the processes in ChildSafe including <i>Emergency Response Procedures for Critical Incidents</i> if that is appropriate.</p>
<p>3. A possible demonic manifestation does not mean you have to begin deliverance ministry immediately.</p>	<p>a) Your role as a leader is to settle the situation down for the person involved and other people in the room. In the context of a youth camp or similar situation your role is not to cast the demon out. b) It is most likely that the person has been living with this situation for some time and waiting a few days to ensure it is dealt with in the right way is far more important. c) If there is a manifestation that seems to be demonic, take authority over it by telling it to stop in Jesus name. Simply say, "In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to stop this behaviour and be quiet." You may need to say that a number of times. Be firm and trust in the name of Jesus and his power. d) Remember to pray for everyone & get a group to pray if appropriate.</p>
<p>4. No deliverance or other spiritually-intensive ministry is to be carried out with a person under the age of 18 without parental consent and preferably with a parent being present.</p>	<p>a) Call the parents immediately to ask them what they want done and if necessary to come to get their child. b) While there are legal reasons for doing this, as Christians our understanding of the role of parents is also important. c) Those God appoints; God anoints. Parents have spiritual authority to pray for their children and to bless them. d) If deliverance is done against the wishes of a parent you make follow-up and ongoing care much more difficult and may even create a situation in which new spiritual difficulties may arise. Matt 12:43-45</p>
<p>5. Physical restraint should only be used to stop a person hurting themselves or others.</p>	<p>a) It is appropriate to seek to stop a person from hurting themselves or others by exercising some physical restraint as well as moving things out of the way. b) Leaders should not put their own safety at risk and it may be that the best thing you can do is to clear the area.</p>
<p>6. Not every strange occurrence is demonic.</p>	<p>a) Sometimes mental illness plays a part. b) Sometimes it is a way of getting attention. c) If a young person has a medical history of epilepsy, convulsions or a similar condition then it is obviously not appropriate to address it as if it is only a spiritual issue. You may simply need to move all objects out of the way and seek medical help as appropriate.</p>
<p>7. Follow-up is the responsibility of parents, local pastors and congregations and not the camp leaders.</p>	<p>a) Once the person has left the camp, or the camp is over, the fundamental responsibility shifts from the camp leaders and pastor to parents, family, their local pastor and other authorities. b) These people will naturally want to consult the camp leaders to get accurate information and any advice or suggestions. c) Further involvement by camp leaders is by invitation only.</p>