Providing a Safe Haven for Kids

This year, nearly a million cases of child abuse will be reported in the United States. Tragically, thousands of those cases will occur within the walls of a church building.

Does your church have specific child protection policies and practices in place? Are your children's and youth workers screened? Are children's and youth workers regularly trained in child protection policies, and are they well supervised?

It shouldn't hurt to be a child – especially at church!

BASIC CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

1. Two Adult Rule – A minimum of two adults are required in attendance during all Awana events and activities.

2. No Private One-on-One Contact – Private one-on-one contact between adults and children or youth is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, the meeting is to be conducted in the clear view of others, always utilizing the rule that women counsel girls and men counsel boys.

3. Respect of Privacy – Adults must respect the privacy of children and youth in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

4. Camp Directors are encouraged to have separate shower and latrine facilities for males and females. When separate facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use must be scheduled and posted for showers.

5. Adults and children or youth of the same sex may occupy dormitory or single-room accommodations, provided there is a minimum of four children or youth. Any adults staying with children must be CPP trained.

6. Male and female leaders require separate sleeping facilities. Married couples may share the same quarters if appropriate facilities are available.

7. No Secret Organization – Awana Clubs International does not recognize any secret organization as part of its ministry programs or activities. All aspects of the Awana Clubs International ministry are open to observation by parents and missionaries.

8. Appropriate Attire – Proper clothing for activities is required. For example, skinny-dipping is not appropriate as part of camping.

9. Constructive Discipline – Discipline used during Awana approved events and activities must be constructive and reflect the values of ACI. Corporal punishment is never permitted.

10. Hazing Prohibited – Hazing and initiations are prohibited and may never be included as part of any Awana event or activity.

11. No "pairing off" at camp – Children and youth must remain in larger groups and are not be allowed to pair off and go wandering around.

Appropriate Conduct, Touching and Contact – Kids Fifth Grade and Younger

1.0 General	
APPROPRIATE	**INAPPROPRIATE**
1.1 Minimum of two unrelated adults in line of sight or close proximity to each other at all times when involved with children's activity.	1.2 Adults alone with a child.
1.3 Another adult present or involved in any contact with child of same or opposite sex; no private one-on-one meeting or contact with child is permitted.	1.4 Meeting, conference, travel or other activity with same or opposite sex minor without supervision or witness.
1.5 Proper number of adults-to-participant ratio for the age of the children and the activity. One adult to 4 - 6 children are recommended for this age group.	1.6 Inadequate number of volunteers and staff for the activity.
1.7 Respecting the privacy of children in bathroom situations and intruding only to the extent necessary for assistance requested by the child or for health or safety reasons.	1.8 Entering the bathroom with a child that doesn't need assistance or is not in any peril.
2.0 Discipline	
APPROPRIATE	**INAPPROPRIATE**
2.1 Praising and encouraging good behavior.	2.2 Corporal punishment; treatment that is demeaning or intended to embarrass or harass the recipient
2.3 A firm yet gentle voice addressing the "offense". Making eye contact with the child when delivering instructions.	2.4 Any words or tone that would cause a child to think he or she, rather than a specific behavior, is the "problem". 2.4.1 Any words that could cause feelings of condemnation or shame in a child about any aspect of their person, including racial or ethnic comments.
2.5 Age appropriate time outs (about 1 minute per age of the child) in the "Timeout Chair." Confidential parental discussion when necessary.	2.6 Any physical disciplinary contact, such as grabbing the child, unless the child or others are in immediate danger.

2.7 If these methods are unsuccessful, call your supervisor to handle the situation. Otherwise, the unwanted behavior may be reinforced and draw attention away from the rest of the group.	
3.0 Physical Contact	
APPROPRIATE	**INAPPROPRIATE**
3.1 Non-demanding, gentle touch of the shoulder, hand, arm, head, or back.	3.2 Kissing; demanding hugs and/or kisses; opposite sex piggy-back rides.
3.3 Sitting the child on one knee (only appropriate at preschool or kindergarten level).	3.4 Sitting the child in center of the lap; sitting the child between the legs; sitting a child above age 6 on the lap - one or both legs.
3.5 Physical contact which expresses affirmation and is not done for the satisfaction or pleasure of the adult.	3.6 Touching chest, genital area, upper legs, buttocks, stomach; seductiveness or suggestive contact
3.7 Shoulder to shoulder hug expressing support or congratulations.	3.8 Full, front-of-the-body hug.

4.0 HUGS — When a child asks for a hug, it shows there is a relational connection between the two people and that the child has an obvious trust in the adult. The main point about giving hugs is that they need to be mutual. If there is any hesitation or resistance from the young person, the hug doesn't happen.

5.0 LAP SITTING — Children in first grade or above do not sit on the lap of an adult. Children can sit beside the adult on the chair or floor. Children kindergarten-age and younger may want or need the security of being held. If a child of this age positions himself/herself on a lap, gently pick the child up by the waist and set the child on one knee. This also leaves the other knee open for the next child that may come along. At no time will a child sit in the center of a lap or between the legs, regardless of the gender of the adult.

6.0 BATHROOM PROCEDURES — Permission to use the bathroom needs be requested by children. An adult needs wait outside the bathroom door in plain view of others after the adult has checked to see if any adults are already in the bathroom. If the bathroom has private stalls and no open urinals and there is an adult using the bathroom, the adult should be asked to leave as soon as possible so the child can use the bathroom in private. For situations in which children require assistance (very young children or children with medical conditions), an adult and assistant of the same sex as the child, if possible, would always be present.

7.0 CONTACT OUTSIDE USUAL MINISTRY FUNCTIONS — Generally there is no contact of adults with minors outside the normal ministry function if they are younger than 5th grade. An exception to this can be made ahead of time with agreement of the child's parents. An example of this would be a leader who wants to telephone his or her clubbers. Adults do not contact children younger than 5th grade via electronic means. Leaders are not advised to pick up or drop off younger children unless it is prearranged with the parents and there are two adults present with the children at all times.

Awana Standards of Conduct and Contact: Youth Sixth Grade and Above

1.0 Two Adult Rule – A minimum of two adults is required in attendance during all Awana Clubs International sponsored activities and events, and these two adults must be CP trained. Co-ed groups require co-ed chaperones.

2.0 No Private One-on-One Contact – Private one-on-one contact between an adult and child is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, the meeting is to be conducted in the clear view of others.

3.0 Respect of Privacy – Adult leaders must respect the privacy of youth in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require some other action. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations.

4.0 Accommodations –
4.1 Summit Regional Teams – Youth of the same sex will stay in motel rooms separate from adults.

4.2 Church Teams – ACI recommends that church teams abide by the same rules as the regional team accommodations (see #4.1). If a church team varies from this standard, they agree to indemnify and hold Awana Clubs International harmless for any and all claims that may arise from this choice.

4.3 Camp – Two adult counselors are recommended for each cabin. This is protection for the camper as well as the volunteer. It is recommended that counselors plan activities with counselors from other cabins. Mix it up, so your cabin does not always do activities with the same other cabin. Conduct devotions and other activities in plain view of other counselors. If you want to go on a hike, not only do you ask another counselor and cabin to go with your cabin, but also check and see if there is a third adult available to go with the two cabins. That way, if there is an emergency, the extra adult can return to camp for help. Remember to follow the other standards of conduct listed here for camp, especially respecting the privacy of campers and counselors. Also, encourage campers to respect the privacy of others and treat each other kindly.

5.0 Male and female leaders require separate sleeping accommodations, unless they are married.

6.0 No Secret Organization – Awana Clubs International does not recognize any secret organization as part of its ministry programs or activities. All aspects of the Awana Clubs International ministry are open to observation by parents and missionaries.

7.0 Appropriate Modest Attire – Proper clothing is required for all activities. Remember, as an Awana Clubs International employee or volunteer, you are a testimony to the students and all those with whom you come into contact.

8.0 Constructive Discipline – Discipline used during ACI-approved events and activities must be constructive and reflect the values of Awana Clubs International. Corporal punishment is never permitted.

9.0 Hazing Prohibited – Hazing and initiations are prohibited and may never be included as part of any Awana Clubs International event or activity.

10.0 Driving and Riding in Vehicles – Whenever possible the Two Adult Rule must be followed when transporting young people. If two adults are not available, then several young people must

be in the car. Before transporting young people, the adult must have a signed permission slip from the parent(s). Also, the parent(s) must have a clear understanding of (1) pick up and drop off times, (2) the intended destination and purpose of the trip and (3) the cell phone and/or pager number of the adult driver.

11.0 One-on-One Meetings between an Adult and a Young Person – One-on-one meetings must take place in plain view of another adult. The exception to this is when, prior to the meeting, written parental permission is given, all of the guidelines in Section 11.0 of this document are followed, the one-on-one contact is between an adult that is the same sex of the young person, and all of the instructions the parent(s) may give are followed.

12.0 Day Events or Activities – All applicable guidelines in Sections 10.0 and 11.0 of this document must be followed for day events, as well as Awana Clubs International Basic Standards of Conduct. A proper adult to young person and male and female adult ratio is required. Adults have the responsibility to supervise their group members where opportunities abound to elude the watchful eye of the chaperones. Care must be taken as necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the students, others and property.