



# Parent Handbook

## 2011-2012

Austin Bluffs Evangelical Free Church

## BACKGROUND

Awana is an international, non-denominational ministry that assists churches in reaching children with the gospel of Jesus Christ and training them to serve Him. Throughout the year, children are given the opportunity to participate in weekly club meetings, and in special events such as the Grand Prix, Bible Quizzing, and Awana Games.

The name 'Awana' is an acronym for the phrase *Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed* (though Awana International says that Awana does not have to be spelled using all caps). This phrase comes from the club's key verse which points to the centrality of God's word in the life of a Christian:

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15*

## DATES AND TIMES

Weekly meetings for boys and girls ages 3 through the 6<sup>th</sup> grade are held on Sunday nights. All clubs meet from 5:45-7:15pm. Children must be age 3 by August 22nd of the club year to participate in the Awana program.

## CLUBS AT AUSTIN BLUFFS

<b>Austin Bluffs offers three Awana clubs:</b>
<b>CUBBIES</b> for pre-kindergarten children ages 3-4
<b>SPARKS</b> for children in grades K-2
<b>TRUTH AND TRAINING (T&amp;T)</b> for children in grades 3-6

## DIRECTORS

Associate Pastor	Rob Zietlow	596-3333
Awana Commander	Jerry Wilson	638-6403
Cubbies Director	Pat Landry	594-6888
Sparks Director	Ronna Hoglund	530-0914
Truth and Training Boys	Neil Saunders	434-1787
Truth and Training Girls	Sharon Zietlow	573-8619

## Awana Calendar 2011-2012

Parents, please note that all dates are subject to change. Please be on the lookout for notes sent home with your clubber about theme nights and calendar changes. In the case of inclement weather, please check the website ([www.abefc.org](http://www.abefc.org)) or call for a recorded message (596-3333).

July-August 14th	Online Awana Sign-ups
July 31 <sup>st</sup> -August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Awana Handbook & Uniform Payments Collected on Sunday mornings
August 21 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> Club Night (1)
August 27 <sup>th</sup>	Family Fun Day 10:30-12:30am (lunch served from 11-noon)
August 28 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (2)
September 4 <sup>th</sup>	<i>No Club - Labor Day Weekend</i>
September 11 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (3)
September 18 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (4)
September 25 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Theme Night (Commanders's Choice - Backwards Night) (5)
October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Regular Club Night - Clubber of the Month Awards (6)
October 9 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (7)
October 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Members Meeting - Early Club - 4:15-5:45pm (8) - (members meeting to follow)</b>
October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Regular Club Night (9)
October 30 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (10) - ABEFC Mission's Conference
November 6 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Clubber of the Month Awards (11)
November 13 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Theme Night (Cubbies Choice) (12)
November 20 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Thanksgiving Pie Fellowship (13)
November 27 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night & Haiti Christmas Gift Collection (14)
December 4 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Christmas Party, Clubber of the Month Awards, & Haiti Christmas Gift Collection (15)
<i>December 11<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>No Club - Choir Concert</i>
<i>December 18<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>No Club - Christmas</i>
<i>December 25<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>No Club - Christmas</i>
<i>January 1<sup>st</sup></i>	<i>No Club - New Years Day</i>
TBD	Awana Grand Prix
January 8 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (16)
January 15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Members Meeting - Early Club - 4:15-5:45pm (17) - members meeting to follow</b>
January 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Regular Club Night - Theme Night (Sparks Choice) (18)
TBD	Bible Quiz
January 29 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (19)
February 5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>No Club - Super Bowl Sunday (enjoy time w/ family and friends!)</i>
February 12 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Clubber of the Month Awards (20)
February 19 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (21)
February 26 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Theme Night (T&T Girls Choice) (22)
March 4 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Clubber of the Month Awards (23)
March 6 <sup>th</sup>	Awana Games/Sparks-a-Rama
March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (24)
March 18 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night - Theme Night (T&T Boys Choice) (25)
March 25 <sup>th</sup>	<i>No Club - Spring Break</i>
April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Regular Club Night - Clubber of the Month Awards (26)
April 8 <sup>th</sup>	<i>No Club - Easter Sunday</i>
April 15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Members Meeting - Early Club - 4:15-5:45pm (27) - members meeting to follow -</b>
April 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>Regular Club Night (28)</i>
April 29 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (29)
May 6 <sup>th</sup>	Regular Club Night (30)
May 13 <sup>th</sup>	<i>No Club - Mother's Day</i>
May 20 <sup>th</sup>	Awards Ceremony

## **CLUB NIGHT FORMAT**

All club meetings are divided into three segments: handbook time, game time, and council time.

### ***HANDBOOK TIME***

Handbook Time consists of interaction between individual clubbers and their table leader. Clubbers recite Bible memory work and discuss Bible reading assignments for comprehension. When the leader is satisfied the clubber has memorized and comprehends the handbook material adequately, they will sign the handbook for section credit. (For Cubbies, this is Book Time.)

### ***COUNCIL TIME***

Council Time includes singing and instruction from the Bible. A variety of topics are covered including the person of Jesus Christ, the gospel of salvation by grace, the eternal security of a believer, and living the Christian life. (For Cubbies this is Story Time.)

### ***GAME TIME***

Game Time offers clubbers the opportunity to participate as team members in physical and mental activities which develops team spirit, good sportsmanship, coordination skills and self-confidence. Although games are competitive in nature (non-competitive for CUBBIES) and winning is desirable, leaders give top priority to building and preserving each clubber's character. We ask that each clubber wear clothes that you don't mind getting a little dirty. Rubber-soled shoes for our game time are also appreciated. (For Cubbies this is Play Time).

## **HANDBOOKS**

Much of the Awana program revolves around the clubber's handbook, which is designed to aid in Biblical instruction. Handbooks are made up of several sections, which typically include scripture reading assignments and passages for scripture memory. During Handbook Time, clubbers get together with their leaders who will check off their section work, and assist them in their progress through the handbook. If a clubber is new to their club (Cubbies, Sparks, or T&T), they will first complete an entrance booklet before receiving their handbook.

## **CLUB UNIFORMS**

Both clubbers and leaders wear uniforms to encourage club unity, and to promote an orderly and disciplined club. Uniforms also provide a place for clubbers to display their achievement awards. Wearing the club uniform is a privilege that a clubber earns upon completion of the entrance booklet. When your clubber receives his or her uniform, take this opportunity to congratulate them on their accomplishment!

## **AWARDS**

Clubbers receive awards on a regular basis as they work their way through the handbook. (Clubbers must be in uniform to receive awards). This serves to keep them motivated and excited. At the conclusion of the Awana year, we have a special "Awards Ceremony" to honor children who complete their handbook that year. From time to time we create contests or other incentives to motivate the children as they complete the handbook.

To keep the pace required for finishing one handbook during the Awana year, clubbers will need to work on their handbooks at home. Parental encouragement and help will greatly enhance a clubbers likelihood of completing their book! Clubbers are expected to memorize verses word perfect, and they must know the reference. Although word for word perfection is the goal, clubbers may receive two helps for each section and still receive section credit.

In addition to accurate memorization, clubbers must comprehend the content of their verses to receive section credit. Handbook sections typically include sidebar definitions for difficult words or concepts; however, parental assistance is highly encouraged to help your clubber get the most out of God's word!

A pace of about two to three sections per week for T&T clubbers should be adequate time to complete the handbook by the end of the club year in April.

All awards are provided at no charge to the clubbers. However, if awards are lost or broken, replacements can be purchased at cost.

### **CLUB ATTENDANCE AWARD:**

Club Attendance Awards are given on a quarterly basis. Each quarter, clubbers will receive the following awards according to their attendance:

- First Attendance Award 7 weeks
- Second Attendance Award 15 weeks
- Third Attendance Award 23 weeks
- Fourth Attendance Award 30 weeks

For CUBBIES, the same requirements apply but awards are given semi-annually:

- First Attendance Award 15 weeks
- Second Attendance Award 30 weeks

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AWARD**

To receive this award, clubbers must have no more than two unexcused absences per award period. Illness, family emergency and being out of town will be counted as excused absences if documented by a parent's note. Clubbers may attend Austin Bluffs, their own church, or a remote church while on vacation. Awards are given semi-annually:

- First Sunday School Award 15 weeks
- Second Sunday School Award 30 weeks

*\*Note that attendance at any morning church service counts towards Sunday School attendance.*

## **COSTS**

### **HANDBOOKS**

The entrance booklet is free. If needed, replacements will be available at a cost of twenty-five cents per copy. Upon completion of the entrance booklet, a one-year handbook is required to continue in the program. The costs of the handbook are included below.

Cubbies \$10  
Sparks \$11  
T&T \$10

### **UNIFORMS**

Upon completion of the entrance test, a clubber is eligible to wear the Awana uniform. We encourage each clubber to get and wear the uniform as the clubber must be wearing a uniform in order to receive an earned award. The uniform can be purchased through the club, either as new or (if available) used. Prices for new uniforms, including charter numbers:

Cubbies \$12  
Sparks \$12  
T&T (3<sup>RD</sup> & 4<sup>TH</sup> grades - green shirt) \$14  
T&T (4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grades - blue shirt) \$15

## **SPECIAL CUBBIES NOTES**

### **CUBBIES HANDBOOKS**

Each section in your child's handbook is called a Bear Hug. Your child will learn ONE Bear Hug each week. You will find a calendar attached to your child's handbook that specifies which Bear Hug should be prepared for the appropriate week. Every child works on the same material each week and our club night is designed to reinforce the verses and concepts for that week. Each Bear Hug has two parts: that week's verses and learning concept, and "Under the Apple Tree". In order to earn the end of year Book Award your child has to complete the basic Bear Hug material. The Under the Apple Tree section is optional and is geared towards those children that are super excited about learning more about God's word, or those that are accelerated learners.

### **SCRIPTURE MEMORY FOR CUBBIES:**

Awana has some very specific policies outlining what is expected of these children when they memorize scripture. Three (3) year olds do not have to know the scripture reference. Four (4) year olds DO need to memorize the scripture reference. We will give the children TWO one word helps for each section.

### ***ATTENDANCE POLICY***

Our year is divided into two semesters. Your child will be allowed three (3) absences from club and Sunday School. The fourth time that your child misses club they lose their eligibility for the attendance awards. Please do not make your child feel that these awards are necessary to completing the program. They are just extra awards for those that can be there almost every time.

## **TIPS FOR PARENTS**

Your child is going to love Awana - and you will too! This program will help you teach your child to hide God's Word in his or her heart and apply it to life. Please commit to help your child succeed.

### ***ARRIVAL***

As you arrive, clubbers will check in at the registration table in the foyer. The glass doors leading to the foyer will be the only doors that are unlocked. After checking in, clubbers proceed to their classrooms to line up with their club for the Opening Ceremony.

The Opening Ceremony begins promptly at 5:45pm. Please arrive approximately five minutes early to allow for check in and line up.

### ***DISMISSAL***

Parents will pick up their clubbers from their assigned classrooms at 7:15pm.

### ***IDEAS FOR HELPING YOUR CHILD***

- On Monday (after Awana), have your child write the verses for the next week on index cards. Have your child read the verses aloud three times each morning, each afternoon, and each evening.
- Make up a song or rhythmic way of reciting the verses. Practice in the car and at mealtimes.
- Say aloud the Scripture reference and first phrase over and over, add next phrase (always starting from the beginning of the verse). Continue until the child can do the entire verse without help several times. Review, review, review!
- Look up/discuss the meaning of difficult words. (The handbook gives brief definitions for some words.)
- Look up the verses in the Bible. Read the surrounding text with your child, looking for answers to the "5 W's and H" questions (who, what, where, when, why, how). What is happening? Who said/wrote these words? Who was it said/written to? Why was it said? When/where did this happen? How did the listeners respond? Or how did the events unfold? This exercise will give the verses more meaning and will aid in remembering, understanding and applying the verses to our lives.
- Discuss any "lessons for life" from the verses? What is it that God wants me to believe? How will I live if I really believe that? What does God want me to do? What changes do I need to make in my thinking and/or behavior?
- Ask your child to repeat the verse in his or her own words. Ask if he or she can think of a story or recent event that illustrates the truth of the passage they are learning.

# ABEFC AWANA EXPECTATIONS AND CLUB STANDARDS

## RESPECT

- Be respectful in attitude and behavior to all other clubbers and leaders
  - Keep your hands to yourself, no roughhousing at club
- Address all leaders as Mr., Mrs., Miss
- Listen and follow directions from your leaders at all times
- Raise your hand and wait to be called on when you're in club
- Bow your head and close your eyes during prayer
- Stay in your seat during Handbook Time and ask permission before standing and moving around

## RESPONSIBILITY

- Be on time for club (check in by 5:40pm) and have your uniform on and your handbook with you
  - Awards are only given to clubbers wearing their uniform
- Wear appropriate shoes for game time
- Be aware of the 5-Count and 3-Count rules of discipline
  - If you are given a behavior warning, be respectful, have a good attitude, and shape up! 😊
- Regularly attend club, Sunday School, and church to receive attendance awards

## ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

- Set aside time to work on your handbook sections each week
  - Remember only 2 helps are allowed per section
- Enthusiastically participate in Council Time, Game Time, and other Awana activities.
- Be encouraging of other clubbers
- Lend a helping hand to clubbers and leaders when they need it