

# What Is Awana?

Welcome to one of the most exciting and rewarding leadership roles you can fill! Children and youth are the richest mission field in the world. Did you know that the probability of a person accepting Christ as Savior is highest between the ages of 5 and 12? And that a person's moral foundation is largely set by age 9 (*Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions*, George Barna, 2003).

God has given children and youth workers a unique opportunity to further the kingdom of God in our world by leading kids into a personal relationship with Jesus. What better adventure could we invite children and students to join us on than that?

Awana® is a global, non-profit ministry committed to the belief that the greatest impact for Christ starts with kids who know, love, and serve Him. Reaching over 2.8 million kids and youth each week with the gospel, Awana equips parents, volunteers, and church leaders with proven integrated programs, tools, and training in evangelism and biblical discipleship. Evidenced by stories of life, family, and community transformation, God is changing the world through the ministry of Awana. Today Awana ministry takes place in more than 30,000 churches and 100 countries worldwide with more than 400,000 volunteer leaders. We are so pleased that you are joining us on this journey!

**The name Awana comes from the first letters of the phrase “approved workmen are not ashamed.” Look up 2 Timothy 2:15 in the King James Version to see why it is our key verse.**

Awana began in the 1950s as a boys club in a non-denominational church in Chicago. As the pastors, Lance Latham and Art Rorheim, saw the neighborhood children line up outside the local movie theatre, they asked “How can we get those kids as excited about learning God's Word as they are about the movies?” Using a combination of energetic games, Bible-based teaching, and small groups led by loving, well-equipped leaders, the church was soon bursting at the seams with children! Word quickly spread to surrounding churches. God has been blessing and expanding the ministry ever since.

## **Awana Mission**

The Awana mission is to reach children everywhere with the gospel of Jesus Christ and engage them in lifelong discipleship. Our prayer is that all children and youth throughout the world

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will come to know, love, and serve Him. This starts with equipping leaders. That's you. That's now. Congratulations on taking the first step toward becoming the leader God meant for you to be.

Let's look closer at what it means to lead a child to know, love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Know** – Our desire is that each child will know who God is and know that they can have eternal life when they put their trust in the fact that Jesus died for their sins and rose again. See Philippians 3:10, John 17:3, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Colossians 1:9-10.

**Love** – The Lord desires intimacy with us. Our desire is to disciple kids and students to grow in their love towards God and others. See Ephesians 3:19, 1 John 4:7-12.

**Serve** – Serving Christ is a supernatural by-product of loving Him. Our desire is that all believers will experience the joy of serving God and others. See Mark 10:45, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Ephesians 2:10.

Ultimately, children and youth will come to know, love, and serve the Lord Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit works in their hearts. But God has invited us to play a role in sharing the good news of Christ with others. The Awana ministry is a tool that can help us to do just that.

### LOOK UP: Matthew 28:19-20

Are disciples made or born?

Where should we go?

Who will go with us as we make disciples?

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Instilling a missional heart in kids is an essential part of creating lifelong disciples. Awana encourages kids in this spiritual journey in a couple of ways. First, the handbook curriculum lays a strong foundation of biblical truths and introduces kids to missions. Next, Awana GO™ (Global Outreach) connects kids here with kids around the world through creative lessons and various activities that can make a huge impact for the kingdom. Children are both inspired and challenged to help reach more kids with the gospel of Christ and at the same time deepen their relationship with God.

### **The Principles of Awana**

The Awana ministry can be adapted to fit the unique culture and needs of each church and community. While it may look different from church to church, it's proven to effectively reach kids for Christ when the following six principles are in place.

1. An Awana ministry is centered on the gospel.
2. It has high scriptural content.
3. It is fun and exciting for young people.
4. It is built on strong leadership.
5. It trains children and youth to serve.
6. It strengthens church/parent partnership.

Read Deuteronomy 32:46. This passage contains Moses' final directions to the children of Israel: *And he said unto them, "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law"* (KJV).

Moses wanted the Israelites to remember their responsibility to obey God's Word and teach future generations to do the same. The programs in Awana seek to follow this pattern in God's Word. We seek to know God's Word and understand it, in order to change how we live. So each week children spend time memorizing the Scriptures and learning how to apply them in their lives.

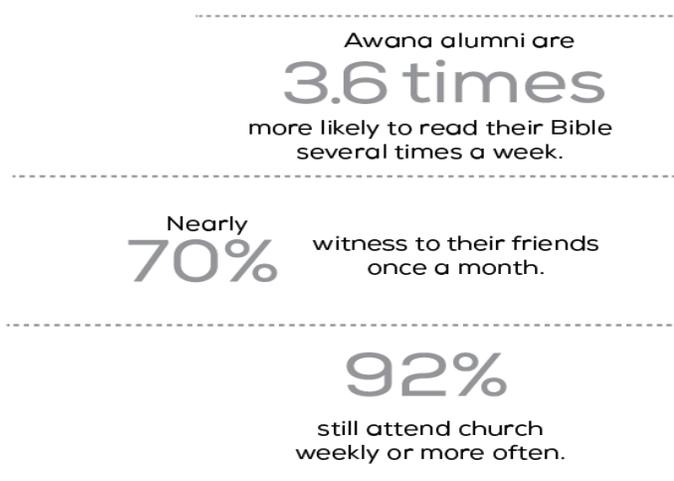
The principles of Awana clubs are rooted in the idea that children can have fun while learning God's Word – that capturing a child's sense of fun enhances his learning. This is why we use games to attract children. Bible teaching and small-group interactions can be exciting and attractive to kids too, by incorporating high-energy songs, creative drama, object lessons, and by having engaged, equipped leaders who love the children. Awana is committed to providing you with a variety of learning opportunities to help you grow in your relationship with Christ and develop your ministry skills. These range from online training to books, conferences, and events.

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In Awana, children of all ages learn about serving God. Our materials teach about missions and serving others. And your Awana ministry is a great place for kids to begin serving in the church.

As important as children's and youth workers are, parents have the greatest opportunity to influence the spiritual development of children. The Awana curriculum encourages parental involvement. Awana also offers biblical training resources so your church can come alongside parents and partner with them in this critical responsibility.

Consistent long-term participation in Awana – between 6-10 years – accompanied by spiritual training from parents, reaps long-lasting results.



Source: Awana Alumni Survey

### **Awana Clubs Structure**

Awana offers several ministry options to meet the needs of different churches and cultures around the world. At the core of Awana is Awana Clubs™. From ages 2-18, children and youth have fun playing age-appropriate games, learning God's Word through large-group Bible teaching, and memorizing Bible verses in a small-group setting.

## Awana Clubs

Two-three year olds



Preschoolers



Kindergarten through second grade



Third through sixth grade



## Awana YM®

Middle school (two- or three-year option)



High school



While it varies from church to church, Awana club meetings typically run 90 minutes to two hours and feature three main segments:

**Game/Interaction/Play Time** – Fun, energetic time that engages children and youth right from the start. Typically consists of games (on or off the Awana Game Square), art/drama, team building activities, worship, crafts for younger kids, or service projects for older students.

**Large Group Time** – Typically includes Bible teaching and announcements with options such as worship or testimonies.

**Small Group Time** - Leader discipled a small group of students by building relationships, discussing the Bible lesson, answering questions, praying for one another, helping students understand, and complete handbook requirements.

The leadership structure typically consists of a pastor who oversees the children's ministry, including Awana. An Awana ministry director, sometimes referred to as an Awana commander, is responsible for the Awana Clubs ministry. Each club has a club director, such as

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a T&T director who oversees a team of club leaders who serve a small group of children. There is also a game director, large group teacher, and secretary.

## **Serving Kids Matters**

*“That’s what the Bible is for, to guide us and impact our lives.”*

Meet Koen.

Koen is 10 years old and attends Park Community Church in Chicago, Illinois. He likes learning about God in fun ways at Awana. He says, “Through the devotionals I am learning things that inspire me to get closer to God and also to read more of the Bible. That’s what the Bible is for, to guide us and impact our lives.” Even at this young age, Koen knows the truth of God’s Word and has a vision for how he can teach people about God in the future.

# How to Share the Gospel

What is the gospel? What do we mean when we say that Awana is centered on the gospel? It means that we believe there is nothing more important than inviting children and youth into a personal, saving relationship with God. Specifically, we are referring to the good news that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scriptures. First Corinthians 15:3-4 is the heart of the gospel. This is the message at the core of our Christian belief. When a child puts their trust in Jesus, they become a child of God and begin a lifelong adventure as a disciple of Jesus.

***For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. (Romans 1:16a, NKJV)***

From a very early age people can understand the gospel message and place their trust in what Jesus did on the cross for them. As an Awana leader, you have the privilege of presenting this truth to the children in your care. It may take several times of hearing the gospel message before a child's heart is prepared to respond to it in faith. People learn through repetition. That's why we present the gospel regularly and in all segments of Awana clubs, with clarity and urgency. Over the past 60 years, hundreds of thousands of Awana leaders have been used by God to bring this life-transforming message to children across our globe. As a result, lives, families, and communities have been eternally changed. We're so glad you are joining us on this mission of reaching kids for Christ!

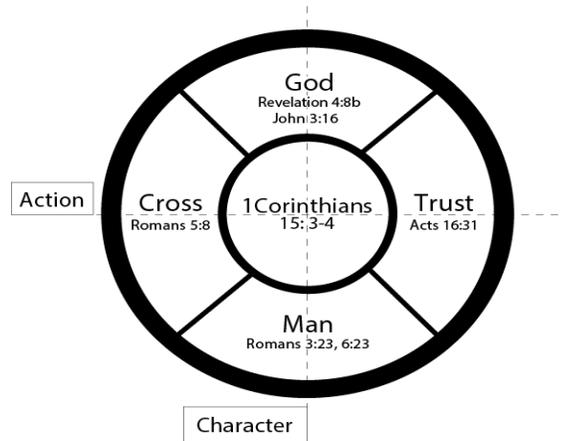
Children are at all different stages in their understanding of spiritual concepts. Some have already trusted Christ as their Savior. Still others may have never heard the plan of salvation. Still others have heard it but haven't yet made a faith decision. Listen closely to each child to gain clues about where he is in this faith journey. This will allow you to respond in a way that meets that child's needs.

## **The Gospel Wheel**

The gospel is truly good news, yet still it's common to feel anxious or nervous or downright scared when it comes to sharing it with others. Prayer and preparation can overcome this fear. Awana created the Gospel Wheel as a simple tool to help you remember the basic truths of the gospel. There is an outline within the model but the real value is to prompt you to share the gospel using Scripture. In conversation, you can discern what segment of the wheel to start

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with based on the person's question. If you commit to memorizing the eight verses on the Gospel Wheel, you will be prepared to present the gospel to anyone, anytime, anywhere.



At the center is 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 which is a summary of the gospel. Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again.

The segments align themselves along two dimensions. The vertical axis could begin with a discussion of God's character. Understanding attributes of God is critical to accepting His free gift of salvation. The verses, Revelation 4:8b and John 3:16, describe a God that is holy and loving. On the opposite side of that axis is man's character. Romans 3:23 and 6:23 describe man as sinful and the cost of that sin is death. But there is hope! The horizontal axis describes the action of Christ. Romans 5:8 explains that Jesus' death on the cross provided for our salvation. The corresponding action of a person is to trust or believe that Jesus paid the price for our sins (Acts 16:31). Start anywhere on the wheel but get to the gospel.

**The following definitions of words from these Scriptures help explain the gospel to children.**

**Demonstrates:**  
shows, proves

**Sin:**  
bad things we do; disobeying

**Perish/death:**  
separation from God forever

**Salvation:**  
freedom from the punishment of sin

**Wages:**  
payment

**Eternal/everlasting:**  
goes on forever and ever

**Saved:**  
not being punished for sin

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If you sense that a child is ready to accept God's free gift of salvation, you might ask "Do you believe that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose from the dead, and therefore, will you put your trust in Him?" If yes, allow the child to pray in their own words to tell God they are trusting in Jesus to forgive their sins. Then celebrate! Be sure to tell their parents too.

Note: A common invitation in children's ministry is "Do you want to ask Jesus into your heart?" Because children are literal thinkers, this invitation can be very confusing and should be avoided.

Take a few minutes to pray for opportunities to share the good news with the children you serve and for the courage to follow God's leading as opportunities arise.

For more on sharing the gospel, there are online training modules at [awana.org/leaders](http://awana.org/leaders). Also download the Gospel Message app at [awana.org/apps](http://awana.org/apps).

## **Serving Kids Matters**

*“My friends and I have invited many people because I want them to know that Jesus loves them.”*

Meet Emily.

Emily attends Awana at Appleton Alliance Church in Appleton, Wisconsin. There, Emily heard the gospel and regularly shares that good news with her friends. Emily says, “My friends and I have invited many people because I want them to know that Jesus loves them. I pray that they can come and afterward I pray that they got a full understanding. I hope that through the kids that I bring that their parents will start learning from their kids and they’ll want to check it out.” Emily has a heart to reach others with the gospel.

# Understanding 8- to 11-Year -Olds

So you're working with third through sixth graders! Whether you're a parent of an 8- to 11-year-old or haven't interacted with one in years, understanding their general developmental characteristics will help you to best serve them.

## Intellectually

- Are moving from concrete to abstract thinking.
- Are logical and begin to understand cause and effect.
- Are rapid, eager learners.
- Are realistic.
- Like rules and need order.
- Want proof.

## Socially

- Focus on peer relationships.
- A sense of belonging is important.
- Like group and team work.
- Interested in justice and fairness.
- Are quick to anger, but also quick to forgive.
- Are hero-worshippers; like superheroes, music idols, and missionaries.
- Like to try new things.

## Physically

- Have abundant energy.
- Like team play.
- May be messy or disorganized.
- Are in process of identifying and developing talents and abilities.

Here are some ideas on how to apply these characteristics to the spiritual development of T&T kids.

- Talk about the concept of grace as it relates to our relationship with God and with others.
- Model prayer. Challenge the children to pray for one another.
- Encourage children to explore their budding talents by serving in club. This might include leading motions during worship time, helping others with verses during

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Small Group Time, helping the game director distribute equipment, giving a testimony during Large Group Time.

- Have a regular “Ask the pastor” time during Large Group Time where children submit questions in advance and the pastor responds.
- Be certain rules are clearly communicated and consistently enforced. Don’t let lack of discipline be a barrier to a child hearing and responding to the gospel.
- Allow children to move throughout the club meeting, whether it’s physical activity during Game Time or singing with motions during Large Group Time or standing to recite verses during Small Group Time.
- Encourage them to emulate Christian musicians, Christian athletes, Bible characters, or even an older sibling or kid in church living a godly life.
- Help them understand how the Bible is organized and how to find verses.
- Share your testimony and, for those who have accepted Jesus as Savior, encourage them to tell their story of salvation with others.

In a survey, we asked 8- to 11-year-olds what questions they would most like to ask about God and the Bible. The top responses were:



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Think back to when you were between the ages of 8 and 11. What you were like? What types of activities were you involved in? Who were the important people in your life?

# **T&T Club Basics**

## **Curriculum Overview**

Truth & Training™ (T&T) is designed to present third-through sixth-graders with basic truths of the Christian faith and train them to apply these truths to their daily lives. They learn about missions and serving others. They experience a sense of belonging and learn how to cultivate positive, grace-filled friendships. T&T curriculum consists of four handbooks and Large Group lesson books to complement handbook content.

T&T Ultimate Adventure® teaches third- and fourth-graders that salvation in Christ is the ultimate adventure! Kids learn that the Bible is true and they can trust what it says. There are two Ultimate Adventure handbooks. Each book answers four questions about God and the Bible. Kids learn answers to each of these questions and memorize verses that back up the answers. Each Ultimate Adventure book consists of eight Discoveries. These Discoveries each have seven sections. Each section includes various activities such as memory verses, Bible studies, puzzles, and service opportunities. They also have a space for a leader to sign once a child has completed the requirements of that section.

T&T Ultimate Challenge® trains fifth- and sixth-graders that walking faithfully with Christ is the ultimate challenge! There are two Ultimate Challenge handbooks. Each book answers four questions about God and the Bible. Kids learn answers to each of these questions and memorize verses that back up the answers. Each Ultimate Challenge book consists of eight Challenges. These Challenges each have seven sections. Each section has a space for a leader to sign once the child has completed the requirements of that section.

Each T&T handbook also includes parent pages to encourage parental involvement in their child's spiritual development. Many unsaved parents have accepted Christ as Savior because they helped their child work through their Awana book.

The *Start Zone* is a short booklet that explains God's plan for salvation. This booklet is an ideal tool for each new child who joins your Awana club and for getting the gospel into the home of non-churched families. It's designed to be given to a child before they receive their handbook.

Before you begin serving in T&T, look through a T&T handbook to become familiar with how it's organized. This will ensure you're prepared to help the children in your group navigate it.

## **Engaging With Scripture**

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A key feature of T&T, and all Awana ministries, is its rich Scripture content. Children learn about the Bible: how it's organized, books that make up the Bible and why God's Word can be trusted. They hear stories of real people in the Bible. And they internalize God's Word by memorizing verses.

Children commit Scripture to memory so that it becomes a part of who they are. When a verse has been committed to memory, God can use it to minister to that child when he needs it, immediately or even years later. When it's memorized, the child can share a verse with others in times of need. Based on Psalm 119:6-16 and your own experience, what reasons can you think of for memorizing Scripture?

*Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all Your commands. I will praise You with an upright heart as I learn Your righteous laws. I will obey Your decrees; do not utterly forsake me. How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to Your word. I seek You with all my heart; do not let me stray from Your commands. I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You. Praise be to You, O LORD; teach me Your decrees. With my lips I recount all the laws that come from Your mouth. I rejoice in following Your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on Your precepts and consider Your ways. I delight in Your decrees; I will not neglect Your word. (Psalm 119:6-16 NIV).*

As an Awana leader, you have an opportunity to engage children in the Scripture by asking them questions of understanding and how it might apply to their lives. Establishing a routine of asking kids questions about the Scriptures rather than simply signing off on the sections teaches them what it means to be a disciple of Christ, knowing and obeying God's Word. The handbooks contain definitions of words that are used in the verses to help you explain the verses. Also, show the children that you value God's Word by reciting verses that you've memorized. Children this age love the opportunity to sign off on an adult's Scripture memory work!

### **Motivation and Recognition**

Throughout Scripture, awards are given in recognition of special achievement or obedience. Awards are biblical and motivating. That said it's important to balance intrinsic and extrinsic awards carefully.

Giving children awards offers them tangible encouragement, reminds parents of their child's progress, and provides a sense of belonging.

More T&T kids will complete handbooks when they are rewarded for doing so. The result is that children will learn more Bible truths. Awards should be meaningful or have a sense of

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value to the receiver. The achievement required to receive an award should be clearly communicated and awarded with consistency. Therefore keep good records of what each child has accomplished. Celebrate achievements regularly and publicly.

There are two types of awards in T&T: individual and team awards.

### **Individual Awards**

Throughout the year, children earn achievement awards to display on their uniforms as they progress through their handbook. They can also earn patches and book completion awards at the end of the club year for finishing their handbooks. The goal is to complete one handbook per year. The last page of each handbook provides suggested placement of awards on the uniform.

At the end of the year, many churches host an awards ceremony where parents are invited to celebrate with their children as they receive their book award. A book award is given to each child who has completed a handbook.

If your church does not use the Awana uniform and awards, be sure to substitute them with some form of visible award system to motivate and recognize the children.

### **Team Awards**

Teams can earn weekly awards for achievement and good behavior throughout a club meeting by earning points. Positive points are awarded to teams for displaying positive behavior, achievements, and participation. See the section on discipline to learn more about positive points. Team awards are celebrated at the end of the meeting.

### **Uniforms**

There are several benefits to having children wear the same apparel to club. Uniforms encourage an orderly and disciplined club environment. They provide a child with a sense of belonging and community. Uniforms also provide a place to display achievement awards. For leaders, a uniform identifies which adults are approved to be working with the children, which gives parents peace of mind. Leader lanyards can be used as nametags with picture identification and as a place to display leader awards.

### **Discipline**

In our culture, the word *discipline* is often used negatively. Actually, discipline is meant to be a loving approach to teaching children appropriate behavior. It comes from the word *disciple* and literally means “to teach” or “to mold.” Children need discipline to become healthy, mature adults.

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Read Hebrews 12:5-11 then write a one-sentence summary of this passage. *And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by Him. For the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives. "It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it (ESV),*

Many people confuse discipline with punishment. The chart below helps to clarify the differences.

<b>Punishment</b>	<b>vs.</b>	<b>Discipline</b>
Inflicts a penalty for an offense	<b>PURPOSE</b>	Training for correction and development
Payment for past offenses or misbehavior	<b>FOCUS</b>	Correct future behavior
Hostility, frustration, or anger	<b>LEADER'S ATTITUDE</b>	Love and concern for the child
Fearful, guilty, or shamed	<b>HOW A CHILD FEELS</b>	Secure and loved

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The correct use of discipline includes expectations, rules, consequences, and correction. When these are clearly communicated, understood, and enforced consistently, children and leaders will feel safe and secure in your club. Here are some practical ideas to instill discipline in your children's ministry.

- Set clear expectations using simple, specific, and realistic rules.
- Teach discipline methods at the beginning of the year and reinforce them consistently throughout the year.
- Catch your children doing good things and applaud them for it.

There are three primary methods of discipline used in Awana: Positive points, the five-count, and the three-count.

### **Positive points**

Positive points allow teams to earn collective points throughout a club meeting. It provides positive reinforcement of the behavior that you would like to see. Each child is assigned to a team. In each segment of club, teams have opportunities to earn points. In Game Time, teams earn points for being quiet when asked, cheering for their teammates, displaying good sportsmanship, and winning games. In Large Group Time teams can sit together and be awarded for paying attention, responding to questions, and participating in worship. Small Group Time allows opportunities for points as children finish sections, help others, and obey their leaders.

The key to positive points is that they are awarded for good behavior, not subtracted for negative behavior. Bring attention to good behavior, not bad behavior. Winning teams may receive small tokens such as candy bars, or earn special privileges such as being dismissed first. Winning teams can be announced and rewarded at the end of the club meeting for immediate recognition.

### **The five-count**

The five-count is a proven, effective method for group discipline. The leader in charge counts to five slowly and loudly, while holding one hand in the air and counting on his fingers. Leaders and children respond by being quiet and still by the count of five. Use this in any club segment when you need to get the group's attention.

For the benefit of new children, regularly review the five-count and expected behavior.

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When a team responds to the five-count quickly, reward them with positive points.

### **The three-count**

While the five-count is used in a group setting, the three-count is for an individual child who continues to misbehave. Generally, a gentle verbal reprimand is all it takes to get a child back on course. But when that hasn't worked, a three-count can help a disruptive child correct himself.

**One count:** Say something such as, "Your behavior continues to be disruptive and disrespectful. You had previous warnings and still haven't corrected your behavior so this is your one-count. If you continue to misbehave by (fill in specific behavior) then you will get a two-count and be removed from the activity."

**Two count:** Bring the child to the director and together say something such as, "Despite repeated warnings and receiving a one-count, you continue to (fill in specific behavior). Therefore, this is your two-count and you can not participate in the activity now." The child will stay with the director or another pair of adults for supervision, then return to the activity when the director feels the child is ready.

**Three count:** If the child continues to misbehave after returning to the activity, the child is removed again and the director speaks to the parents. In the presence of the child, explain the behavior, explain the club rules and the consequences if the child continues to act out.

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Approach parents with a spirit of mutual purpose, respect, and love for the child, desiring to work together to train the child.

In the extreme case where a child is harming other children, they may be asked not to return to club. In situations with children who have problems beyond their control, use your judgment on the best way to reach them. Ask for help from your club director or pastor and the child's parents as needed.

### **Parent Partnership**

As important as children's and youth workers are, parents have the greatest opportunity to influence the spiritual development of their children. In Deuteronomy 6, God makes clear it is the parent's responsibility to pass their faith on to the next generation. Awana makes it easy for you, as an Awana leader, to help the parents of your Awana kids. The Awana curriculum is designed to encourage parents to work with their children in learning and memorizing God's Word. Challenge the parents to help their child complete handbook sections. Encourage parents to memorize along with their children. Host a parent night and invite parents to experience a club meeting. Get to know the parents when they drop off or pick up their children. Keep in communication throughout the year via email or phone to let them know how their child is doing. Together, in partnership, you can lead children to know, love, and serve Christ.

### **Child Protection**

We live in a broken world. We know this yet still we're surprised that we need to protect the children in our church. We like to think churches are safe from sexual predators but they're not – there are churches of all sizes around the world that share in this heart-breaking reality. If your church doesn't have a child protection (CP) policy, or doesn't enforce the one it has, encourage your church leadership to create one or enforce it.

There are seven areas of child protection to address. Please understand that this is not legal advice. Awana is not able to give legal advice. Nothing can substitute for competent legal counsel from an attorney who knows your church.

1. Develop and follow policies and practices for child protection.
2. Screen workers.
3. Retain records.
4. Train workers in your policy.
5. Supervise workers.
6. Seek legal counsel and professional advice.

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### 7. Report abuse and suspected abuse.

Scripture provides insight into the importance Jesus placed on children coming to Him: ...*"Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these"* (Luke 18:16, NIV). It is imperative for the church to do everything it can to create a safe place for children to grow in the Lord.

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## **Serving Kids Matters**

*Jericho accepted Christ as his Savior and his life began to change.*

Meet Jericho.

Jericho spends his time on the streets of his city in the Phillipines. He and his friends steal metal so they can get money to buy something to eat. One day, while breaking into a home, he encountered a pastor who invited him to attend his Awana club. There Jericho heard that Jesus loved him so much that He died to take the punishment for his sins. Jericho accepted Christ as his Savior and his life began to change. Now Jericho dreams of becoming a pastor so he can share Jesus with other street children.

# **T&T Leader Role**

Now that you understand the basic features of T&T, you may be wondering what you're supposed to do when all those energetic kids arrive. This section will give you what you need to get off to a good start.

It is of utmost importance that the kids in your care know that they are loved. 1 John 4:7a says: *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God (NIV)*. Children this age are watching the adults around them. They can tell if you want to be there or not. Kids are drawn to a leader who exhibits an attitude that communicates, "There is no other place I'd rather be than right here with you." A loving leader opens the pathway to a child's receptiveness to hearing the gospel and willingness to learn more about the loving God that we serve.

Commit to praying for the children in your ministry throughout the week. Posting their names or pictures in a place that you regularly see will help remind you to pray for them.

Arrive to church early so you are there to greet the kids in your group by name as they arrive. Smile and let them know you are happy to see them! Say hello to the parents who drop off their children and thank them for bringing their kids.

Help with the check-in process as needed.

Some churches hold an opening ceremony for the first few minutes of the club meeting. This gives an opportunity to establish discipline and officially mark the start of club. Activities may include reciting a key verse together, opening in prayer, saying pledges, recognizing achievement, and making announcements.

## **Large Group Time**

Large Group Time is when all the kids and leaders join together for a Bible lesson. This time could also include worship, prayer, testimonies, award presentations, and announcements. Large Group Time should be fun and upbeat, with children participating at various times. Be creative!

What is my role during Large Group Time?

1. Sit with the children. Model good behavior and participate in the activities.
2. Listen to the Bible lesson and announcements so you can answer any questions the kids may have.

## *Getting Started With Truth & Training*

3. Support the large group leader by encouraging the children who are well-behaved and addressing any discipline issues that might arise.
4. Cheer on children who receive awards.

### **Small Group Time**

This is the segment when leaders meet with a small group of children to recite Scripture and discuss God's Word using their handbooks. This is the best opportunity for discipleship by getting to know the children, modeling Christlikeness, teaching biblical truths, praying together, and building community. We recommend a 2:10 leader to child ratio for small group. This means two leaders are assigned five children each, but meet in the same space. This allows them to back each other up when needed and is a good child protection measure.

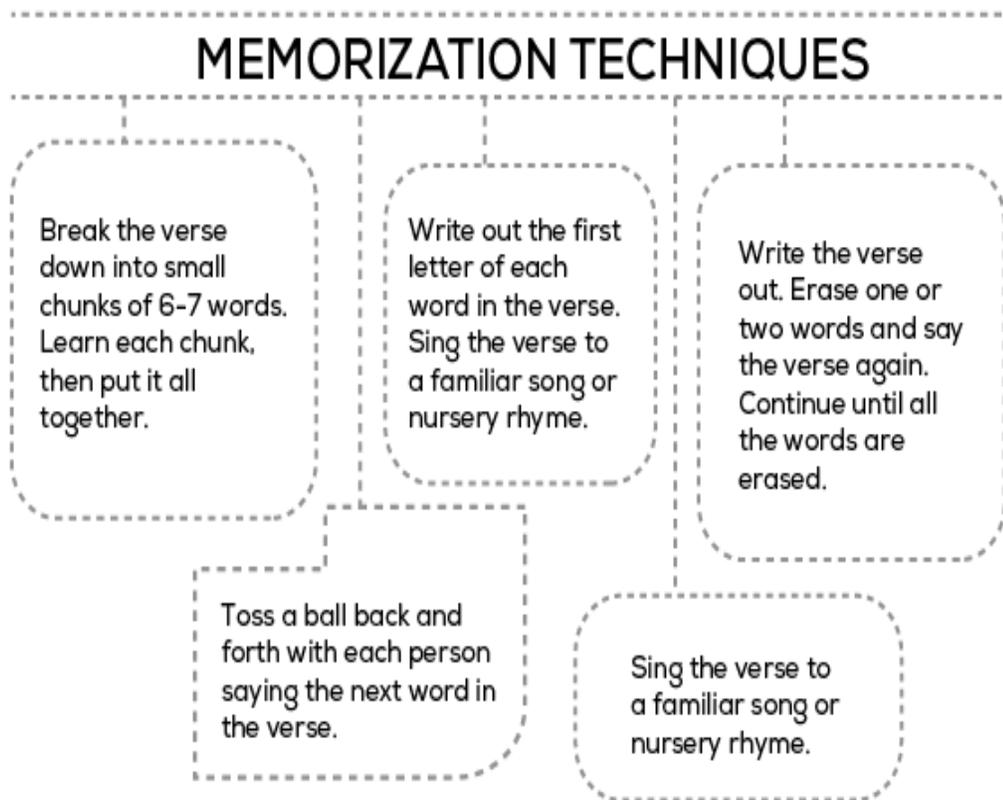
During Small Group Time, children work through their handbooks at their own pace and are encouraged to work at home during the week so they come prepared to recite verses.

What is a leader's role during Small Group Time?

1. Open in prayer. Ask children to share prayer requests and praises. Share your own. Model prayer and encourage the children to pray too. Sharing in this way builds community and allows small group members to know and care for each other.
2. Listen to verses and sign off on handbook sections. Awana recommends the following standards for passing sections:
  - Allow two helps per section. A help is a few words or a gesture.
  - Kids need to recite the reference so they know where the verse came from in the Bible.
  - All verses in a section are recited in one sitting.
  - Complete sections in order as the books are designed this way, including review verses that were introduced previously.
3. Help children memorize by suggesting various memorization techniques. Pay attention to each child's learning preferences.
4. Explain spiritual truths as you listen to children recite their verses. Ask what the verse means. Define unfamiliar words. Show the children where to find the verse in the Bible.
5. Keep records of each child's attendance and achievement. Awana record-keeping cards ensure that attendance is recorded and the date each section a child passes is recorded. It's very important to keep accurate records so that if a child loses their handbook, they can still get credit for the work they've completed.

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6. Be an encourager! Praise good attendance, achievements, and behavior.



### **Game Time**

This segment of the club meeting is when the children enjoy fun games, usually but not always on the Awana Game Square. The purpose of Game Time is to attract boys and girls to attend club and to want to invite their friends to join them.



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- Maintain order and individual discipline.
- Encourage participation.
- Model good sportsmanship.

Support and help the game director as needed.

# Growing As a Leader

The fact that you are reading this book indicates that you are a leader who is interested in doing your best to serve the children in your care. God will surely honor that! In their book, *The Secret*, Mark Miller and Ken Blanchard identify several practices of great leaders. One is that great leaders are constantly growing and learning, always seeking to improve.

In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul writes to Timothy: ... *and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also* (ESV). The word *faithful* implies that the teacher is strong in his walk with Christ. The word *able* implies the teacher has the skill to teach others. Awana provides you with the tools, resources, and training to help you grow in Christlikeness and develop the ministry skills you need to serve the young people within your sphere of influence.

## **Trust and Obey**

The Christian life is a journey and we all continue to grow under the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit. Trust and obedience are two of the key ingredients for our walk. Look up Psalm 20:7. In whom do we trust?

Are you feeling a bit overwhelmed with the responsibilities laid out in this role book so far? Look up Psalm 56:4 and Proverbs 3:5-6. What are some of the benefits of trust?

In 2 John 1:6 God calls us to walk according to His commandments.

As an Awana leader you will help set an example for the kids in your ministry. Deuteronomy 32:46-47 says: *"Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess"* (ESV).

## **Being in God's Word**

While it's not required for Awana leaders to memorize Scripture along with the children, it's a spiritual discipline that reaps great rewards. And the children love it when they get an opportunity to listen to an adult recite verses. A great place to start is with the eight verses that make up the Gospel Wheel. Once these are memorized you will be prepared to share the gospel using Scripture anytime, anywhere.



**Prayer**

Staying in close contact with your heavenly Father is critical to a healthy, growing ministry. Pray for your club and for your children and their families. Pray also for your church and community – that many would come to hear the gospel and accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. What is your prayer for your spiritual growth and your role as a leader this year?

**Grow and Develop**

There are several ways you can continue to grow and develop your ministry skills as you serve God's precious kids.

**Getting Started Training**

## *Getting Started With Truth & Training*

By reading this Getting Started book, you are well on your way to getting off to a good start as an Awana leader. Other ways to get basic training include taking a Getting Started class or completing the Getting Started online training. Learn more about these options at [awana.org/leaders](http://awana.org/leaders).

Leaders who complete one or more of the Getting Started options, and memorize the eight Gospel Wheel verses are recognized with a Getting Started role pin.

### **Online Learning**

These interactive online modules develop your basic skills and provide solutions to common club challenges. Training modules vary in length from two to 40 minutes and can be accessed via desktop, tablet, and/or smartphone. Learn more at [awana.org/online-learning](http://awana.org/online-learning).

Mozo, technology built for Awana ministries, is a whole new way of doing leadership development, ministry management, and team collaboration. Among other features, Mozo offers a searchable online library of leadership training, teaching resources, digital record keeping, a centralized message center, and calendar. It's a must-have resource for every Awana leader. Learn more at [awana.org/mozo](http://awana.org/mozo).

### **Awana Ministry Conference (AMC)**

These local Awana leadership conferences are held across the U.S. and Canada each year from August through October. Inspiring messages, practical workshops, idea sharing, and networking get you off to the best start of your ministry year! Learn more at [awana.org/amc](http://awana.org/amc).

### **Blogs**

Awana offers several FREE blogs that provide a regular stream of thought-provoking ministry advice, tips, humor, and practical support for your children's ministry. Subscribe at [awana.org/blog](http://awana.org/blog).

### **Equipped to Lead**

This monthly newsletter is designed to equip you to lead with excellence and keep you up-to-date on the latest news and resources to support your ministry. Subscribe on [awana.org](http://awana.org).

### **LEAD: Equip**

To make big ministry impact, leaders need community, encouragement, and learning and development opportunities. New this year, LEAD is a leadership development experience designed to equip ministry leaders to make a bigger impact on the next generation. The LEAD: Equip experience combines social online learning with a two-day live event.

- Connect with and learn from other leaders like yourself.

## *Getting Started With Truth & Training*

- Gain key skills to advance your ministry to children and youth.
- Grow in your relationship with Christ.
- Ignite your desire to lead. Register at [awana.org/lead](http://awana.org/lead).

### **Rock-Solid Series**

This series of four books, [Rock-Solid Kids](#), [Rock-Solid Children's Ministry](#), [Rock-Solid Volunteers](#), and [Rock-Solid Teacher](#), help church leaders build a strong ministry modeled on scriptural teaching. Visit the e-store or ministry catalog.

### **Parent Handbooks**

Designed for adults, parents, and leaders to gain a biblical worldview and develop spiritually by learning the same verses in the children's handbooks. Each book corresponds with a Sparks or T&T handbook. Visit the [e-store](#) or ministry catalog.

## *Getting Started With Truth & Training*

### **Additional Resources**

#### **Ministry Support and Care**

A team of Customer Care representatives at Awana is dedicated to helping you with any questions you may have. They can be reached at 866-292-6227 or by live chat at [community.awana.org](https://community.awana.org).

#### **Missions Curriculum**

Awana GO™ (Global Outreach) inspires your club to go into all the world and make disciples and to see the world through God's eyes. These free resources provide large group curriculum to teach children about missions and give ideas for how you can engage kids in making a difference in the lives of others. [awana.org/go](https://awana.org/go).

#### **Serving Children With Special Needs**

[Awana for Me](#) — This book will assist you in welcoming and integrating special-needs children into your club. Order through [e-store](#) or *Awana Ministry Catalog*.

Online Training Series: This FREE video-training series features author and speaker Barb Newman as she helps leaders understand how to serve children with learning, behavioral, and physical challenges. Visit our training library at [awana.org/online-training](https://awana.org/online-training).

## *Getting Started With Truth & Training*

### Club Meeting Resources

#### **Game Books**

##### [The Official Sparks Game Book](#)

The official game book for Sparks, with nearly 100 game ideas for your Sparkies!

Features a number of new game ideas as well as time-tested games from previous Sparks publications. Game ideas are organized by several different categories for easy searching based on your game space, club size, etc.

##### [The Official T&T Game Book](#)

We've handpicked popular games from the book *The Best Awana Games Ever!* and added fresh, new game ideas in this convenient guide.

With unique twists on some of the most loved Awana game ideas ever, this is Game Time with T&T in mind! All 163 games are indexed for quick planning and come complete with easy-to-follow instructions. A section of AwanaGames™ event listing helps even the newest club compete successfully in regional events.

##### [The Official Awana Youth Ministries Game Book: 93 Exciting Games and Two Boring Ones](#)

These fun games were created with Trek students in mind.

This book is packed with a wide variety of interesting games to keep your students engaged. Games like Shaving Cream Wiffle® Ball, Slime Search and Human Pinball will especially appeal to today's youth. Outdoor games included.

The companion app puts the game book on your smartphone or iPad. Go to [awana.org/gameapp](http://awana.org/gameapp) to purchase.

#### **Getting Started Pocket Guides**

Give each leader a small, easy-to-read [Pocket Guide](#) with quick tips for successfully leading clubbers in Awana.

Each one includes teaching tips and other handy information to use during training and club.

##### [Gospel Message App](#)

The Gospel Wheel goes digital with this exclusive free app for your smartphone or tablet.

This versatile app includes three different versions that modify the gospel presentation for adults, teens and children. It also allows you the flexibility to start the discussion at any point on the wheel. For more information go to [awana.org/apps](http://awana.org/apps).

## *Getting Started With Truth & Training*

### **Leader Guidebooks**

These convenient [Leader Guides](#) tell you what you need to know to work with Sparkies through each section of the handbooks.

Also included are optional handbook-related activities for club time, memory tips and games.

### **Large Groups Lessons**

#### Reach Kids on Their Level

The most burning questions your kids have about God and the Bible are answered in these books.

[WHAT Is Your Biggest Question About God and the Bible?](#) And the follow-up, [WHY Should I Believe the Bible Is True?](#) are the results of our poll of more than 1,000 kids. Both books feature lessons that include a thought-provoking introduction, a “look it up” feature, visual ideas and a challenge. Appropriate for both Sparks and T&T.

#### [WHO Do I Need to Know From the Bible?](#)

Reinforce what Sparkies are learning in their Bibles and handbooks and make your Large Group Time complete.

Each version of *WHO Do I Need to Know From the Bible?* Includes 30 interactive lessons, with biographies of biblical figures not included in the handbooks. Use with Sparkies of all ages as a stand-alone teaching tool. Make lesson time easier to plan and execute for your large-group teachers!