

# 21 Things That Will Ruin Your Awana® Ministry

Ways to Keep From Sabotaging Your Club

## 1. Prayerlessness

- We have so many resources available to us that it is easy to “do the work.”
- True spiritual work and results are the work of God and the result of prayer.
- Jeremiah 33:3
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Pray daily from the heart.
  - Bug your leaders to pray
  - Pray together / Leader Prayer and Planning Meetings

## 2. Leaders who don't know what they are doing or why

- Leaders who are not trained will get frustrated and quit.
- They will not know what to do, and won't be effective.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Give your leaders a Role Book.
  - Train them.
  - Simple instructions are better than nothing.

## 3. A club out of control

- No one likes chaos.
- Your club can be well disciplined.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Communicate your expectations.
  - Have a primary disciplinarian.
  - Use the 5 count and 3 count properly.
  - Remove incorrigible kids.
  - Pray and never give up on a child.

## 4. Leaders who have no real purpose for being at club

- A leader without a cause is like a fire department without a fire.
- Help your leaders have a burden and vision for serving.
- “People will give to a good cause, but they will sacrifice for a vision.” Andy Stanley
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Ask them how they would answer the question if someone walked into their handbook room and said, “What are you doing here?” This will expose their vision.
  - Share with them the reality of where the kids are. Their ignorance, their depravity, their home situation.
  - Move them to compassion. Mark 6:34. What if that was you?
  - Help your leaders be on a mission every week.

## 5. Pastor and church leadership who have no appreciation for the value of Awana

- How does Awana benefit the church?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Help them see these benefits.

## 6. Doing the same thing week after week

- “There is a direct correlation between predictability and boredom.” Bill Allison
- If you want the kids to be excited, you've got to be excited about your club. Creative planning will get you excited.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Plan, promote theme nights.
  - Do contests.
  - Try new ideas and ways of doing things.

“All that God is, and all that God has, is at the disposal of Prayer.” R.A. Torrey

“God is not wanting great men, but men who will dare to prove the greatness of their God.” A.B. Simpson

“Wherever I have found a man or woman of power, I have found a man or woman of prayer.” J.C. Ryle

“When thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words than thy words without heart.” John Bunyan





## 7. Playing the same games each week

- Believe it or not, the kids will get tired of their favorite games if played week after week.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Make a rule: wait 3 weeks before replaying a game.
  - Use the Awana Game books
  - Create your own game or variations of an Awana game.

## 8. No team leaders on the line during Game Time

- Game Time will not flow well, discipline problems will abound, kids won't have fun and your Game Director will get frustrated and quit if you don't have Line Leaders.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Recruit more help, maybe even a parent.
  - Give Line Leaders a job to do:
    - Manage the team.
    - Explain the rules.
    - Encourage the kids.
    - Create team spirit.
    - Get to know the kids and let them get to know you.

## 9. Too many kids in a handbook group

- You can only manage 5-6 kids effectively in a Handbook group.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Pray fervently for more help.
  - Share your burden and vision for kids before the church.
  - Share success stories.

## 10. Letting kids say one verse at a time with lots of help

- Our goal is for the kids to know the Word, not just earn a bone.
- Sure we want them to understand the verse, but how much better to have it memorized too.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Follow the standards for passing a section.
    - One sitting without looking.
    - Scripture word perfect.
    - No more than two helps per section.
  - Help the kids excel, aspire to improve and do more. Say, "You did such a good job, I'll bet you could do two sections next week."



## 11. No play for the Bible lessons or not prepared

- The Bible lesson is a crucial part of the club night.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Plan half a dozen devotion series.
  - Use lots of Bible stories. They don't know them.
  - Use missionary biographies.
  - Teach them simple doctrines.
    - Man
    - Angels
    - Salvation
    - The Bible
    - God
  - Teach them lessons on character.
  - Use the Large Group Time lesson books by Awana, or CEF material.
  - Check out Pete's PowerPoint Station ([www.pppst.com](http://www.pppst.com))



## 12. Singing silly songs that have no message or eliminating music time altogether

- Fun songs are good, but make sure they have a message.
- There is power in a song to teach kids Bible truths.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Look for new choruses that have a good message.
  - Don't be afraid to occasionally use a hymn or gospel song:
    - At Calvary
    - May the Mind of Christ My Savior
    - Take My Life
    - Living for Jesus
    - What a Friend We Have in Jesus



## 13. Not motivating the kids; minimizing the uniform and awards

- Kids don't come automatically wanting to memorize.
- Help them want to learn.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Use extrinsic means to motivate them:
    - Shares – Awana Store
    - Trading cards
    - Competition – boys vs. girls
    - Have a point system that runs throughout the entire evening.
    - Stress the importance of the uniform.
    - Make a big deal about awards.
  - Utilize intrinsic means:
    - "I use knowing the books of the Bible every day of my life!"

## 14. Lackluster award presentation

- The kids did a lot of work to earn that jewel, bone or patch. It is a big deal; so act like it when you present their awards.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Ask for enthusiastic applause for the kids.
  - Consider rolling out the red carpet.

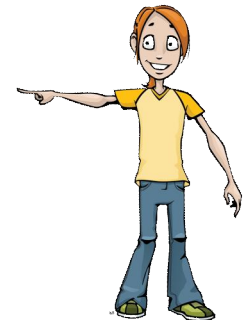


## 15. Not emphasizing the gospel

- What is the gospel? \_\_\_\_\_ I Corinthians 15:3-4
- It is a wonderful love story of God's desire for us.
- Never get tired of it yourself.
- Realize that here are kids every week who may not have heard it. Just because it is old news to you doesn't mean that it isn't new news to someone else.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Learn the Gospel Wheel
  - Share it often.

## 16. Failing to help kids understand that Christianity is a loving relationship with God

- Christianity is more than proper beliefs and proper behavior. It is a living, loving relationship with our Creator. Isaiah 43:4
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Talk about your relationship with God in personal, warm terms.
  - Tell them about Adam, Abraham and Moses and their relationship with God.
  - Teach them to pray and talk to God as they would with a friend or ideal father.





## 17. Not conveying the value of the Word

- The kids will never wholeheartedly embrace Scripture memory if they don't value the Word.
- Is the Word important to you? Do you read it regularly? Do you cherish it?
- How well do you know the Bible? Try placing these people in the order they occurred in history:
  - \_\_\_ Adam / \_\_\_ David / \_\_\_ Jesus / \_\_\_ Joseph / \_\_\_ Noah / \_\_\_ Paul
- "We may only read God's Word when we prepare a lesson and our hearts remain cold because we don't employ personal study." Reese Kauffman
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Develop a love for God's Word yourself.
- Share with them what the Bible says about itself:
  - Deuteronomy 32:46-47
  - Psalm 119:9,11
  - Psalm 119:105
  - Psalm 19:7-11
  - II Timothy 3:16-17
- Always be thinking of ways the Word helps you in your daily life and share it with the kids.

## 18. Leaders not present with teams in Large Group Time

- Leaders play a vital role in Large Group Time. This is not fellowship time for leaders.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Have at least one leader per team sitting among the kids.
  - Give them responsibilities:
    - Help maintain discipline.
    - Assist the kids in looking up passages.
    - Most of all they provide a godly example to the kids, showing interest in the proclamation of God's Word.

## 19. Failure to think through the details of the club year and meeting

- "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Set club goals.
  - Plan the calendar and special events
  - Plan your leadership needs
  - Plan the facility use.

## 20. Not going after kids outside of your club

- Awana at its heart is outreach.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Encourage kids to bring friends.
  - Put an Awana sign in the church yard.
  - Take flyers door to door.
  - Have a float in community parades.
  - Have a booth at the fair.
  - Put an ad in the local newspaper.
  - Tell the children you meet about your club.
  - Have little invitation business cards with you.



## 21. A mediocre Opening Ceremony or none at all

- The Opening Ceremony sets the tone for the entire evening.
- Your enthusiasm for the club, the kids and Christ are on display during this time.
- Sabotage Suppressors:
  - Smile and speak with excitement; act like you are glad the kids are there.
  - Have a sharp, well-disciplined ceremony. Think through how you want it to look and coach the kids.
  - Recite Scripture verses and sing theme songs.
  - Do a drawing with those who were on time, or wore their uniform.