



Parent Handbook 2021-2022

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved,
a worker who has no need to be ashamed,
rightly handling the word of truth.”

2 Timothy 2:15 ESV



Dear Parents/Guardians,

We very excited to be offering Awana as a ministry to children at Grace Community Church and our surrounding communities.

You and your child are extremely important to our Awana leadership. We have a great desire to partner with you in ministering to your child through this program. We want to provide a place and environment that shows the love of Jesus Christ while challenging children to grow in their relationship with Christ through His Word. We count it an honor to be a part of your family's spiritual growth and development.

This handbook is designed to give you all the information you and your child will need to have a successful year. In order for your child to get the most out of Awana, he/she will need your help in completing sections of their handbooks and attending club regularly. Our prayer is that your child will experience spiritual and emotional growth while having fun through their involvement with our program.

Please feel free to contact us any time if you have questions or let us know how we may better serve you. We look forward to ministering to your child and pray it will be an enjoyable experience for him/her.

Sincerely yours,

Brad Herrman

Awana Ministry Director

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What Is Awana?

Awana is a weekly children's community club which offers a safe, positive environment to learn about God, hear the Gospel, and memorize key verses about life and godliness. The Awana name is derived from 2 Timothy 2:15, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (ESV). Thus, the Awana name stands for Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed. Awana began in Chicago in 1950 when Lance Latham and Art Raheem developed a program to appeal to young people, reach them with the gospel of Christ, and train them in the Lord's work. Other churches heard about the success of the program and by 1960, Awana had registered 900 clubs. Today there are more than 2.3 million children reached by the gospel each week in 100+ countries by 30,000 churches. Our local club's charter number is 9469. Children work to complete one handbook per year. To do so, it is important for parents to set aside consistent time to encourage and help their child complete sections each week. You may be surprised what your child can learn! Handbooks are given after completion of an Entrance Booklet.

Who, What, When, Where, and How?

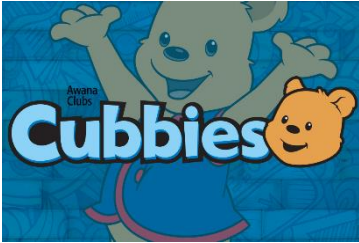
Meetings are held on Wednesdays at 6:30-8:00 pm through the school year at Grace Community Church (GCC). Please refer to the Awana calendar for special nights or for scheduled breaks due to holidays, etc. Clubs will begin promptly at 6:30, but the doors will be locked until 6:15 to allow leaders' adequate preparation time. Fast track time will be available to help clubbers get verse finished up at 6:15 as well. Children must be three years and potty-trained by September 1st of the club year to participate in the program. Clubbers range from preschool to the 12th grade. Parents are welcome to stay, visit, or check in on their clubber at any time. Parents (not siblings) are expected to pick up their clubber from the rooms after the closing ceremonies. The night is divided into three time periods for each of three clubs:

Small Group Time (also called Handbook Time) consists of trained leaders (who have passed a background check and met requirements for children's ministry at Grace) listening to verses, helping clubbers learn and comprehend, and then signing off on sections from the handbook. Accommodations can be made for special learners, but typically each section must be recited word-for-word with no more than two "helps," including the reference. We use the English Standard Version (ESV) translation, but other versions may be special purchased.

Large Group Time (also called Council Time) consists of instruction from the Bible, missionary stories, object lessons, guest speakers, films and/or Bible quizzing.

Game Time offers the clubbers the opportunity to participate as team members in physical activities which can help develop team spirit, good sportsmanship, coordination skills, and self-confidence. Although games are competitive in nature (less so in Cubbies) and winning is desirable, leaders are encouraged to give top priority to the edification of each clubber.

Awana Clubs at Grace



Cubbies will be meeting in the preschool room just off the large, east room where you enter. Cubbies Director, Laura Millard, has eleven years of experience leading the Cubbies. Cubbies use a pace program in which all the clubbers complete the same section. Parental involvement during the week is encouraged as you lead your child through handbook sections called "Bear Hugs" combining

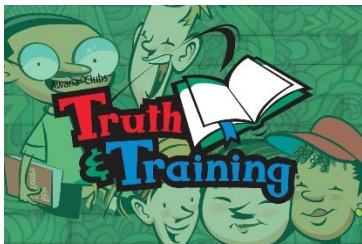
basic Scripture memory with parent-child activities to help your Cubbie grasp simple biblical truths. Clubbers who join during the year will complete the entrance booklet and then will begin their lesson with the same Bear Hug the rest of the Cubbies are learning. Working through the handbook with your child and having the Scriptural lesson reviewed in club helps instill your child with a lifelong biblical worldview. The clubbers earn patches as they progress, and they earn "shares" used as money on the night of the Awana Carnival in April. It's

a gentle, fun way to begin!



Sparks will be meeting in the children's wing in the southwest corner of the building. Director Candace Herrman have been working in Awana over 20 years. Sparks complete three handbooks in three years to receive their Sparks plaque. They start out with the Flight 3:16 booklet and then the green Hang Glider Book.

For a Spark to complete a book in one year, 2-3 sections need to be passed most nights. Most Sparks still need parental involvement on a near-daily basis to complete the book, although they will become more independent as they read! A quick way to know how your Spark is progressing is to note how many red and green jewels are in their "wings." If half of it is filled by Christmas break, your Spark is on track to complete the handbook by the end of April. Blue jewels are for attendance at club, so please let your leader know if your Spark missed due to sickness or being out-of-town, as those are excused and will not count. Shares are given just prior to the Awana carnival so none are lost.



T&T will be using the recently updated T&T Mission: Evidence of Grace handbooks. All four books must be completed to receive the "Timothy Award."

One to two sections should be completed per club night in order to complete the start zone and handbook in one year. For all clubbers who want to come early to say their verses, Fast Track will be available at 6:15pm in the Cafe. The boys and girls meet for separate small group times in classrooms at the east

end of the fellowship hall but join for large group lessons and game time. Wendy Brackeen is the girls' directors and Nate Stryker is the boys' directors. Awards for T&T consist of patches to be sewn or adhered to the uniform and Awana shares, which are given just prior to the Awana carnival so none are lost.



Trek is a 2-year program for Middle School students. This new program challenges students to wrestle with the three most important questions they're asking in middle school. By allowing students to dive deep into the Scriptures and answer these questions for themselves we allow them to own their faith and discover what they believe.

Journey establishes high school students as lifelong disciples through a deep study of God's Word, mobilizing them to live with godly perspective and evident faith.

Parent Responsibilities

The teaching in Awana begins at home. Each week, parents help their clubber complete memorization work in their handbooks. At club, we will center our teaching on the same Bible truths you are teaching your child at home. By creating this partnership, we can anchor Biblical truths into our clubbers' hearts and minds. Please be sure to carefully read any fliers or handouts your child brings home. They will contain important information for you to read. We will also be using email to effectively communicate with parents.

Encouragement: Always encourage your child. Children have much more fun when Mom and Dad show interest in their accomplishments.

Assistance: Help children to attend Awana every week and to arrive on time (club begins promptly at 6:30 pm). Consistency builds friendships, achievement, and self-discipline. Pick up clubbers promptly at 8:00 pm. All clubbers will not be permitted to leave their pick-up area without a parent or guardian.

During the week, help your child prepare at least two to three sections. This will ensure they will complete their handbook to receive their special awards and to qualify for other Awana activities.

Attendance: Visit our club. We welcome parents/guardians to visit Club on Family night, this allows you to see what your child does, and for you to catch the excitement of Awana!!! Be sure to check the calendar for details. Attend all major events. Parents are always welcome and are encouraged to attend special events as a way of showing your support and approval of your child's accomplishments.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP MY CHILD SUCCEED IN AWANA?

1. The most important thing you can do is encourage and support your child's efforts. Be their cheerleader! Praise every effort!
2. Help your child read and practice the memory verses. Check for clear understanding by asking open-ended questions (questions your child can answer with something other than "yes" or "no"). Initial or sign your child's handbook when your child has mastered a section.
3. Help your child be regular in attendance and arrive at club on time. Some awards are based on attendance, so please be here if you can. Also, please let the Awana leaders know if your child was out because he or she was sick, so they don't miss out on awards.
4. Attend church and Sunday school, somewhere. Our desire is to teach the Word of God to your child and your family. It is not our desire to take you away from your home church. However, if you do not have a home church, you are always invited to worship with us! *Our worship gathering begins at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. We also offer Sunday School for all ages at 9:15 a.m.*

Weather Cancellation Policy

If Great Bend USD 428 public schools are closed or dismiss early due to weather, there will be no Awana that night. If weather conditions deteriorate after school has dismissed at the normal time, we will announce

cancellation on KSN TV, KVBG radio, and post information on the GCC Awana Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/AwanaClubsAtGrace>).

Rewards and Awards

All clubbers receive patches (Sparks also receive jewels for their "wings") to mark their accomplishments as they progress through their handbooks. They also receive "shares," which act as money on the Carnival Night in April. Each meeting a clubber receives one share for attending, one for bringing a Bible, one for bringing their handbook, one for wearing their uniform, two for each section completed, and ten shares for each new friend they bring to Awana. There are also special theme nights scattered throughout the year which earn another share for participation. Shares are also given for participation in game time, positive leadership, and effort. Awards Night in April recognizes clubbers who have participated in the program but offers special commendation to clubbers who have completed their handbooks. Uniforms upon completion of the Entrance Booklet, a clubber is eligible to wear the Awana uniform. We encourage each clubber to wear their club uniform at each meeting so they can display their awards, receive shares, and benefit from a sense of belonging. Used uniforms may be donated to the club after the clubber no longer has need of them, to be given to scholarship clubbers.

Dues

Dues to help cover costs are \$20/year or \$10/semester. Uniforms are an additional, but required, at-cost fee. The dues do not cover all the costs of the Awana program, since this is a ministry of GCC, but they do increase the involvement of the clubbers in attendance and in care of the handbooks. Partial scholarships are available upon request (just note if you need assistance on your order form). No one will be turned away from Awana Clubs at Grace based on their ability to pay!

Lost handbooks will be replaced at cost. If you would like to donate to help cover the cost of a scholarship, please note the donation on your fee's worksheet at registration. Dues are "due" at registration or once your clubber has completed their Entrance Booklet.

Extras

In addition to dues and uniforms, we offer the opportunity to purchase a bag for \$9.00 and/or a music CD of the sections \$10. Please note that any bag will do (we do recommend a bag). The handbooks in Cubbies and Sparks come with CDs of the stories and sections, they are just not set to music. If your clubber would benefit from these purchases, just indicate what you would like to purchase on your order form.

Wellness Policy

As we all know, sickness spreads easily among children, affecting not only the other clubbers in your Awana group, but your family and other families also. Please keep the child home from Awana if within the last 24 hours your child has displayed any of the following symptoms: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, discolored nasal mucus, bad cough, or rash. If your child misses Awana due to an illness, that is an excused absence and needs to be reported to the secretary the following club night, either in person or with a note. Some awards the clubber earns are based on attendance and an excused absence counts toward the awards. Leaders and parent helpers

who are ill are asked to stay home as well. Please notify your director or the commander to let them know of your absence.

Discipline

Five Count System: To quiet clubbers, a leader begins to count to five. When the count has reached five, absolute silence by all in attendance should reign.

Three Count System: When correction for misbehavior of an individual clubber is needed, the clubber is given a "one count" by the leader. This serves as a warning that the behavior is not at an acceptable level for club. If the clubber, at any time during the same night, receives a "two count," five shares are deducted from that clubber. Usually that is as far as is needed, but if the clubber again chooses an inappropriate behavior, the clubber receives a "three count" and is removed from the usual club activities. At the discretion of the Commander, the clubber may spend the remainder of that night's club with the Commander (under his wing), or the parents may be called to take the clubber home immediately.

Explanation will be made to the clubber at each step and the parents will be informed if a "three count" is reached. The clubber is welcomed back to club the next week with a clean slate. However, after three occurrences of the three-count, the clubber will be excused from the club for three weeks. If a fourth three-count is necessary after the clubber returns, he or she will be suspended from the club for the remainder of the club year. Our goal is to make Awana a safe and fun environment for every clubber. Thank you for your support of our leaders and for your understanding if correction is deemed necessary for your child.