



FAITH-BASED TOOLKIT

The Basics are five fun, simple, and powerful ways
to help all our children become the happiest
and most successful they can be!

This packet is a guide to using the
Palmetto Basics within in the
Faith-Based Christian community.

Maximize Love, Manage Stress
Talk, Sing and Point
Count, Group and Compare
Explore Through Movement and Play
Read and Discuss Stories

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introductory Letter.....	3
About The Basics.....	5-6
How to Implement the Palmetto Basics.....	8-12
Maximize Love, Manage Stress.....	8
Talk, Sing and Point.....	9
Count, Group and Compare.....	10
Explore Through Movement and Play.....	11
Read and Discuss Stories.....	12
Activities for Children's Ministry.....	13-17
Songs with dances and actions.....	13-14
Songs for counting and spelling.....	15
Ideas for using math in Sunday School.....	16
Art projects for Sunday School.....	17
Prayer	
Suggestions.....	18-19
Bulletin	
Inserts.....	20
Become a Palmetto Basics Champion.....	21



For more information, please visit www.palmettobasics.org



“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.”
-Proverbs 22:6

By definition, to “train” means to instruct over a period of time, to teach a particular skill or behavior. It implies a journey towards a goal.

The Palmetto Basics, adopted from the *Boston Basics*, were designed to help you along this journey. Written in simple language, *The Basics* boil down decades of research-based best practices, and presents them in a way that any parent, caregiver, grandparent, neighbor, or parishioner, can understand and do.

Concepts like “Maximize Love, Manage Stress” speak volumes about the importance of reducing childhood trauma, or adverse childhood experiences, but frames that work as a daily effort “to maximize love.” We are all on a shared journey where these actions daily affect us and those we touch.

The Basics is not a to-do list, but a series of concepts that we can adapt and adopt into our everyday walk. We have all been in a place where we could help children “Read and Discuss Stories,” whether in a formal learning environment like our Sunday School story time, or in a church lobby or food pantry waiting room.

Our prayer is that *The Basics* provides you with a framework to examine how you, your family, your neighbors, and your church family can join us on this journey. We hope this resource guide provides your church family with ideas of ways to implement these strategies within your own community. And, as always, we are here to support you as we travel together on this journey.

-The Palmetto Basics Team

About The Basics

The Palmetto Basics Campaign is inspired by the fact that 80% of brain growth happens in the first three years of life. During this period, skill gaps between socio-economic, racial, and ethnic groups become clearly apparent. This does not need to be! Everyday interactions between children, their parents, and other caregivers provide abundant opportunities to give children from every background a more equal start in life.

The Basics are five evidence-based parenting and caregiving principles that encompass much of what experts find is important for children from birth to age three. Every child from every background can benefit from routinely experiencing *The Basics* learning moments. Therefore, *The Basics* campaign is working through a broad range of institutions to ensure that every parent and caregiver is fully supported by family and friends to use *The Basics* in everyday life.

1. Maximize Love, Manage Stress



Infants thrive when their world seems loving, safe, and predictable. When you express love and respond to their needs, you teach them that they can count on you. Over time, showing love and responding helps them learn to manage their feelings and behavior. As they grow, feeling secure in their relationships gives them the confidence they need to explore, learn, and take on life's challenges.

Young children are affected by your emotions, both good and bad. So, it is important to find strategies that help you cope with stress. Caring for yourself benefits your child.

2. Talk, Sing, and Point



Babies are learning language from the moment they are born. At first, to a newborn baby, speech is just sound. Then, day by day, they learn that the sounds have meaning. This process depends on how much people talk to them. Every time you talk, sing, or point to what you are talking about, you provide clues to the meaning of what you are saying. You are providing important information to their brains about how language works.

As your child develops, talking with them and answering their questions is a way to teach them about the world. By talking with them, you will also get to know the fascinating person they are becoming!

3. Count, Group and Compare

Becoming good at math begins long before a child enters school. Even infants are wired to learn simple math ideas, including small numbers, patterns, and making comparisons. You don't need to be a math teacher to start preparing your child to be a problem solver. There are fun and simple activities that you can do now to build math and thinking skills.

4. Explore Through Movement and Play

Movement and play are good for children's bodies—their coordination, strength, and overall health. They are also ways that children explore and learn about the world. Newborns don't have much control over their bodies. Each stage of development comes with new opportunities for learning. For example, an infant might explore by touching, grasping, chewing, or crawling. A toddler might explore by walking or climbing.

Young children are like scientists—curious and excited to explore their surroundings. See where your child's curiosity takes them. The more you pay attention, the more you will learn about the person they are becoming.

5. Read and Discuss Stories

The more we read with young children, the more prepared they become to enjoy reading and to do well in school. It is never too early to begin reading! Stories expose children to words and ideas that they would not otherwise experience. Books teach children to use their imaginations. What they learn about people, places, and things can be important building blocks to later life success. For both parents and children, times together with books form fond and lasting memories.

How to Implement The Basics

Thank you for considering using *The Basics* as part of your church tradition! Every day, churches provide opportunities for families to spend quality time together and to receive the support they need to be successful.

Here are several ways you can integrate The Basics messaging into your church service and community. Feel free to adapt any and/or all of these suggestions.

Ways to Use Basic 1: Maximize Love, Manage Stress

“So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”
-1 Corinthians 13:13

As ministry leaders, it's important to provide a safe and loving environment for children and parents. Families should feel their church is a welcoming and loving place to come to connect with the community and encounter God. Our calling is to stand together as a community to act as advocates and protectors of all children. We'd like to share some tips on how you can make your church a place where your members want to come to help each other learn to Maximize Love and Manage Stress:

- Programs for elementary aged children
 - Giving children the opportunity to socialize with each other in a safe, Christian environment will help them to identify with the church and each other. Putting together simple programs and activities such as board game night, karaoke night, or just a safe place to hang out, creates an environment where children can learn to love God and each other.
- Family events
 - Family focused events held once or twice a month give families the chance to bond with each other and other members of the church community. Church members from all ages coming together shows the love and support the church has for all of its members. Some suggestions include:
 - Easter egg hunt, seasonal festivals, game night, Act of Kindness Day (choose a charity and find a way the church can get involved), movie night, etc.
- Involve children and families in church services
 - Allowing children and families to be actively involved in the service makes them feel included and have a sense of belonging within the church. Giving children a role is a great way to highlight them and show them they are important and loved in their church community. Some suggestions on what this might look like include:

- Lighting candles, ushering with a parent, singing in the choir, reading Scripture, offering prayers, and/or greeting with a parent.
- Parent mentor groups
 - A great way to Maximize Love and Manage Stress in your church community is giving parents a break. Perhaps at the same time you are holding a program or event for the children at your church, offer a chance for their parents to come and gather with one another. Bible Studies, Mentor Mom's, Book Clubs, Small Groups or a simple social gathering at the church will strengthen the love your church members have for one another and will help to manage their stress at home.
- Have children come up to offer a prayer at Sunday school or bless a meal
 - Have a group of children from a variety of ages pray for different topics or challenges affecting youth today. Children can ask each other to pray for guidance or share a story of how God is acting in their lives. Listening to prayers from their peers can strengthen the love and understanding children have for one another.
 - Consider giving children the option to say the opening or closing prayer at Sunday school.
 - Having a group of children sing a prayer or use a prayer cube (blessings at any sort of church gathering where food is served is also a great way to get them involved.
- ABC prayer cards
 - For each letter in the alphabet there is a verse. These cards are a great tool in helping children learn scripture and learn the alphabet.

Ways to Use Basic 2: Talk, Sing and Point

*"Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!"
-Psalm 95:1*

Talking and singing is one of the main ways children learn about the world. Taking the time to talk and sing with the children of your church can be one of the best ways to teach them about the love God has for each of them. Children are a part of God's Kingdom and we have a great responsibility to share His love with them. Ministering to children through music can help them grow in the world and in their faith. Here are some ideas for how you can Talk, Sing, and Point children:

- Singing in the choir
 - Do you have a children's choir? Encouraging children to sing and dance engages their whole body in the worship service, keeping them excited and eager to listen to the message. Whether its during Sunday school, Sunday services, or on holidays, having a children's choir will keep children actively involved and excited about serving the church.

- Play music that is fun for the children to sing
 - Playing music that is easy for children to remember and sing along to during church services or in Sunday school helps them to engage and get excited about worship songs. This is also helpful for children who are too young to read because they can still sway, dance, clap, and hum to the music. Consider developing a service where the music varies from music about family and home to music that is fun for the children to sing along to.
- Create movements that go along with the songs.
 - Movements help children learn the song faster and helps them to have a better understanding of the song's meaning.
- Song suggestions: *Actions/dances to go along with some of these songs can be found on pgs. 14-16 of the packet*
 - *Father Abraham*
 - *Jesus Loves Me*
 - *Jesus Loves the Little Children of the World*
 - *He Has Got the Whole World in His Hands*
 - *This Little Light of Mine*
 - *Rise and Shine and Give God the Glory*
 - *Go Tell it on the Mountain*
 - *Go Now in Peace (teach the sign language motions that go along with this song)*

Ways to Use Basic 3: Count, Group and Compare 1 2 3

“For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?” -Luke 14:28

Why is math an important part of church life? Math is yet another wonder of God's creation and using numbers, comparison, and categories are great tools that can be used to enhance comprehension of passages discussed at church and at home. Methods of counting, grouping, and comparing can help illustrate the truth and the practical application of the Word of God. Here are some examples of how you can incorporate Count, Group, and Compare with the children of your church community:

- Math activities to use in Sunday School: *lesson details on pg. 16 of the packet*
 - Using Luke 19:8 to practice multiplication.
 - Determine how big Noah's Ark was and compare to its size to a real-life object such as a football field.
 - Practice counting in twos since Noah brought each animal into the ark in pairs.
- Tutoring
 - Have a time set up where older students can help the younger kids with school work. The church could provide a space where students can come

For more information, please visit www.palmettobasics.org

to aid one another. Open this up to all members of the church to build a strong academic support system within the church community.

- Numbers associated with Advent and Lent
 - Talk about the 40 days/nights Jesus spent in the desert, count the 5 candles during Advent or use a journey map during Lent.
 - A journey map has a space for each day Jesus was in the desert. The children can mark off a spot each day until Easter.

Ways to Use Basic 4: Explore Through Movement and Play

*“And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets.”
-Zechariah 8:5*

Children learn by observing and copying what they see. Giving them an opportunity to participate, children will learn, grow, and feel valued by older members of the church. Here are some tips on how you can make the church a place where children can be ACTIVE in the church community and Explore Through Movement and Play:

- Encourage curriculums that promote movement
- Find a role for children to actively engage in Sunday services
 - Lighting candles, collecting the offering, or greeting people at the door on Sunday mornings are all ways children can start becoming active members of the church. It gives them opportunity to take initiative, socialize with members of all ages, and have fun with their special role on Sundays.
- Social Service
 - Encouraging children to get involved in social service projects will help them become active members of our churches and the Greenville community. Christ has called us all to serve and we can teach this message by setting an example and including children in community service activities. Visit hospital patients, serve at a food pantry, or volunteer at the local humane society; giving them this opportunity will allow them to grow in their community, learn selflessness, and serve the Lord.
- Plays and Performances!
 - Get the kids up and moving during Sunday school or holiday events by putting on a play or musical performance for the rest of the congregation. By doing this, the children will get a chance to move and play with one another while fully engaging in Scripture at the same time. What child will forget the time they got to play Mary or Joseph in the Christmas live nativity scene?
- Art projects in Sunday school
 - Children love art and what a fun way to share the gospel! Giving children a fun and creative way to learn about the Christian faith will get them excited

For more information, please visit www.palmettobasics.org

to learn more and is a beautiful way for them to express what Scripture means to them. *Some fun craft ideas are on pgs. 17 & 18 of this packet*

Ways to Use Palmetto Basic 5: Read and Discuss Stories



"I will utter hidden things, things from of old—what we have heard and know, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from our children; we will tell the next generation the praise worthy deeds of the Lord." -Psalm 78:2-3

It's never too early to start reading to children! Churches offer so many opportunities to get a jump start on early literacy by showing children the Word of God. Reading stories exposes children to words they wouldn't otherwise experience and teaching our children to read Scripture and other stories will help them to use their imagination! Here are some examples for how you can Read and Discuss Stories at your church:

- Encourage children to read along during the Sunday service
 - Ask children bring their own Bibles on Sunday and encourage them to follow along with the passages being discussed that day. Even by simply following along with the text, young children will begin to recognize letters, names and text format. Getting in the routine of following along with passages being read will help children to build a strong foundation for reading and maybe even inspire them to continue reading on their own at home!
- Encourage parents to discuss the reading at home
 - Intentional conversations with children at home about what was taught in church that day can be a great way to help them grow in their faith and expand on things they are curious about. Open conversations can strengthen a family through Christ and inspire young Christians to seek out more of God's Word on their own.
 - Sunday school is also a great place to get kids reading and talking about Scripture. Encourage your students to read and discuss what they think about the passage; get the kids talking!
- Set an example!
 - Demonstrating God's character as Christian leaders to the children of our community is perhaps the greatest way to help them grow as active members in the church and the community. Share your love of reading and learning more about the Word of God with them.
- Set up a lending library at the church
 - Have a community book shelf where members of the church can donate and take books home to read to their kids.



For more information, please visit www.palmettobasics.org

Activities for Children's Ministry

Below are songs and activities that families and Sunday school classes can use with elementary aged children to put The Basics into practice.

Songs with Dances and Actions:

Father Abraham

Lyrics:

*Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord. Right arm!
Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord. Right arm, left arm!
Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord. Right arm, left arm, right foot!
Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord. Right arm, left arm, right foot, left foot!
Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord. Right arm, left arm, right foot, left foot, Chin up!
Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord. Right arm, left arm, right foot, left foot, Chin up, turn around!
Father Abraham had many sons
Many sons had Father Abraham
I am one of them and so are you
So let's all praise the Lord. Right arm, left arm, right foot, left foot, Chin up, turn around, sit down!*

ACTIONS:

Right arm: Clench fist, bend and extend arm upward repeatedly throughout song
Left arm: Add left arm in same motion as right
Right foot: Add right foot stepping up and down
Left foot: Add left foot stepping up and down
Chin up: Add head nodding up and down
Turn around: Add turning in place while continuing other motions

I'm in the Lord's Army

Lyrics:

*I may never march in the infantry
Ride in the cavalry
Shoot the artillery
I may never fly o'er the enemy
But I'm in the Lord's army (Yes, sir!)
I'm in the Lord's army (Yes, sir!)
I'm in the Lord's army (Yes, sir!)
I may never march in the infantry
Ride in the cavalry
Shoot the artillery
I may never fly o'er the enemy
But I'm in the Lord's army (Yes, sir!)*

ACTIONS:

March in the infantry: march in place
Ride in the cavalry: hands like holding a horse's reins and move up and down as if riding a horse
Shoot in the artillery: move hands with straight arms to slap each other while pushing right hand forward
Fly over the enemy: arms straight out and imitate a plane flying
Yes, sir!: salute

Only a boy named David

Lyrics:

*Only a boy named David
Only a little sling
Only a boy named David
But he could pray and sing
Only a boy named David
Only a rippling brook
Only a boy named David
But five little stones he took.
And one little stone went in the sling
And the sling went round and round
And one little stone went in the sling
And the sling went round and round
And round and round And round and round
And round and round and round
And one little stone went up in the air
And the giant came tumbling down.*

ACTIONS:

On the chorus: And one little stone went in the sling: pretend to put stone in sling
And the sling went round and round: twirl sling overhead round and round (continuing)
And one little stone went up in the air: motion like releasing stone from sling
And the giant came tumbling down: everyone falls to the ground

Songs for Counting and Spelling:

A-B-C-D-E-F-G Jesus Died for You and Me

Lyrics:

*A-B-C-D-E-F-G,
Jesus died for you and me
H-I-J-K-L-M-N, Jesus died for sinful men, AMEN!
O-P-Q-R-S-T-U,
I believe God's word is true,
V-W,
God has promised you
X-Y-Z,
A home eternally.*

The B-I-B-L-E

Lyrics:

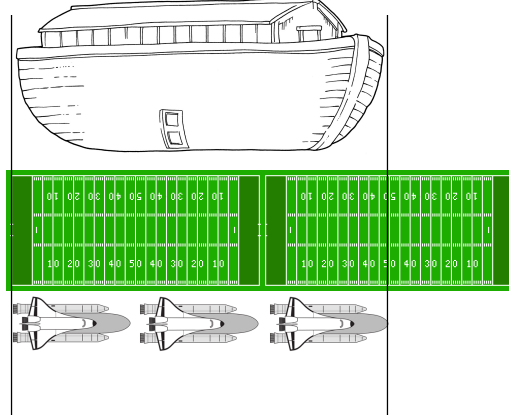
*The B-I-B-L-E
Yes, that's the book for me
I stand alone on the Word of God
The B-I-B-L-E
The B-L-O-O-D
That Jesus shed for me;
Christ paid the price,
our sacrifice
The B-L-O-O-D!
I'm S-A-V-E-D,
By G-R-A-C-E;
I'm saved by grace,
the Scripture says
The B-I-B-L-E!*

Ideas for using math in Sunday School:

How big was Noah's Ark?

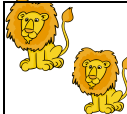

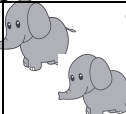

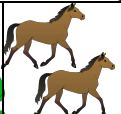

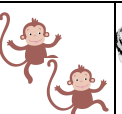
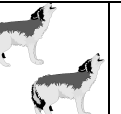
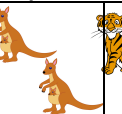

Determine how big Noah's Ark was and compare to its size to a real life object such as a football field, an airplane, smart cars, telephone poles, space shuttles, train boxcars...

Example: Noah's ark would have been approximately one and a half football fields long and 3 space shuttles long.



Counting in Two's:

Practice counting in twos since Noah brought each animal into the ark in pairs.

									
2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20

Art Projects for Sunday School:

Fishers of Men

Materials: Dowel stick, string, magnet, paper clips, and "fish" (cut out pieces of paper to look like fish).

Directions:

6. Tie one end of the string to dowel and attach a magnet to the other side (to resemble a fishing pole).
7. Cut out the paper fish and have the kids color and decorate them however they want.
8. Slip a metal paper clip to each fish and put them in a pile.
9. Using the magnet tied to the dowel stick, see how many fish the kids can catch from the pile.

Bookmarks: “God is...”

Directions: Provide a strip of paper (book mark size) with the title: “God is...”. Provide the kids with crayons or markers and have them write down everything they believe God is on their bookmark. Example:

**Other Ideas:**

- In honor of St. Francis, make bird feeders.
- Make cards for the sick and homeless
- Make stained glass windows using glass jars and tissue paper

Prayer Suggestions

The overwhelming power of prayer and worship can strengthen our Christian community and bring us all together in this mission to create a lasting and Christ-centered support system around our children. There is no better way to show our love for the children of our community than to pray for them. We ask for God's grace and guidance in their lives.

Here is an example of a Preschool Chapel Service:

Opening Sentences (stand)

Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made.

Children: We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Song: "This is the Day That the Lord Has Made."

Children's Creed (stand)

All: I believe in God above,
I believe in Jesus' love.
I believe in the Spirit too,
comes to teach me what to do.
I believe that I must be,
true and loving, Lord like Thee. (Amen)

Prayers of the People (stand...put hands in prayer position)

We pray for the people God's whole church. We pray especially for the people of our church.

We pray for the United States and for our President. We pray for the other countries of the world and their leaders. May they all work for peace.

We pray for our city of Greenville and for the people who live and work and go to school here. We pray for the other cities and towns like it and for the people who live in them.

We pray for the good earth which God has given us. May we help to take care of the land, the air, the water, the plants and the animals.

We pray for all the people who are sick or sad or lonely or afraid. May we always remember them and be kind.

We pray for all the people who have died. May they have a place with you.



We thank you for your many blessings.

Lord, hear the prayers of your young people and strengthen us to do your will.
Amen.

Song

Bible Story

The Lord's Prayer

(Sing) Go Now in Peace

Dismissal

Leader: Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Children: Thanks be to God.



Share The Basics!

Thank you for considering taking action to utilize all that The Basics have to offer! Please share them with your congregation and others who could benefit from The Basics.

Our community is filled with organizations who encourage and support our youngest children. The Basics are evidenced-based and streamlined strategies we should all be promoting to support parents, caregivers, employees and anyone who is around children ages 0-5. We challenge you to recognize learning moments in every conversation, Sunday school lesson, and cheerful song. Recognize their connection and validation by The Basics. JOIN US in sharing this impact!

This message makes sense for everyone to share and together, we can all make a positive impact.



**The Basics serve as a reminder
to the community about what we can all do to help
children be ready for school and life. Join us!**

For more information, please visit www.palmettobasics.org