



# LIFE NEWS

## AWANA Reimagined

by Gordon Lanpher  
Children's Pastor

[parksidevisalia.org](http://parksidevisalia.org)



There are many things that come to mind when I say AWANA. Some people have great memories of saying verses every Wednesday night... others remember struggling to even get one verse memorized in two weeks. Some kids remember the infamous game square, and others can't stop singing the Sparks song (We are Sparks for Jesus....). Still many of you have no idea what I am talking about when I say the word AWANA.

AWANA is an international organization that spans lots of countries and denominations. It is known for its mid-week discipleship ministry to children (although it has more components than that). This discipleship program incorporates a large group time (council time), where they get teaching from an adult. It has a game time where fun and relationship-building takes place. Finally, it has small groups, which are called "handbook time." This is where an adult and a few other kids dive deep into God's Word through study and memorization. This study of God's Word allows them to be transformed.

AWANA has been around for decades. Yet, it continues to want to invest in kids in the ways they do best. This is largely why, they have gone to a "move together" model. This means that kids in most clubs are learning the same verses each week. There are slightly fewer verses, but they are doing deeper study of them and allowing more application opportunities. AWANA leadership reimagined how to take the best of what they were doing and make it even better.

With this reimagining of how to best disciple children, they now call it the "3 B's" which are belonging, believing,

and becoming. In practice, **Belong** looks like a "highly relational ministry from caring and loving adults." Meaning that when children show up to AWANA, they have adults who want to be with them and champion them. **Believe** means a "deeply scriptural ministry rooted in the Gospel and the truth of God's Word, helping kids know, love, and serve Jesus Christ." In other words, they know the deep life changing truths of the Bible. Finally, **Become** means "experiential ministry designed to help kids navigate a changing culture, experience God's presence, and walk in the ways of Jesus." It's not just Bible trivia or fun stories that don't mean anything. **Become** is about learning and equipping kids to face the challenges of their daily lives.

### ***This year, AWANA is starting on September 7th!***

We offer this relational discipleship ministry for almost two hours every Wednesday from September to mid-May. You can know that your child is being equipped well. Every month we offer at least one family dinner where you don't have to cook and can just come before club. **New this year, we are offering for the first time ever, Puggles!** Puggles is designed for two year old's turning three this school year. We would love to have you join us!

**Registration is open at:**  
[www.parksidevisalia.twotimtwo.com/site/index](http://www.parksidevisalia.twotimtwo.com/site/index)



**"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."  
2 Timothy 2:15**