

Re-Opening Awana Club



Covid-19 season will end. We have been looking on social media, the internet, the news, and other sources for information. There is not too much out there (but coming fast), on re-opening. State and Federal Governments are building a plan to open gradually.

An excellent article recently discovered is on Ken Braddy's Blog site titled "**24 Questions Your Church Should Answer Before People Return**" (<https://kenbraddy.com/2020/04/18/20-questions-your-church-should-answer-before-people-return/>) This is great for your church and ministries in general. But what about your Awana Club directly? Here are some tried and true concepts as well as a few new ones to consider before you re-open.

When doors are opened will you just pick up where you left off?

No. Take time to clean: church, kitchen, offices, bathrooms, doorknobs, children's wing, toys, cribs, windows, etc. Other options: Paint, repair, upgrade your children's areas. This will encourage celebration and energy. Remember that when you re-open, new people will be visiting. Make your new impression your best impression.

NEW Normal, New Procedures: What if the *Phase 1* return has a **100-person limit** with *social distancing*? Your Club may have 80 kids, so you may think you are "out of the woods". But, don't forget there may be: Support Groups, Mid-Week Services, Bible Studies, Choir, Band/Orchestra Practice, etc. You may have over 100 people you normally don't see. Don't forget to consider your leaders and visitors in the mix.

Consider temporarily moving parts of Awana or other ministries to another night to avoid over-crowding. Now may be a good time (and a difficult decision) to trim or postpone less productive ministries.

Social Distancing - *Not going to happen with kids.* For their own good, rethink how they make contact with each other – and you.

- Rearrange your Rooms with additional distance – Clean afterwards.
- Game Tim: Consider Games that don't cause contact (races, relays, Simon Says, etc.) Clean all game equipment after use.
 - Idea: Foam Pipe insulators cut to one - foot lengths. Use the sticks to High Five.
- Teach affectionate kids proper spacing (But assure them that you still love them.) Review Child Protection Policies.
- **Enforce Sick Policies** with Parents (including allergy season sloppy noses). Some parents will get right back into the habit that Awana or any Children's Ministry is a free baby-sitting service and deliver their kids to you as fast as possible. Make sure parents understand the health hazard potential.
- Teach children to use hand sanitizer properly (if you can get it).
- **What are the schools going to do?** Emulate their policies so the kids have consistency.

Club Return Night: This is a celebration time for everyone. But some suggestions would be:

- Pre-brief Leaders so all are on the same page. The remainder of the season will be very unusual.
- Updates and schedule for the evening – There will be changes in your church that will affect expectations!
- (Check your church calendar too if extending the Awana year).
- Review the general rules with the kids on first night of the year (devotion, 5 count, potty breaks, ...)
- Make the first night a social time, not a theme night which could cause confusion/disappointment. Just PARTY!!!
- Update Records to handbooks – hope they match.

These are just some ideas. Be ready when the doors open, new people visit, and many celebrations. Share your ideas. We'd love to help and encourage you.