

Getting Beyond “Hello” with Clubbers’ Parents

Simple ways to connect with your clubbers’ parents.

Biblical Truth: Deuteronomy 6:6-7 “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you lie down and when you get up.” (NKJV)

Each of us needs to learn simple conversation starting techniques with clubbers’ parents in order to build relationships so that you can encourage parents to be more involved in the spiritual development of their children.

Your Awana club may serve different purposes for different parents. Some may view it as the sole spiritual training ground for their children. Others may view it as a support system for what they are trying to teach in their home. Some view it as free babysitting for the night. Whatever the parent’s perspective of club is, Awana has a very intentional purpose and that is to support the church and parent in the training of their children to know, love and serve Christ. Awana maintains the position that parents are the primary spiritual influencers in their child’s life and we are there to support and encourage that growth process.

In order to understand the parents perspective of club and encourage them to lead their child in their spiritual growth at home we must first establish a relationship. We cannot speak into a family’s life without first creating a foundation of trust and mutual goals for their child.

Set a good first impression when greeting parents so they can see God’s love and grace in you.

1. Make yourself known by wearing your uniform each week.
2. Start with a friendly “hi, I’m your child’s Awana leader!”
3. Be kind. Always be aware of your testimony.
4. Welcome them to visit club at any time.
5. Personally give parents a letter introducing yourself.

A parents’ child is the most important and valuable area of common ground upon which to begin a conversation and relationship. Here are some tips on how to start conversation with the parents and establish a genuine relationship.

1. Show that you care about their child
 - Pay attention to their child’s accomplishments in club so that you can share it with their parent.
 - Be prepared to share compliments about their child.
 - If you have trouble remembering specifics about the clubber, bring a small notebook to write down things (or use your phone to take notes) to ask about later or share with their parent.

- Be genuine. Give specific examples to support a general comment about their child. (i.e. Grace is so kind to the other clubbers. She told Sarah that she did a great job saying her verses tonight.)
2. Be excited about their spiritual growth and development
 - Be prepared to talk about these developments with the parent by giving the child opportunities to display their growth. Encourage them to help each other with their verses or share what they think about the verses.
 - Encourage them to share prayer requests in your handbook group.
 - Encourage them to share a highlight from their week or from what they are learning.
 - Challenge clubbers to work on a certain section or number of sections during the week. Share that goal with the parent so they can help at home.
 3. Reinforce announcements.
 - Make sure parents (and clubbers) are aware of all club and relevant church announcements.
 - Invite parents to any special events and ask if they have any questions.
 4. Talk about club experience.
 - Ask parents what their son or daughter likes best about club.
 - Ask parents if their son or daughter talks about or ask questions about the Large Group Lesson.
 - Let parents know about the lesson so they can talk to their children about it at home or in the car.
 5. Offer to pray for the parent, clubber and family.

Some parents may want to hear more about how they can take another step in discipling their child. Here are some suggestions on how to encourage parents even more.

1. Challenge them to work with their child weekly in their handbook to complete one handbook that year.
2. Introduce them to your Awana Commander, Director or another couple who is a strong example of home discipleship.
3. Offer cookies and coffee 15 minutes before the clubbers are dismissed. Ask a few friendly church people to mingle with the parents.
4. Invite them to club/church/community events.
5. Plan an outing for your handbook group and invite parents to come. (Never plan an outing without other adults present!)
6. Look for opportunities for parents to help in club. (Remember that they must comply with your church's child protection training and volunteer requirements)
7. Make them aware of parent products from Awana.