

Loving Your Clubbers With Discipline

What does discipline mean? To disciple, teach, or mold

There are two types of discipline -

- Negative - punishment for misbehavior
- Positive - rewards for correct behavior

Positive discipline is more effective in Awana setting. How do you accomplish this?

- 5 count for group situations
- Positive points for teams having desired behavior
- Other age appropriate rewards - stickers, stamps, verbal praise, marble jar, baseball cards, candy if good all night, etc

Use 3 count for individual clubbers - 3 strikes and you are out

Most Discipline problems can be avoided - look for the underlying causes throughout the club night. Often these 4 key things can eliminate most discipline problems.

1. Not starting on time - this allows pre-club chaos and makes the clubbers harder to control the rest of the Awana time
SOLUTION: ask leaders to be there 15 minutes before the clubbers, have a pre-club activity such as word searches, organized game, etc
2. Lack of planning - this shows up in all club areas and usually results in clubbers being out of control. If you don't have a plan for the clubbers, they will come up with a plan.
SOLUTION: Plan! Know who is responsible for each segment of club, have time fillers available like the clap game, Bible drills, Sparky says, etc, plan out transitions so everyone isn't trying to use the same hallway at the same time, etc
3. Clubbers needs aren't being met - thirsty clubbers may be disruptive during council time, too many bodies in a room, too many distraction, etc.
SOLUTION: Be sensitive to the clubbers and what their needs are
4. Lack of clear, consistent expectations - clubbers will live up to your expectations. Often, they don't know what the expectations are, or they change every week.
SOLUTION: Have a clearly defined set of rules that all leaders are responsible to enforce. Communicate these to the clubbers and parents.

In addition, there are specific frustrations and challenges with each club night segment. How do you combat these?

1. Opening ceremony is chaotic - SOLUTION: leaders should be greeting "their" clubbers, have a group activity
2. Handbook time is nonproductive and noisy - SOLUTION: set noise level expectation, have activities for clubbers to work on when finished with sections, leaders are responsible for "their" clubbers, make it important to be prepared with books and sections by having extra incentives, work at positive discipline
3. Council Time is just an exercise in frustration - SOLUTION: think through seating arrangements - leaders should sit with clubbers, have assigned places for teams and reward quiet teams, make the council time fit the attentions span of the clubbers, make it interesting to the clubbers!
4. Game time is bedlam and mayhem - SOLUTION: Game director needs to set expectations and leaders should help enforce, leaders should be interacting with clubbers and helping with crowd control by reminding the clubbers to listen, pay attention, be fair, take turns, etc

Remember, in order for clubbers to change their behavior you need to give them a reason to do so.

1. Show logical consequences (gain more game time etc)
2. earn nightly rewards through cooperation
3. earn team points
4. praise
5. more fun for all

In conclusion, we need to remember that we as leaders are the example. Is our attitude worth imitating? We also must expect the club to be orderly and disciplined. If we want the clubbers to respect us, we have to respect them. Lastly, remember the p's - pray and prior planning prevents poor performance!