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INTRODUCTION TO CUBBIES

We welcome you to the exciting world of Awana Clubs Cubbies®. Get ready for the boundless energy, curious questions, teachable hearts and simple faith of the preschoolers in your club. As you get to know them, you will share in their love, wonder and silliness. You may also share in their sorrow over a lost toy or a parting with Mom or Dad at the door. These little ones will surely keep you on your toes — and on your knees in prayer! But here's the most exciting part: you will witness God's work firsthand in their lives and yours.

WHAT IS CUBBIES?

Cubbies is a weekly Awana® club designed for children who are in the two years prior to entering kindergarten. The Cubbies program features Scripture memorization and age-appropriate, hands-on Bible learning in a setting that fosters love and respect for God. Parents are central in Cubbies! The Cubbies handbooks encourage and equip parents to actively nurture their child spiritually. At club, Cubbies leaders reinforce the teaching parents do in the home. In this way, parents and club leaders work as a team to spiritually nurture Cubbies children.

THE PURPOSE OF CUBBIES

As preschoolers take the first steps in their walk with God, they form core beliefs and attitudes that can shape their faith for years to come. Cubbies builds a foundation of faith in preschoolers (3- to 5-year-olds) by nurturing their respect for God, His Son and His Word.

A child's spiritual journey must start with a respect for the awesomeness and authority of God. Without this initial respect for God and His standards, a child cannot understand the need for salvation or make wise life choices.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow His precepts have good understanding ... (Psalm 111:10)

By fear, the psalmist did not mean a timid, shrinking kind of fear, but rather an awe of God's greatness and holiness, resulting in humble, reverent obedience. Because we respect God, we want to love Him and do His will.

The Cubbies curriculum teaches respect for God, His Son and His Word in several important ways:

**It is God-focused.** Each lesson and unit highlights a key aspect of God's character (such as His love, faithfulness or power). Since Cubbies learn best through stories, the character trait is usually presented through a Bible story. In Cubbies, we emphasize that all stories from the Bible are true and not make-believe. God teaches us about Himself as we see Him relate to real people in real, historical settings.

**It is Christ-centered.** God's Son, Jesus Christ, is the cornerstone of Cubbies club. Christ is the only way to the Father (John 14:6) and the central message of the Scriptures (Luke 24:27). From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible unfolds God's plan to redeem the world from sin through the work of His promised Savior. Each club year, the first four lessons in Cubbies (Bear Hugs A, B, 1 and 2) explain the gospel in a simple way. The rest of the lessons cover key Old and New Testament Bible stories. The teacher connects Bible stories, even the Old Testament ones, to Christ. For example, when teaching the story of Noah and the ark, the teacher explains that just as God promised to save Noah and his family from the flood (the punishment for sin), God has promised to save us from the punishment for sin through His Son, Jesus Christ. Yes, Christ is the cornerstone of Cubbies club!
Introduction to Cubbies AppleSeed Teaching Plans

It is built on the Bible.
We show respect for God by memorizing and obeying what He says. Each week, Cubbies memorize a Bible verse or a Bible-based Core Truth. (Core Truths are explained later in this introduction.) Leaders and parents are urged to open the Bible when they are teaching, whether they are paraphrasing or reading verses directly. We also recommend showing Cubbies where their memory verse is found in the Bible. From an early age, Cubbies must learn that the Bible is different from any other book. God talks to us through the Bible, and all His Words are true. The Cubbies program helps children respect and treasure God's Word.

It prioritizes the home.
The Bible designates parents as the primary spiritual teachers of their children (see, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Proverbs 6:20-23 and Ephesians 6:4). Cubbies probably won't gain a foundational respect for God through two hours a week at club. Instead, most of their learning about God will happen indirectly as they watch the lifestyle and attitudes of their parents or guardians, the people they see every day. The Cubbies program makes every effort to motivate and equip parents to be strong biblical role models and teachers. Cubbies leaders see their role as reinforcing the teaching parents do in the home; however, leaders also recognize that the Cubbies who do not come from Christian homes (or who have uninvolved parents) will need extra support and attention.

It promotes loving, respectful relationships.
To learn respect for God, Cubbies must experience an environment of respect and see respectfulness modeled by the people who take care of them. Leaders and parents must be loving authority figures who show Cubbies how to respect not only God but other authority figures, peers and even the church building and the grounds. Love and teaching respect go hand-in-hand, because when Cubbies fall short (as we all do) they can rest in the truth that we love them no matter what! Pray that Cubbies know and feel God’s love through all of your words and actions.

Nurturing respect for God is a big job. Leaders and parents must pray daily, asking for God to give them wisdom (and patience) as they convey his awesomeness and authority to impressionable preschool children.

WHO’S WHO IN CUBBIES

The Awana commander oversees Cubbies and other Awana clubs in your church.

The Cubbies director leads and manages the Cubbies club, ministering primarily to Cubbies leaders. Read the Cubbies Director Role Book for detailed information.

Cubbies leaders serve in various aspects of the club, ministering primarily to Cubbies and their parents. Read the Cubbies Leader Role Book for detailed information.

The Secretary Role Book and Game Director Role Book may also be helpful resources.
Thank you for purchasing the Cubbies AppleSeed Teaching Plans. If you have not already done so, you will need to purchase the Cubbies AppleSeed Teaching Cards as visuals to accompany your lessons. These colorfully illustrated cards are also available in digital format to use with a projector.

Consult the Awana Ministry Catalog or visit awana.org to order these core materials for your Cubbies and their families.

**NOTE:** Always order extra supplies. Preschoolers are known to misplace items, and you may have newcomers after the first week of club.

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**CORE CUBBIES MATERIALS**

**Apple Acres Entrance Booklet**
Order one for each Cubbie. Both first- and second-year Cubbies complete this at the beginning of each new club year. Visitors must complete this booklet before receiving a handbook.

**Parent Welcome Booklet**
Order one for each Cubbies family. This booklet introduces parents to the vision of Awana and the various Awana programs for kids and teens (ages 2 to 18).

**AppleSeed Handbook**
Order one for each Cubbie. Cubbies all work in the same handbook at the same pace. Handbooks alternate each year, so if Cubbies complete the AppleSeed handbook this year, they will complete the HoneyComb handbook next year.

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**CUBBIES UNIFORM AND AWARDS**

Rewards are biblical and motivating, but they can easily become a distraction or a source of competition among kids. When Cubbies memorize a verse, affirm the spiritual value of what they are doing: They are showing love and obedience to God. They are learning important truths that will help them every day. Show equal excitement about every child’s progress. Never compare children to each other.

After completing the Apple Acres entrance booklet and the AppleSeed Trail in the handbook, Cubbies who consistently complete Bear Hugs will receive an award about every four weeks. Consult the Cubbies Director Role Book or Cubbies Leader Role Book for details on the Cubbies awards and award system. The resource CD for the AppleSeed Teaching Plans includes a diagram of a Cubbies vest and award emblems for your reference. If you find that many parents do not sew on the awards, use the adhesive Badge Magic® Sheets available in the Awana Ministry Catalog or give parents directions for ironing on the awards. The pocket on the vest is a convenient place for Cubbies to store awards as they travel home from club.
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HOW CUBBIES LEARN

Have you ever realized that the longer you stand up and talk to a group of preschoolers, the more they tune you out? That's because preschoolers are "five-sense" learners — they learn best when they see, hear, taste, smell and touch. They also need lots of repetition of the same truth in different ways.

Total Time Teaching (TTT) is a positive, creative teaching approach that stimulates repetition and five-sense learning in Cubbies. In order for TTT to work, the majority of the materials and activities, both at home and at club, must be coordinated to reinforce the lesson theme. TTT is most successful when it is a team effort among ALL Cubbies leaders and parents.

The Cubbies AppleSeed handbook and coordinated teaching plans have been written with TTT built-in. Here's how it works in a typical week: The child is first introduced to a biblical truth, such as "God created animals," at home when his parents read the Bear Hug from the handbook and work with him on the memory verse and activities. When the child comes to club, the leaders reinforce the truth from the Bear Hug in each club segment. For example, the child makes an animal mask in Coming In, watches a puppet show about the animals who live on Apple Acres farm, listens to a lesson (with pictures) about God creating the animals, eats animal crackers and plays a game in which children pretend to move like animals. In all these various sensory activities, the teacher repeats and discusses the truth that God created animals.

Implementing TTT is easy because each weekly lesson plan includes several activity options that all coordinate with the lesson theme. Even better, most of the activities have been suggested and/or tested by real Cubbies leaders! Choose and adapt the activities that work best for your situation.

PREPARING FOR THE CLUB YEAR

Step 1: Set Your Schedule
First, the Awana commander and Cubbies director must decide on a starting and ending time for the Cubbies club. Most Cubbies clubs meet for 90 minutes (one hour and a half) to two hours. We do not recommend meeting for less than this. If your club meets for the shorter 90 minute time-frame, you may want to eliminate the Snacks or the Songs segments. Do not eliminate the Lesson Time or the Handbook Time, since these are central to the meeting. Be sure to allow five minutes in your schedule for transitions to another room.

The commander and director must also decide on a calendar schedule for the Cubbies club that coordinates with other Awana clubs and church events. The teaching plans include 28 Bear Hug lessons (including Bear Hugs A and B) and four Special Day lessons. This gives you a total of 32 lessons. The Special Day lessons are optional and can be plugged in at any time during the club year. If your club meets for less than 32 weeks, we recommend skipping Bear Hug B and the review lessons in Bear Hugs 6, 10 and/or 14, since these are familiar Bible stories.

The resource CD for the AppleSeed Teaching Plans includes sample club calendar and a template for creating your own calendar. Give parents a copy of the club calendar at the beginning of the year. You may want to attach the calendar to the inside cover of each child’s handbook for the parents’ easy reference.

Step 2: Prepare Your Leaders
The Cubbies director should decide who will be in charge of each segment of the meeting. The director may actively lead each segment, or the director...
may assign roles to other leaders and oversee their roles. For example, some directors designate puppet leaders, Bible lesson leaders, craft leaders and game leaders. All leaders should be screened in accordance with your church’s policy and complete Getting Started training for their role in Cubbies. Talk to your commander about this training and the leader certification process.

In advance, the director should give each leader a copy of the first page of the Bear Hug lesson for the upcoming week. (These can be printed easily from the resource CD. You may want to give leaders pages for more than one lesson at a time.) This page contains the lesson theme, memory verse, prayers and goals for Cubbies, devotional insights and practical ministry tips. This page will promote a unified teaching approach and help leaders prepare spiritually for club. Encourage leaders to memorize the same verse Cubbies memorize. Leaders should always learn the complete Bible verse.

The director should also give each leader the handbook leader sheet that corresponds to the weekly Bear Hug. (These can also be printed from the resource CD. Some clubs may choose to copy this sheet on the back of the devotional page mentioned previously.) This sheet contains helpful discussion questions, tips and activity ideas for helping Cubbies during Handbook Time.

**Step 3: Plan the Club Meeting**

The Cubbies Director Role Book and Cubbies Leader Role Book give you detailed information on the purposes and practices of each segment of club. Here are some aspects we want to highlight.

**The Memory Seed** is the Cubbies’ weekly memory verse or phrase. Cubbies all work on the same verse at the same time. However, most Bible verses will have a short and long version. This allows Cubbies to learn the verse at a level that matches their ability. (Cubbies who learn the long version must also learn the Bible reference.) In the handbook, parents note the version they worked on with their child. Since the Cubbies can learn the verse at either level, it is usually best for the leader to repeat the long version of the verse and reference during club activities and let Cubbies chime in on the part they know. In this way, you reinforce both groups.

In each lesson, The Big Apple summarizes the lesson theme (main idea) in one or two sentences. Each unit (Units 1–6) has a Core Truth. The Core Truth is a simple statement about God’s character that is repeated in each lesson of a unit (God is Creator; God’s Word is truth, God keeps His promises, etc.). Although each unit lesson still has a specific memory verse and lesson theme (The Big Apple), these themes and verses all reinforce and coordinate with the larger Core Truth about God. In the fourth lesson of each unit, Cubbies recite the Core Truth as part of their handbook section. Cubbies also recite the first verse of the unit again (which is a summary verse for the unit). Since the fourth lesson in each unit is a built-in review for all Cubbies, there is no separate handbook review section on these weeks.

**Coming In** is the 10 to 15 minutes prior to the official start of club when children check in. As soon as Cubbies arrive, leaders should engage them in a hands-on activity that reinforces what they learned from the handbook at home and prepares them for what they will learn in club. Each Bear Hug suggests several activity ideas for Coming In. Choose or adapt the idea that works best for your club. If desired, choose more than one idea and set the various activities up at centers (or tables) around the room. Station a leader at each
center and let Cubbies choose a center or rotate groups of Cubbies among the centers. To reinforce learning, the same centers can be set up, with slight variations, for an entire four-week unit. The resource CD contains patterns to use with some activities. If desired, activities and centers from Coming In may be continued during or after Handbook Time. Some clubs choose less-structured activities for Coming In, such as free play with toys or puzzles or reading Bible story books. Leaders talk with Cubbies and try to guide conversations naturally into the lesson theme.

During the Puppet Show, children come to know and love the three Cubbies animal characters. You can purchase Cubbie Bear, Luvie Lamb and Katie Collie puppets from the Awana Ministry Catalog. The puppet scripts can be performed easily by one leader since no more than two puppets appear at any one time in the script. If more leaders are available, you could set up a puppet stage and assign a puppet to each leader. The puppet stories introduce the lesson theme in an interactive and entertaining way. However, since children easily confuse reality and make-believe, Awana recommends that you avoid situations where these fictional puppet characters explicitly teach biblical truths.

Snacks are optional. Many clubs add them in after Handbook Time or after Play Time. Each Bear Hug suggests snack ideas that fit the lesson theme. Please note that food allergies are becoming more common among children. (See Safe Snack Guidelines on the resource CD. Ask about allergies and other food restrictions when the Cubbies register each year and be sure leaders are informed. Also consider posting a description of the weekly snack in a visible place for parents to see when they drop off their child. Many clubs display a snack sign-up sheet during club registration and invite parents to take turns bringing snacks. Cubbies also may enjoy assisting their parent with the snack.

As you prepare for Lesson Time, be sure to read the Scripture passages listed in Sow the Seeds. Let God’s Word teach and transform you before you teach it to Cubbies. Pray about the goals listed in See Them Sprout! and add any goals the Holy Spirit brings to mind for your Cubbies. Remember, the Holy Spirit is the best teacher. Always ask Him to show you ways to adapt and personalize your lesson so you can partner with what HE wants to do through you and in your specific Cubbies club. Finally, it’s a good idea to practice using your visuals (teaching cards or digital images) before you teach. Cubbies easily lose focus if you are constantly fumbling around for cards or trying to figure out how to work the projector. The AppleSeed Teaching Cards and digital images come with a numbered list of visuals for each lesson for your reference. Some teachers find it easier to post cards on the wall or display cards on a music stand, chair or easel instead of holding them while teaching. Laminate the cards for extra durability.

In Handbook Time, Cubbies work with a leader in small groups to discuss and apply the Bible lesson, recite memory work and complete an activity that reinforces their learning. Cubbies complete one Bear Hug handbook section each week. The Review and Under the Apple Tree sections are optional for each week.

Play Time is an energetic, motion-filled time of non-competitive games that reinforce the lesson theme. The teaching plans include several game ideas that can work with various club sizes and spaces. You will also find a list of anytime games on the resource CD. Anytime games are perfect for the weeks when Cubbies finish planned games early. Remember, preschoolers love repetition, and they often need to play a game several times to learn it. Do not be afraid to repeat the same game, or a slightly modified version, for several weeks. You can usually adapt games to fit the new lesson theme.

Going Home is a great time to clean up, lead Cubbies in low-energy review activities and connect with parents.
It is important to prepare for your club year by following all the steps listed. We urge you to organize your schedule, train your leaders and plan your club meetings with excellence. However, you can do all these things and still not have a successful club year. Why? Because you need the two Ps!

The first and most important P is prayer. This basic Christian discipline tends to be the most neglected, especially when we are worrying about all the logistics of club: Do I have enough leaders tonight? Where is my Luvie Lamb puppet? Did someone forget the craft sticks? Expect that prayer will get pushed out of your ministry unless you make a constant, diligent and unified effort. Do whatever you have to do to make prayer the heartbeat of your ministry. Without the presence and power of God through His Word and Spirit, your ministry will have little more spiritual impact than a child's daycare center.

The second P is parents. A key theme of your prayers should be the parents of your Cubbies. Remember, the Bible designates parents, not church leaders, as the primary spiritual teachers of their children. Parents will be at various levels in fulfilling their God-given role, so you must meet them at their level. Pray for unsaved parents to trust Christ as Savior — many parents have come to faith while working on handbook sections with their child. Pray that parents new to the faith will mature as disciples and gain the vision and basic tools for teaching their children. (The Cubbies handbook is a perfect tool for parents because it gives a simple, fun and age-appropriate format for teaching the Bible to their child.) Pray that mature Christian parents will renew and deepen their commitment to spiritual training in the home. Pray also for those parents, whether saved or unsaved, who are disengaged with their child's Cubbies experience.

You should put at least as much, if not more, effort into involving parents as you put into planning a club meeting. Remember, your club meetings are meant to reinforce the teaching parents have already done in the home. Here are some basic points to keep in mind.

- **Invite parents to a club meeting at the beginning of the year.** The first lesson, Bear Hug A, is written to include both parents and Cubbies. Use this time to introduce parents to the Cubbies program and leaders. Show them how to work with their child on the entrance booklet and handbook. Explain the Cubbies award structure and answer any questions they have. If many of your Cubbies’ parents serve as leaders in other Awana clubs, schedule this meeting when other clubs do not meet.

- **Recognize diversity in families.** In our culture, we can safely assume that many Cubbies do not come from traditional two-parent homes. Cubbies may be raised by a single parent, grandparent, foster parent, stepparent or other relative. Cubbies may alternate living between two parents who are divorced. Be sensitive and accommodating to each family situation.

- **Build relationships with parents.** Talk with parents at the start or end of club, visit their home, contact them by phone or email and connect at special parent or church events through the year. Use their child as a springboard for conversation: share their child's progress, positive personality traits or memorable questions and quotes. Build a sense of partnership with the parents; you are working together to help their child grow spiritually.

- **Introduce parents to Parent Pause and Awana resources.** Parents need to know the various ways Awana can help their family grow spiritually.

When parents register, give them a copy of the Parent Welcome Booklet (available in the Awana Ministry Catalog). This booklet outlines the vision of Awana and its programs for children and teens.

Each month, give parents a copy of the Parent Pause newsletter, available as a free download from the ART (Awana Resources and Tools) section of awana.org. This newsletter gives parents ideas
Cubbies are learning self-control. Help them by clearly communicating and demonstrating behavior expectations at the beginning of the club year. Many leaders use the Cubbie Bear Buddy Levels to remind Cubbies of appropriate behavior for various club segments. Create a simple picture poster for each level and display it at the right time during club. For more discipline ideas see the Cubbies Director Role Book.

**Cubbie Bear Buddy Levels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>When to use it</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level One</td>
<td>Lesson Time, Puppet Show</td>
<td>Cubbies sit still and listen quietly unless the leader directs them otherwise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Two</td>
<td>Coming In, Handbook Time, Going Home</td>
<td>Cubbies may talk quietly as they interact with leaders and other Cubbies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Three</td>
<td>Play Time</td>
<td>Cubbies may cheer, jump and play while following game rules.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Cubbies with Special Needs**

The prayer of Awana is that all children and youth will come to know, love and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Expect that you will have children with a wide range of abilities, backgrounds and personalities in your Cubbies club. Some children may require extra attention and individualized support due to a special need. Special needs range from mild learning disabilities and developmental delays to severe mental disability, physical impairments, language barriers, terminal illness or food allergies to name a few. Build a partnership with parents, and keep a constant discussion going with them about the best ways to support their child. You may also want to consult the book *Awana for Me!* (available in the Awana Ministry Catalog), which offers practical strategies for helping children with various special needs during all segments of club.
Memory Seed: 1 John 4:10: … God … loved us and sent His Son …

HOP ONE: REVIEW AND REPEAT
1. (Stretch out arms wide and direct Cubbies to do the same.) Cubbies, God loves you more than you or I could ever reach! How do you feel when you hear God loves you that much? (Answers will vary.)

2. Where does God tell us that He loves us? (In His special book, the Bible.) (Open your Bible to 1 John 4:10 and repeat the verse together several times.)

3. Who is God’s Son? (Jesus Christ.) Where did God send His Son? (To live on earth. He came to be our Savior.)

HOP TWO: RECITE
Listen to Cubbies recite the verse individually. Since many of your Cubbies are new to club this year, they may also be new to Scripture memory. Break the verse into phrases. Say each phrase slowly and let the child repeat it after you. Then say the whole verse several times. The child can keep repeating it after you until he can say it with little or no help. Sign the Bear Hug A section in the child’s Apple Acres entrance booklet, award a Green Apple sticker and keep records according to your club’s procedures. If parents are visiting your club tonight, orient them to the entrance booklet and give them some tips on how to work with their child at home.

HOP THREE: REINFORCE
With your director’s approval, choose one or more of the following activities to help Cubbies reinforce their learning. (Cubbies may also continue activities started in Coming In.) Complete these activities as a handbook group or allow Cubbies to work on them independently, or with another leader, while you listen to individual Cubbies recite sections.

IDEA 1: Bear Hug A Activity Sheet

What You Need
• Copy of the Bear Hug A Activity Sheet for each Cubbie
• Crayons
• Optional — scissors, glue sticks and a sheet of construction paper for each child

Let Cubbies point to each word-picture box as they say the verse with the group or a parent. Cubbies can color the boxes and complete one or both of the fun options listed on the activity sheet. Cubbies who finish early could continue activities started in Coming In.

IDEA 2: Verse Shapes

What You Need
• Play-Doh®
• Rolling pins
• Heart and cross cookie cutters
• An Apple Acres entrance booklet for each child

Flatten a piece of Play-Doh with a rolling pin. Say “God loved us” and make a heart with a cookie cutter. Say “and sent His Son” and make a cross. Let Cubbies copy you. You can also show Cubbies how to make a cross by rolling two “snakes” between their hands: a longer snake and a shorter snake. The shorter snake is laid across the longer snake to make a cross. While Cubbies work with dough, listen to individual Cubbies recite verses or show parents how to use the Cubbies Apple Acres entrance booklet with their child at home. Answer any questions parents have about Cubbies.
Parent Night
Cubbies Key Verse
1 John 4:10

Memory Seed: 1 John 4:10: … God … loved us and sent His Son …
The Big Apple: God loves us very much! He sent His Son to be our Savior.

SOW THE SEEDS
Read: Matthew 13:3-9; 18-23; 1 John 4:7-10
Memorize: 1 John 4:10

Imagine a seed planter (sower) heading down a dusty path toward his field — a field he’s prepared for planting. But on the way, some of his seed falls along the roadside and waiting birds swoop down for a tasty lunch. Other seed blows onto rocky ground and the sprouts quickly die because their roots had nowhere to grow.

The sower continues walking. Again, seed falls to the ground and blows into a patch of thorns. For awhile, these seeds seem to be doing well, but soon the thorns choke the fledgling plants.

The only seeds that prosper are those planted in the field that is richly prepared with soil and water. Notice that the seed is the same in all four scenarios. Only the environment is different.

As Cubbies leaders, we all have the same seed — the Word of God. First, we pray that the “field” of our own hearts would be richly prepared to receive God’s Word. Then we pray for the hearts of our Cubbies. We pray that God would give our Cubbies hearts with “good soil” so they can grow by spiritual leaps and bounds this year. Finally, we pray for the “field” of our classroom. A richly prepared club environment nurtures healthy spiritual growth. Pray for:

1. A place that is welcoming, loving and safe.
2. Leaders who show love and respect for God in both word and action and who understand the age characteristics of the children.
3. Parents who are included in club activities and supported as they spiritually nurture their sons and daughters.

SEE THEM SPROUT!
Pray that the Holy Spirit would work through this lesson so Cubbies:

1. Realize God loves them more than anyone else does.
2. Hear God’s declaration of love for us in His special book, the Bible.
3. Sense sadness that they have disobeyed God.
4. Feel happy because God still loves us even though we disobey. He sent His Son to be our Savior.
5. Know that the Lord Jesus died for our sin. When we trust Him as Savior, we learn how to love and obey God, because God helps us.

6. ______________________
7. ______________________
(Add the goals the Holy Spirit brings to your mind and heart as you pray for Cubbies.)
COMING IN
(10-15 minutes before club officially starts)

We recommend inviting parents to this first night of club so you can introduce them to the program and show them how to help their child at home.

Welcome parents and Cubbies with one or more of the following activities.

IDEA 1: Photos

What You Need
- Camera

Designate a leader to take pictures of individual Cubbies as they arrive. Use the child’s picture as the photo for the front cover of his or her handbook. If parents are joining you for this first meeting, also take a picture of the child and parent together. These pictures could be displayed on a bulletin board, used in a future craft or framed for a family gift.

Remember to obtain written permission from a parent before using a Cubbie’s photo in any of your club’s displays or materials.

IDEA 2: Heart Collage

What You Need
- Sheet of construction paper for each Cubbie with “Who Loves You?” printed at the top
- Glue sticks
- Piles of paper hearts or heart stickers of different colors and sizes

Direct Cubbies to each make a collage by gluing (or sticking) the various hearts on the sheet of construction paper. Leaders or a child’s parent should write a name of someone who loves the child on or above each heart (e.g., Mom, Dad, Grandma, Uncle Jeff). On the biggest heart, the leader or parent should write “God,” and explain that God loves the child most of all.

IDEA 3: Apple Picking

What You Need
- Picture of an apple tree on poster board (branches should be at a child’s height)
- Tape or sticky putty
- Laminated green, red and yellow paper apples (“Apple Patterns” on the resource CD)
- Basket
- Optional — blindfold

Hang the apple tree on the wall. Put tape or putty on the back of each apple and allow Cubbies to take turns either putting apples on the tree or picking them off and placing them in the basket. (Only do this with a small number of Cubbies at a time. Preschoolers do not like to wait long for their turn. Large clubs could divide Cubbies into smaller groups and provide a tree poster and set of apples for each group.) To turn this into a Play Time game, blindfold Cubbies as they try to stick apples on the tree.

STARTING TIME
(3-5 minutes)

Develop a starting routine that Cubbies can expect each week. For example, say a pledge to your country’s flag, celebrate upcoming Cubbies’ birthdays, sing the “Cubbies Song” or recite key Cubbies verses. This first week of club may be a good time to teach the theme song, since new Cubbies haven’t learned verses yet. See the “Cubbies Song” lyrics and music on the resource CD.
PUPPET SHOW
(3-5 minutes)

What You Need
• Cubbie Bear puppet
• Katie Collie puppet
• Luvie Lamb puppet

LEADER: Hi, Cubbies! Welcome to the first night of club — aren’t you excited? I want you to meet a special friend of mine.

When I count to three, call “Cubbie.” OK? One — two — three. CUBBIE!

(After children call out, bring the Cubbie puppet into view. Raise and lower your arm with quick, large motions so Cubbie seems to be hopping.)

CUBBIE (hopping): Hi, boys and girls! I’m so excited to meet you.

LEADER (laughing): I can SEE that you’re excited. Can you stop jumping and hopping for a minute so I can ask you a question?

(Slow down Cubbie’s hopping motions.) Cubbie Bear, we’re going to talk about love tonight. Tell me something that you love.

CUBBIE: Love? Oh, I love apples — red apples, green apples, golden yellow apples. I also like honey and raspberries and, well, anything else that tastes sweet. (Cubbie laughs.) But most of all, I love my best friend, Timothy.

LEADER: Timothy, who’s Timothy?

CUBBIE (looking out at all the Cubbies): Timothy is a boy who’s in Cubbies like you! I live with Timothy on his family’s apple farm. We have so much fun exploring together.

LEADER: Exploring? Where do you like to explore?

CUBBIE: Just today, we went down to the creek.

(Make a loud barking noise and bring the Katie Collie puppet into view.)

KATIE: You know you and Timothy aren’t supposed to go that far from the house. I had to follow you and bring you back.

CUBBIE (chuckling): Kids, meet my other friend, Katie Collie. Do you know what she loves? She loves to remind Timothy and me to obey the rules. But she only does it because she wants us to be safe. She’s a good dog, and very smart too.

(Lift Katie’s chin up slightly and turn her head from side to side as if she’s proud of herself)

LEADER: It’s nice to meet you, Katie! Cubbie, are there any other friends we should meet?

(Remove Katie from the scene so your hand will be free for the Luvie Lamb puppet. If you need extra time to switch puppets, Cubbie can act like he’s looking for Luvie.)

CUBBIE: Of course. You still have to meet my friend, Luvie Lamb. LUVIE!

(Hide the Luvie Lamb puppet behind the Cubbie puppet and poke her head out from behind Cubbie playfully.)

LUVIE (poking her head out): Boo! (She giggles and hides again.)

(Hide Luvie behind a few other places and peek her head out to say “Boo” or “Hi” and giggle.)

CUBBIE: Luvie Lamb loves to play silly games.

LEADER: What a fun time! We met three new friends, and we also found out what they love. Cubbie loves apples and his best friend, Timothy. Katie Collie loves to keep Cubbie and Timothy safe. And Luvie Lamb loves to play silly games.

CUBBIE: Wait! There’s something else I want to say. As soon as I get to know the boys and girls in Cubbies this year, I’m going to love THEM too.

LUVIE (nodding): Yeah, me too!

LEADER: Yes, I’m sure you both will. And we’ll love you too, Cubbie and Luvie Lamb. Right, boys and girls? (Let children respond.)

(If you will be using Cubbie Bear Buddy Levels for classroom management, Cubbie can explain them here.)

CUBBIE: Goodbye for now. We’ll see you next week!

(Let children say goodbye as the puppets are put away.)
SNACKS (5-10 minutes)
Snacks are optional and can be done at any time during the club meeting.

Transition Cubbies into snack time with this song. Sing it to the tune of “Row, Row, Row Your Boat.”

Snack, snack, snack time’s here,
Won’t you take a seat?
Let’s fold our hands
And close our eyes,
We’ll pray before we eat.

IDEA 1: Heart Treats

What You Need
• Red Jell-O® Jigglers® or watermelon slices cut in the shape of hearts (Or any heart-shaped snack, such as cookies or cereal pieces, will work!)

Talk about God’s love for us as Cubbies eat the heart snack.

IDEA 2: Apple Snacks

What You Need
• Slices of red, green and yellow apples or apple-flavored cereal pieces
• Apple juice
• Optional — poster chart with three columns labeled red, yellow and green; red, yellow and green stickers

Give each Cubbie a cup of apple juice and a slice of each color of apple. (For Cubbies under age four, it is best to cut the apples into half-inch pieces to prevent any possibility of choking.) For extra fun, let them each vote on which apple color tastes best by putting that color of sticker in the matching column on the chart. To save preparation time, serve apple-flavored cereal pieces instead of apples. Remind them that Cubbie Bear loves apples. Talk about the things and people they love and share about God’s love.

SONGS (3-5 minutes)
Songs can be done before or after Lesson Time.

SING:
• “If You’re Happy You’re at Cubbies”
  This is exactly like the traditional Sunday school favorite “If You’re Happy and You Know It,” except you replace the opening line with “If you’re happy you’re at Cubbies.”

• “First John 4:10” This is a fun way to teach the Cubbies key verse. Sing these lyrics to the tune of “B-I-N-G-O:

  God loved us and sent His Son,
The Bible tells us so.
God loved us and sent His Son,
(Sing 3 times.)
First John 4:10

• “Jesus Loves Me” It’s good to end with a quieter song if you are transitioning into Prayer and Lesson Time.

PRAYER (1-2 minutes)
(Cubbies are just learning to pray, so use this time each week to intentionally teach the basics of prayer and set a good example. Say the following in your own words.)

Now let’s talk to God. Talking to God is called prayer. When we pray at Cubbies, we fold our hands, bow our heads and close our eyes. You can pray in other ways too, but praying like this helps us to remember that we are talking to God.

(Pray a short prayer with children to prepare them for Lesson Time. Here’s a model. “Dear God, thank You for loving each one of us. Help us to learn more about Your love and Your Son, the Lord Jesus. In Jesus’ name, amen.”)
LESSON TIME (15-20 minutes)

What You Need
• Teaching Cards (TC) 1-5
• Bible with a bookmark placed at 1 John 4:10

(Adapt and personalize the words of this lesson so it fits you and your Cubbies.)

Cubbies, we’ve been talking and singing about love today. Sometimes we say we love cookies or we love to play outside. But when people say they love YOU, it means something different. The people who love you care about you very much. They want to be with you and help you. Cubbies, who are some of the people who love you? (Allow children to answer. Possible answers are parents, grandparents, friends, etc.)

Good answers, Cubbies. Yes, your parents love you! (Display TC1. Point to the picture of the Cubbie with his parents. If some of your Cubbies do not live with their parents, you could also say “guardians” or the “grown-ups who live with you.”)

(If parents are visiting your club, encourage parents to give their child a hug at this time.)

Your grandparents love you too. (Display TC1 again, pointing to the picture of the Cubbie with her grandparents.)

Who else loves you? Do you have friends at Cubbies that love you? (Display TC2 pointing to the Cubbie with her friends.)

Let’s all try to be friends that love each other! (Ask children to each turn to the Cubbies sitting next to them and smile.)

What about the leaders at Cubbies, like me? Do we love you? (Display TC2 again, pointing to the Cubbie with the leaders.)

(Invite all your leaders to stand up. Introduce each leader to the children and parents and say that each leader loves the Cubbies and wants to be at club with them each week. You may want to add that Cubbies leaders also want to get to know the parents.)

Yes, we love you a lot, Cubbies. But guess what? There’s someone who loves you even more than all of us love you. Do you know who? (Allow one or two kids to answer.)

God. That’s who! God loves you so much. God loves you more than anyone else could ever love you.

God talks to us in a very special book called the Bible. (Hold up your Bible. Communicate reverence for God’s Word by the way you hold and handle the Bible.) Many of you have a Bible at your house. Maybe your Bible has pictures in it. Bibles may look different. But all Bibles have God’s words inside.

Cubbies, do you want to hear something God says to us in the Bible? (Open your Bible to 1 John 4:10. You will read the verse in the form that Cubbies will memorize.)

First John 4:10 says: … God … loved us and sent His Son … Say that with me. (Repeat the verse a couple of times.)

Optional: Ask Cubbies to stand up. Tell them to watch and copy what you do. First, hop and smile. Say, “God loves you when you’re happy. He loves you all the time.” Make a sad, crying face. Say, “God loves you when you’re sad.” Pretend to kick or throw a ball. Say, “God loves you when you’re playing outside.” Fold your hands under your head as if you’re sleeping. Say, “God loves you when you’re sleeping in your bed at home. God loves you all the time!” Add your own ideas and motions.

God loves each one of us very much. He wants us to love Him too. We can show that we love God when we obey what He says in the Bible.

But guess what? (Show a sad expression on your face as you display TC3.) We don’t always obey what God tells us in the Bible. Cubbies, have you ever said something mean to someone? When you say something mean, you are not obeying God. Cubbies, have you ever done something your mom or dad told you not to do? (Name some typical ways preschoolers disobey continued on next page
their parents.) When you don't listen to your mom or dad, you are disobeying God. All of us disobey God. This makes God sad. (*Frown and look sad again.*)

(*Smile broadly.*) But I have GOOD NEWS, Cubbies! God still loves us, even when we don't love and obey Him. He showed His love when He sent His only Son, Jesus, to live here on earth and be our Savior. (*Display TC4.*) First John 4:10 says … God … loved us and sent His Son … Say that again with me. (*Repeat the verse a couple more times.*)

(Keep this next part simple and short for kids, but also remember that this is a great chance to share the gospel with parents.)

When Jesus lived on earth, He never disobeyed His Father, God. But, remember, all of us have disobeyed God; we have all sinned. We should be punished for this. Being punished means getting in trouble for the wrong things we have done. But God loved us and sent Jesus to be punished instead of us. Jesus died on the cross for our sin. (*Point to the crosses on TC4.*) Then, three days later, He came alive again! (*Point to Jesus and the open tomb on TC4.*) Each of us must trust Jesus Christ as Savior. That means you believe that He died on the cross for your sin. When you trust Jesus as Savior, you start learning how to obey God more and more, because God helps you. (*The Holy Spirit is the one who indwells us and teaches us how to obey God, but this concept is difficult for many young children to grasp and is not necessary to explain in this first lesson.*)

(*Display TC5. Talk about how the girl in the picture is showing love and obedience to God by listening to the Bible as her mother reads it.*) Cubbies, what are some other ways we can love and obey God? (*praying, sing songs to Him, helping someone, etc.*) God loves us, and He helps us to love Him too. Let’s say our verse together one more time: First John 4:10: … God … loved us and sent His Son …

**HANDBOOK TIME**

(15-30 minutes)

Give each handbook group leader a copy of Bear Hug A Hand book Leader Sheet from the resource CD. This contains helpful discussion questions, tips and activity ideas for helping Cubbies review the lesson and learn the verse.

If parents are visiting, they can join their child’s handbook group.

**IDEA 1: Bear Hug A Activity Sheet**

**What You Need**
- Copy of the Bear Hug A Activity Sheet for each Cubbie
- Crayons
- *Optional* — Cubbies Key Verse sheet (resource CD), scissors, glue sticks and a sheet of construction paper for each child

Point to the pictures on the maze as you say 1 John 4:10 with Cubbies several times. Encourage them to say the verse as they complete the maze and color the pictures. Give older Cubbies copies of the Cubbies Key Verse sheet. They can color the boxes, cut them out and glue them on a piece of construction paper in the proper order. Parents can help their child with either of these activities.

**IDEA 2: Verse Shapes**

**What You Need**
- Play-Doh®
- Rolling pins
- Heart and cross cookie cutters
- An Apple Acres entrance booklet for each child

Flatten a piece of Play-Doh with a rolling pin. Say “God loved us” and make a heart with a cookie cutter. Say “and sent His Son” and make a cross. Let Cubbies copy you. Cubbies can also make a cross by rolling two “snakes” between their hands: a longer snake and a shorter snake. The shorter snake is laid across the longer snake to make a cross. While Cubbies work with dough, listen to individual Cubbies recite the verse or show parents how to use the Cubbies Apple Acres entrance booklet with their child at home. Answer any questions parents have about Cubbies.
**PLAY TIME** (15-20 minutes)

**IDEA 1: Heart Races**

**What You Need**
- Several different colors and sizes of paper hearts (use leftover hearts from Coming In)

Beforehand, hide the hearts around the room, except one medium-sized heart and one large heart. To begin the game, hold up the medium-sized heart and ask Cubbies to name family or friends who love them. Hold up the big heart and ask Cubbies to name who loves them most of all: God! Repeat 1 John 4:10. Let Cubbies race to see how many hearts they can find. Or instead of hiding hearts, you could also spread them out on the floor. Call out a color, and Cubbies will race to pick up all the hearts of that color.

**IDEA 2: Red Apple, Green Apple**

**What You Need**
- Red paper apple and green paper apple

Play this just like the game Red Light, Green Light except hold up a red or green apple. Red means stop. Green means go. If Cubbies don’t stop in time, they don’t have to return to the starting line. Just encourage them to pay attention.

**IDEA 3: Puppet Games**

**What You Need**
- Cubbie Bear puppet
- Red number one paper, yellow number two paper and green number three paper

Use the Cubbie puppet to help children practice the Cubbie Bear Buddy Levels. When Cubbie yells “Buddy Level One!” and you hold up the red paper with the number one on it, children sit on the floor in silence, with their legs crossed and their hands in their laps. When Cubbie yells “Buddy Level Two!” and you hold up the yellow number two paper, children talk quietly to a partner. They may be sitting or standing. When Cubbie yells “Buddy Level Three!” and you hold up the green number three paper, children cheer, jump and run around the room. (Tell them which direction to run to help avoid collisions.) You could also play Simon Says with the Cubbie puppet as Simon. No one is eliminated. Just encourage Cubbies to listen closely and follow directions. End the game with low-impact body movements to prepare Cubbies for snacks and/or Going Home.

**GOING HOME** (5-10 minutes)

After children help clean up the room, involve them in a low-energy activity that also summarizes the verse or theme of your meeting. For example, seat Cubbies in a circle and pass a plastic apple, heart-shaped box or beanbag around the circle as music plays. When the music stops, whoever is holding the object says his or her name and the group recites 1 John 4:10.

Whether parents have been with you at club or they meet you at the door, let them know that you and other leaders are available to answer any questions they have about Cubbies. Give each family a Parent Welcome Booklet (available from Awana). This booklet introduces parents to the vision of Awana and the various Awana clubs for kids and teens (ages 2 to 18). The back page is blank for you to add your club and church contact information.

This is also a great time to give parents the current month’s copy of the Parent Pause newsletter, available as a free download in the ART (Awana Resources and Tools) section of awana.org. This newsletter gives parents ideas for growing their preschooler’s faith at home. It also includes a page for leaders to add Cubbies club news. This newsletter can also be emailed to parents.

If you did not take photos during Coming In, remind parents to bring a wallet-sized photo of their child next week to attach to the child’s handbook. Parents could also attach a photo once their child brings the handbook home.
... God ... loved us and sent His Son ...
(1 John 4:10)

Basic Instructions: Trace on the dotted line in the maze as a leader or parent says the Cubbies Key Verse.
Even More Fun: Color the pictures in the maze.
Ultimate Fun: Show your maze to someone and tell them, “God … loved us and sent His Son …”.

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Apple Patterns
Apple Patterns

Handbook AppleSeed Trail: Bear Hug A
Cubbies AppleSeed Teaching Plans Resource CD

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Cubbies Key Verse

Basic Instructions: Color the words and pictures.
Even More Fun: Cut along the lines. Paste the pieces on a sheet of paper in the right order.
Ultimate Fun: Give your creation to someone who needs to know the Lord Jesus.

SAMPLE

...God... loved

us

and sent

His Son...
Bear Hug A: Teaching Card Thumbnail Images

Teaching Card 1

Teaching Card 2

Teaching Card 3

Teaching Card 4

Teaching Card 5

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