



**Friday, April 21, 2023**  
**Beloit Public Library**  
**9 -10:30 a.m.**

**Present:** Jessica Austin (SCF), Nick Dimassis (BPL), Mary Ellen Fuentes (SDB -Todd), Jessica Graminske (BPL), Geri Heim (volunteer), Kathy Hendricks (ABC Supply/Discovery PLAYce), Lara Hermann (Nutrition and Health Associates/WIC), Kayla Oestreich (Community Action), Brenda Plakans (Welty), Drew Pennington (City of Beloit), Anya Ramsey-Martinez (SDB – Todd), Lisa Sandoval (Head Start), and Robin Stuht (SDB – Homeless Liaison).

### **Welcome & Basics Presentation: Jessica Austin, Director of Early Brain Development**

- **Brain Facts:**
  - The brain doubles during the first year of life, becoming 70% of its adult size by the time a child is one-year old. It reaches 80% of adult size by the third birthday and 90% by the fifth. As the brain grows, foundational neural connections develop and strengthen through repeated use.
  - Nationally representative data show clear cognitive and social-emotional disparities between racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups by the 2nd birthday. One recent study found that by the age of two, less advantaged children were six months behind more advantaged peers in language processing skills.
  - Many parents and caregivers lack access to necessary support and have not had opportunities to learn the science behind The Basics Principles and why it matters for their child's development and wellbeing.
  - Brain development during early childhood builds critical foundations for children's learning, health, and wellbeing over the course of their lifetimes. 5 Inequities that emerge early persist over the long term.

*Experiences Build Brain Architecture*



- [Review of the 5 Basics Principles:](#) Maximize Love, Manage Stress; Count, Group and Compare; Talk, Sing, Point; Explore through movement and Play; Read & Discuss Stories.

- Poem & Community Contract / ABC Plan (addendum)
- Brief Overview of Strategy – (addendum)
- Info / Reminders / Encouragement
- Goals:
  1. Saturate Rock County
  2. Provide Rock County with reminders for infants & toddlers 0-3
  3. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS!

### **Q & A:**

**\*What happens after age 3?** Surveys are provided throughout the program to track usage and feedback. We are focused 0-3, but there is a possibility of external opportunities through age 5.

**\*What challenges are associated with this program?** Based on the experiences in Pensacola, they've realized that the host organization should be the convener and NOT in charge of sign-ups. Relying on our affiliates to oversee this aspect, who have relationships with their clients, is key.

**\*Are there limitations/boundaries?** While the focus is Rock County, we won't turn anyone away.

**\*How will this program differentiate from Literacy for Life?** Stateline Community Foundation's Literacy for Life is the umbrella, while The Basics resides underneath. The Rudder Group, which has been essential as leadership to our original literacy initiative, will be undergoing some reconstruction to better represent our expanded demographics.

**\*How does an agency initiate collaboration?** Direct communication with Jessica Austin, Director of Early Brain Development ([Jessica@statelinecf.com](mailto:Jessica@statelinecf.com)) will be the first step in obtaining necessary materials for client sign-ups, as well as providing parent trainings and establishing your agency dashboard to track information. There is NO cost involved to you or your clients.

**Partner Reports:** Please contact individuals directly for specifics. A few highlights include:

- Collaborative Solutions – A staff & family model for addressing homelessness (Stuht)
- Various community projects & activities for fathers to learn parenting skills (Plakans)
- GBEDC Childcare Business Training and Dream Up Grants (Pennington)
- Collaborations between Community Action, SDB (teen parents) and Head Start (Sandoval)
- After school literacy activities at Todd Elementary supported by a 5-year grant (Fuentes)
- Community Kids is growing; seeking lead teacher, assistants, and volunteers! (Oestreich)
- Eating smart program at NHA/WIC and teaming up with WI Early Childhood Assoc (Hermann)
- Plans for an interactive discovery space with BPL, highlighting BASICS principles (Hendricks)
- Many PBS activities, summer camps & reading programs via Beloit Public Library (Graminske)

### **EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT:**



**BASICS ROLLOUT:  
BUILDING THE FUTURE OF ROCK COUNTY**  
June 21st at Eclipse Center  
7:30 AM – Breakfast Included



**BUILD A BRAIN, BUILD A LIFE, BUILD A COMMUNITY!**

Flyer/sign-up info



<https://statelinecf.org/building-the-future-of-rock-county/>

**Calendar:** The next Partner meeting will be June 23rd at 9 AM. Kindly RSVP: [jamie@statelinecf.com](mailto:jamie@statelinecf.com). Meetings at BPL are **in-person only**, Blackhawk Ext. Rm 111.

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# THE BASICS COMMUNITY CONTRACT

BY RONALD FERGUSON

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We should sign a Basics Contract  
Wherein when it comes to babies  
We would share an obligation  
With no “ifs” or “buts” or “maybes.”

## Maximize Love, Manage Stress

We could guarantee that parents  
Would be rescued from their stress  
By supportive friends and neighbors  
Helping put their cares to rest.

This includes the types of friendship where  
When weary from no sleep  
Every parent finds a trusted soul  
Their precious child to keep.

## Talk, Sing, and Point

We would help each parent come to know  
The benefits of talking  
And the ways that pointing helps the child  
Decipher all their squawking.

## Count, Group, and Compare

We would post on walls and billboards  
Things that little kids could count  
Near some sculptures made for grouping  
To compare and climb and mount.

## Explore through Movement and Play

We would donate games and puzzles  
And some toys to use outside  
We’d make sure that every toddler  
Has a tricycle to ride.

## Read and Discuss Stories

And each child would be enthralled  
By all the wonders found through reading  
For we’d offer to each family  
Any books they might be needing.

## Hereby Resolved

If we all embrace this vision  
(That means friends and neighbors too)  
Parents then will find the bandwidth  
To do what they need to do.

Yes they’ll need to do The Basics  
And by doing your small part  
You will help more parents seed their kids  
To learn and grow up smart.

If we all resolve to do these things  
We’ve learned will be required  
Then each child our efforts benefit  
Will be a life inspired.



# My ABC Plan

It's great to want to do The Basics Principles! But sometimes, good intentions are not enough to follow through on our plans.

Research has shown people are more likely to accomplish their goals when they think through the Action, Benefits, and Challenges of any new practice.

Please complete this form as an example of what you can do with all five of The Basics Principles (or any other goal in your life).

## Action

- ✓ Picture yourself doing a Basics action that you don't usually do.
- ✓ When and where will you do it next?

Action:

When:

Where:

## Benefits

- ✓ How will the activity benefit you and your child?  
How will it make you feel?

Benefits:

My Feelings:

## Challenges

- ✓ What challenges could get in the way of following through?
- ✓ What steps could you take to overcome these challenges?

Challenges:

Solution Steps:

**Pledge to Myself:** I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to be a part of The Basics Community of parents and caregivers who do The Basics Principles and seek opportunities to share them with others.

# THE BASICS STRATEGY IN ACTION

The Basics Strategy is built on evidence that information, social supports, and reminders delivered via multiple channels, especially by trusted messengers, can help people change their behaviors.

The Basics Strategy is a population-level initiative to enhance the development of children ages birth to three by providing information, social supports, and regular reminders to parents and caregivers to apply The Basics Principles and related practices for early childhood caregiving. People live in social ecologies, surrounded by others with whom they interact in formal and informal relationships and upon whom they depend for material, social, and emotional support. These relationships provide enablers and rewards for enacting the caregiving behaviors that The Basics Strategy promotes.

Our approach engages organizations in multiple local sectors with ideas and encouragement for including The Basics-related messages in routine interactions with clients, employees, and members. Frontline service providers rely on the Basics Community Toolkit for materials they can combine in ways tailored for use in their organizations. Regular Basics Insights text messages provide reminders to parents to use The Principles and provide a convenient focus for conversations between parents and others who support them.

Ideally, parents are exposed to The Basics Principles during prenatal care, then again when the child is born, in well-baby visits with health professionals, and in multiple ways across the community as the child grows. Think of it in medical terms: Families get their first “inoculation” before their child is born, then again at birth in the nursery.

Once their child comes home, The Basics are continually reinforced with “booster shots” each time they take the child to a medical facility or pediatrician for a sick- or well-child visit, go to a religious service, visit the barbershop or hair salon, or go to a playgroup at the library.

