

Role Description – Pastor

A pastor sets the tone for Awana as he does for all church ministries. If he is enthused about children's ministry his church most likely will be enthused – a pastor's passion often is contagious. A pastor also is the person with ultimate responsibility and authority in a church. Working within the educational structure of a church, a pastor can ensure integration of Awana with other children's and youth ministries. A pastor's role includes providing spiritual guidance and support for the Awana commander and directors.

Roles and Responsibilities

A pastor whose church runs Awana clubs will seek to fulfill the roles and responsibilities outlined in this role description.

Children's and youth ministry advocate

A pastor's words and actions signify the importance of the ministries in his church. He must be committed to communicate the importance of the Awana ministry and explain how it relates to other children's and youth ministries.

In this role, a pastor ideally would do the following:

- Seek to embrace and communicate God's Word regarding the importance of ministering to children and youth.
- Model Christ's passion for children.
- Communicate passion and vision to the commander and directors.
- Work with church leadership to provide resources and facilities to support the Awana ministry.
- Ensure that the Awana ministry is integrated with the other church ministries.
- Regularly affirm Awana leaders' ability to communicate the gospel clearly and accurately.

Shepherd

A ministry's success is often related to a pastor's ability to shepherd volunteers. A pastor sets the example by shepherding a commander. A commander, in turn, shepherds the directors, who shepherd leaders. A shepherding pastor equips and motivates leaders and models Christlike leadership.

Aspects of this role are the following:

- Encourage spiritual growth through example and accountability.
- Motivate volunteers through vision casting and team building.
- Provide opportunities to help key volunteers to grow spiritually and serve well.
- Assist leaders in recruiting volunteers using biblical principles.
- Ensure volunteer screening for children's safety.

Administrative overseer

A pastor must ensure all church ministries operate smoothly and maintain unity with one another.

In this role a pastor would be responsible for the following:

- Guide the commander to create club policies consistent with church policies.
- Provide input to the commander regarding Awana ministry goals.
- Ensure the Awana ministry fits into the church's philosophy of children's and youth ministry.
- Ensure the Awana ministry calendar coordinates with other ministry calendars in the church.
- Approve the Awana ministry budget.

Communication facilitator

A pastor is the communication link between a church's leadership team, church staff and Awana commander. A pastor also communicates to the congregation regarding the importance Awana clubs play in a church's children's and youth ministry.

Role responsibilities include the following:

- Offer praise and prayer needs of the Awana ministry to the congregation.
- Deliver Large Group Time message on occasion.
- Communicate with parents regarding the importance of teaching their children spiritual lessons and values.
- Share church needs with the local Awana missionary.

Qualifications

A church that has an Awana club will have a pastor who has the following qualifications:

- Have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior.
- Be in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Have a desire for children and youth to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Demonstrate leadership abilities.

Time Commitment

The time required will vary from week to week.

Role Description – Commander

An Awana commander, under the leadership of a pastor, oversees the Awana ministry in his or her church. He or she provides direction, enthusiasm, leadership and support for Awana directors, leaders, clubbers and parents. He or she, along with the pastor, is the communication link between the church staff and the Awana ministry.

Roles and Responsibilities

A commander is responsible for the overall club operation in a local church. He or she will perform the duties and responsibilities included in this role description.

Awana ministry advocate

A commander has the lead influence over a club's passion, commitment and accuracy in evangelizing and discipling children and youth. He or she also can influence the priority of the Awana ministry in the church.

Responsibilities within this role are the following:

- Ensure that the gospel is presented regularly, accurately and clearly.
- Communicate passion and vision to Awana leaders, parents, church leadership and the congregation.
- Communicate ministry needs to church staff and request resources, facilities and equipment to support the ministry.
- Work with church staff to help achieve evangelism and discipleship goals of the church.
- Work with church staff to integrate the Awana ministry with other ministries.

Shepherd

The success of an Awana ministry depends largely on a commander's ability to recruit and shepherd volunteers. A commander sets an example by shepherding directors who, in turn, shepherd leaders. Shepherding is Christlike leadership that involves motivating, developing, recruiting and training.

A shepherd is responsible to do the following:

- Regularly practice disciplines of Christian living to ensure a growing, personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Encourage spiritual growth in others.
- Motivate volunteers through vision casting, recognition and team building.
- Provide training opportunities for leaders to grow spiritually and serve excellently.
- Recruit and select volunteers using biblical principles.
- Develop leaders to assume greater ministry responsibilities.
- Direct compliance with a church's child protection policies and procedures.

Administrator

A commander oversees administrative functions to ensure clubs run smoothly. While some tasks may be delegated, a commander ultimately is accountable to a church's staff for the Awana ministry.

A commander must do or ensure the following administrative responsibilities:

- Establish, communicate and implement administrative club policies.
- Complete and submit Awana annual registration renewal paperwork.
- Prepare budgets and assure good stewardship within a church's Awana clubs.
- Coordinate club calendars and integrate them with a church's calendar.
- Schedule club night speakers.
- Plan and promote leadership dedication ceremony and the award program.

Leader

A commander must lead his team to success.

Leadership is required in the following ways:

- Establish annual ministry goals using the Ten Standards of Excellence.
- Oversee implementation of the Ten Standards of Excellence.
- Assess clubs performance to help club leadership improve its performance and club operation.
- Pray for clubbers, leaders and parents on a regular basis, and encourage all leaders to do the same.
- Discipline clubbers.

Communicator

A commander is the main communication link between a church's staff and club leadership. He or she also communicates with clubbers, parents, community members and the local Awana missionary.

Some responsibilities within this role are the following:

- Promote and publicize local, regional and national Awana events and ministry opportunities and coordinate club participation in these events.
- Promote and publicize the Awana club ministry to the church and community to generate awareness and increase participation.
- Meet with church staff to report praise and prayer needs.
- Speak at club occasionally.

Qualifications

An Awana commander must demonstrate the following:

- Trust in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior.
- Growth in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Passion for children and youth coming to know, love and serve our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Leadership abilities.
- Effective communication skills in a large group setting and one-on-one.

Time Commitment

Five-seven hours per week.

Role Description – Director

An Awana director oversees one club program. He or she provides guidance and direction to leaders under his/her leadership. A director ensures integration of the clubs with other Awana clubs and church ministries.

Roles and Responsibilities

A director's responsibilities fall into four roles:

Leader

A director, under the guidance of a commander, leads his or her club leaders to care for children so they can come to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Leadership responsibilities include the following:

- Work to achieve individual club goals.
- Evaluate club to measure goals achievement.
- Maintain discipline.
- Conduct regular leader meetings centered on Scripture.
- Work with the commander to solve problems.
- Model Christlike leadership.

Administrator

A director is responsible for week-to-week operations of an individual club. He or she has the greatest influence on the overall success of how a club functions.

A director must be able to do the following:

- Work with the commander to ensure club activities integrate with other club and church activities.
- Plan club theme nights and organize the club calendar.
- Enforce compliance with church and club policy, including child protection standards of conduct.
- Ensure accurate club records.
- Develop and oversee check-in and checkout procedures.
- Manage club supply inventory.
- Implement Ten Standards of Excellence as directed by church staff or commander.
- Work with the commander to complete annual club budget.
- Ensure necessary equipment availability.
- Recruit Large Group Time speakers.
- Know the contents of the handbooks in order to provide clubbers needed information.

Shepherd

Another responsibility of a director is to shepherd his or her leaders and help transform them from mechanical leaders into spiritual leaders. Shepherding also is a necessary component of sustaining volunteers in a ministry.

In a shepherding role, directors must be able to do the following:

- Recruit leaders.
- Motivate leaders.
- Pray with and for leaders and clubbers.
- Assist leaders in their efforts to communicate the gospel to clubbers and parents.
- Assist leaders during Handbook Time.
- Establish and maintain ongoing leader training.

Communicator

The most visible responsibility of a director is communication. Connecting with leaders and clubbers' parents is a vital part of a director's responsibility.

Some responsibilities are the following:

- Communicate with parents regarding club events, policies and activities.
- Communicate with leaders about local, regional and national events.
- Facilitate Large Group Time and emcee activities.
- Distribute awards to clubbers.
- Encourage clubbers during all segments of a club night.
- Participate in worship time with clubbers.
- Share the gospel.
- Ensure promotion and publicity to the church and community.
- Motivate leaders and clubbers.

Qualifications

- Have trusted in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior.
- Be in a growing relationship with Christ.
- Passion for children and youth coming to know, love and serve Jesus.
- Demonstrate leadership abilities.
- Communicate effectively one-on-one as well as to large groups.

Time Commitment

Five-seven hours average per week.

Role Description – Leader

A leader is a clubber's main Awana contact. Leaders specifically are responsible to lead clubbers in Handbook Time; however, leaders also are in leadership roles during the other club segments. These adults and Leaders-in-Training (LITs) have the greatest opportunity – and responsibility – to affect lives of children for eternity.

Role and Responsibilities

A leader has one main role – to lead clubbers. Specific responsibilities during each club segment are included in this document.

Check-in/Opening ceremony

Opening ceremony includes a flag ceremony and general announcements.

Some ways a leader may help during this time include:

- Help set up.
- Assist with check-in.
- Greet clubbers by name.
- Participate in pre-club and opening ceremony activities.
- Discipline clubbers.

Large Group Time

Large Group Time should be just as fun as Game Time. This is time for leaders to help clubbers worship the Lord with enthusiasm and hear the gospel in a large group setting.

Leaders can help clubbers in the following ways:

- Participate in large group activities.
- Discipline clubbers.
- Assist director as needed.
- Counsel clubbers who respond to invitations.

Handbook Time

During Handbook Time clubbers have the opportunity to recite sections and receive credit for their efforts. This is also the best opportunity for leaders to develop relationships with clubbers. This small group time can change a clubber's life.

During this time, leaders should:

- Pray with the children.
- Teach spiritual truths.
- Pass sections.
- Enforce standards to pass sections.
- Maintain discipline.
- Keep records.

Game Time

Game Time draws kids to Awana because the kids want to have fun. Fast paced, exciting and fun are three words to describe Game Time.

Leaders participate in the excitement in the following ways:

- Organize teams and maintain order.
- Support the game director.
- Ensure clubber participation.
- Explain game rules.
- Model good sportsmanship.

Closing Ceremony and Checkout

Some clubs bring all the groups together at the end of club for a final word of encouragement. Try to take some time to talk with clubber's parents when they pick up their children. Encourage parents to review the evening's lesson throughout the week – this helps parents and clubbers grow spiritually.

Expectations for leaders for this time period include:

- Greet parents and talk to them about their children.
- Assist in discipline.
- Assist the director.

Leading a clubber to Christ

The prayer of Awana is to see every child come to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. To this end, the gospel should be presented regularly, resulting in clubbers asking leaders questions and putting their trust in Jesus Christ. A leader must know and be able to clearly present the gospel to children.

Responsibilities, therefore, of every club leader are the following:

- Be prepared to share their testimony.
- Be able to share the gospel in age-appropriate language.
- Look for opportunities to explain the gospel and invite clubbers to trust in Jesus.

Qualifications

A leader needs to be qualified in the following ways:

- Have trusted in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior.
- Be growing in relationship with Christ.
- Be walking with the Lord.
- Be in compliance with the requirements of leadership in his or her church.
- Demonstrate an attitude that is attractive to kids.

Time Requirements

Three-four hours per week.

Role Description – Game Director

A game director bears a significant responsibility because Game Time is a primary reason many clubbers come and return to club. Children have a great spirit for fun and the game director is the hero of fun in an Awana ministry. If Game Time is fun, kids will come week after week and be exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Role and Responsibilities

A game director's role is to execute Game Time. Within that role a game director has several responsibilities.

Planning

After prayer, planning is a game director's number-one priority. Whether a club has five or 500 children, games cannot be spontaneous and unstructured without resulting in chaos and tears.

Planning includes the following:

- Choose age-appropriate games.
- Choose a variety of games.
- Know and be able to provide clear instructions.
- Prepare equipment.
- Support club themes and activities when possible.

Implementing Games

An exciting Game Time is a hallmark of Awana. Simple, fast moving games make Game Time fun for everyone. A good rule of thumb is not to play a game that takes longer to explain than it does to play.

Game director responsibilities are listed below:

- Ensure necessary equipment is available.
- Communicate and demonstrate game rules to leaders and clubbers.
- Stagger games so everyone has a chance to excel.
- Maintain proper discipline.
- Model good sportsmanship.
- Lead games.
- Maintain equipment.
- Request equipment purchases.

Coaching

Involving clubbers in local and regional Awana events is a great way to expose kids to other Awana clubbers. It also can be a tremendous team building activity within a club and helps identify future leaders.

Responsibilities are the following:

- Coordinate with commander and directors.
- Prepare clubbers for competition.
- Attend regional coaches meetings.
- Help commander and directors choose coaches.

Qualifications

Game directors must meet the following qualifications:

- Have trusted in Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior.
- Be growing in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Express enthusiasm in his or her role.
- Demonstrate good communication skills with leaders and clubbers.

Time Commitment

Three-four hours per week, plus additional weekends for regional activities.

Role Description - Secretary

Records and details help keep clubs operating smoothly. A club secretary provides organization to the Christ-centered fun of clubs.

Role and Responsibilities

A club secretary's role is to serve leaders, directors, commanders, children, parents and the church through organization. He or she maintains records about clubbers' attendance and achievement, provides information for parents and is aware of inventory needs for club leaders and church staff.

Specific responsibilities are the following:

Attendance

- Maintain attendance records.
- Collect and record dues.
- Provide check-in and checkout direction.

Achievement

- Keep nightly achievement records.
- Handbook points.
- Game Time points.
- Tally scores to determine winning team each evening.
- Maintain permanent achievement records.
- Assist director in award presentation.

Materials

- Tracks club material inventory.
- Compile, place and receive product orders.
- Prepare awards for distribution.

Qualifications

Secretaries must meet the following qualifications:

- Have trusted Jesus Christ as his or her personal Savior.
- Be growing in his or her relationship with the Lord.
- Display solid organizational skills.
- Communicate well with others.

Time Commitment

Four-five hours average per week.



Leaders In Training

A general overview



One of the five principles of Awana is student leadership. The idea is to help plug students into leadership as soon as they are ready to serve. Ready to serve, however, is more than just the willingness to do it; ready also means capable and prepared.

Studying and memorizing God's Word is vital for growth. However, it is not enough by itself. All Christians ought to serve as their maturity, both spiritual and developmental, allows. Your church likely has several different opportunities for middle-school and high-school students to serve. For those students who are gifted and interested in working with children, you might consider using them as leaders-in-training (LITs) in your Awana Clubs. LITs are middle-school and high-school youth who invest back into the Awana ministry and work as leaders with younger children.

While there are many different ways you can use LITs in your church, we will provide you with some recommended guidelines. But ultimately, it is the responsibility of you, your leadership, and your church to determine how to best use these student leaders. There are some incredible opportunities (as well as some unique challenges) to be aware of when using LITs in your church's Awana ministry.

You should have a unique set of guidelines for youth serving in Awana. The guidelines you use are up to you, but they should be consistent. Students have a lot of demands on their time and are still developing skills for setting priorities, so it is a good idea to have some concrete expectations to which LITs agree before they start serving. Also, your church must consider its child protection policies and procedures. You cannot screen youth as you would adult leaders, but you must train them and hold them accountable to the child protection policies of the church.

Here are some things you might find helpful in establishing your program:

Role and Responsibilities

The principal role of an LIT is to assist the adult leader in all aspects of club life, particularly learning and developing evangelistic and church life skills. Specific responsibilities are shared with adult leaders. It is strongly urged that an LIT is never left alone with children. A wonderful place for an LIT to begin serving is in Cubbies or Sparks.

Expectations of an LIT

- * An LIT must complete Awana Basic Training – both orientation and his/her specific role.

- * An LIT must be trained in your church's child protection program.

- * An LIT must be ready to encourage the children he/she serves.

- * An LIT must be very careful in how he/she responds to children. He/she must avoid physical horseplay, never speak or act out in anger, and never violate a child's privacy.

- * An LIT must be faithful to attend all planning sessions and club nights.

- * Schedule a regular meeting time for the LIT with the Awana commander, youth group leader, or other LIT mentor.

Qualifications

- * Must have trusted Jesus Christ as his/her personal Savior. Believe that Jesus Christ's death on the cross alone forgives his/her sins.
- * Must be growing in his or her relationship with Christ.
- * Must be walking with the Lord.
- * Must be in compliance with the requirements of leadership in his/her church.
- * Must demonstrate an attitude that is attractive to kids.
- * Must be actively involved in the youth ministries of the church. (Serving in Awana is not an excuse to stop participating in the ministries designed to reach and disciple teens.)

Another option might be to use your students to do some specialized leading. In this case you would use these students in limited roles rather than as all-around leaders. This allows them to learn a specific skill or ministry and all the responsibilities that come along with it. It is rarely a good idea, though, to place student leaders in a position where they would supervise adults.

The LIT program in your church should be just that, in your church. Use some of these guidelines to help you develop a system that helps your students develop into leaders for both the present and the future. Again, these are simply suggestions and encouragement from us to you. Your church is responsible for determining the specifics of the program and how it will be implemented in your ministry.

For more principles on building a healthy youth ministry, check out 24-7 Ministries' *Who, Me?* and *Now What?* resources at www.24-7ministries.org.