



Proposal

LENA Start is an evidence-based community program that helps families harness the power of conversational turns.

What are conversational turns? They're just simple serve-and-return interactions between an adult and a child. They're also a proven factor in **healthy brain development and long-term outcomes for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.**



Welcome to LENA Start!

This guide is made for anyone who is interested in implementing LENA Start in their school district, library, public health initiative, state agency, or community partnership. As you read through this guide, remember that we are always happy to discuss the details of what makes the most sense for your individual LENA Start implementation.



Within, you'll find out more about:

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How LENA Start Works: The Fundamentals

There are a lot of things LENA Start does:

- Draws on LENA's widely validated "talk pedometer" technology.
- Facilitates empowering, data-driven conversations.
- Shows beneficial results within weeks. And those results pay dividends for years to come.
- Builds community by bringing caregivers together to share experiences.
- Builds awareness of language development in children and provides caregivers an opportunity to assess their child's individual language skills.
- Accelerates children's language development, according to analysis of Developmental Snapshot™ data.
- Increases scores on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, according to an independent evaluation.
- Increases scores on the Star Early Literacy assessment®, according to an independent evaluation.

There are also a few things LENA Start doesn't do:

- Places extra burdens on families. Rather, it asks them to incorporate simple strategies to increase talk in their typical daily routines.
- Presumes that parents and caregivers are doing anything wrong. Rather, it recognizes their strengths and builds on them.



Positive Benefits for Children Experiencing Extreme Language Delays

There's evidence that LENA Start may have a significant impact for children experiencing extreme language delays. On the Developmental Snapshot, these children scored in the 1st percentile before LENA Start and advanced to the 10th percentile after LENA Start. The number of conversational turns these children experienced also increased, moving from the 39th to the 55th percentile.

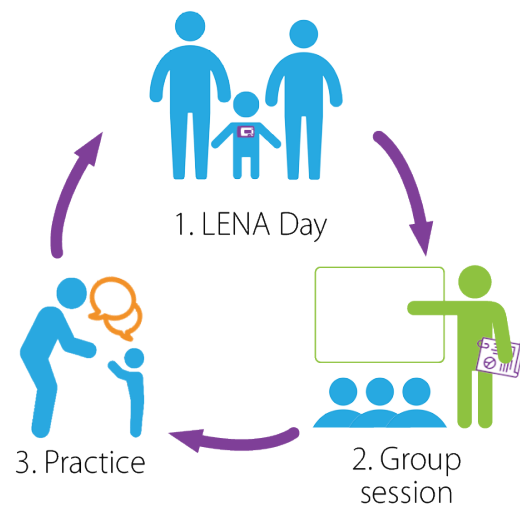
To learn more about outcomes like these and the evidence behind LENA Start, we encourage you to read the [LENA Start Impact Report](#).

The Reflective Feedback Cycle

LENA Start uses data from LENA's "talk pedometer" technology to help caregivers build more brain-building conversational turns into everyday activities.

Following best principles of adult learning, the LENA Start feedback cycle provides caregivers with opportunities to:

- Objectively measure the amount of talk their child experiences each week.
- Set individualized goals and learn strategies to help increase talk.
- Practice the strategies at home during daily routines.



Here's how it works:

- 1. LENA Day:** During a LENA Day, children wear the LENA device, so that interactive talk can be captured and measured. Data from this day is turned into a LENA report that is shared during the group session, enabling families to reflect on their early talk practices.
- 2. Group session:** Coordinators use a strengths-based approach to support families in understanding their LENA Day experience. Families review the objective data from their own LENA Day. Reports show how much interaction a child experienced, enabling families to reflect on their progress and set a clear goal for their next LENA Day. Caregivers also share recent successes and challenges while learning strategies to increase talk during daily routines.
- 3. Practice:** These are the days between a group session and the next LENA Day. During these days, parents and caregivers practice what they have learned while working towards achieving their LENA goals. Intentional practice helps build sustainable habits, which lead to long-term positive outcomes for caregivers and their children.

What a Group Session Looks Like

Relationship-building is a key benefit families experience when participating in LENA Start. Each week, caregivers are encouraged to share personal successes and challenges and build social capital within the group.

There will always be new data from the most recent LENA Day to review at each group session. Reports support strengths-based conversations about what parents' real-life days are like. Coordinators then use engaging curriculum materials to teach families new skills around increasing conversational turns.

Each group session ends with a discussion of goals for the next LENA Day. Families set their own goals based on their personal interests and desired areas of focus. Self-directed goal setting encourages reflection and ownership over personal growth.

The screenshot shows a LENA Online™ report for a child named 'Adult W' on 08/08/23. The report includes a PCTL Legend (High: 75-99, High Avg: 50-74, Low Avg: 25-49, Low: 1-24), Daily Book Reading statistics (Monthly: 11:10 min, 13 min on 08/15, 0 Stars Total), and Total Stars earned (0). The main data is presented in four bar charts: 1. 'Daily Conversational Turns' (07/25, 08/01, 08/08) with a star goal of 902 turns. 2. 'Hourly Conversational Turns on 08/08/23' showing a peak at 11A. 3. 'Daily TV/Electronic Sound' (07/25, 08/01, 08/08) with a star goal of 325. 4. 'Hourly TV/Electronic Sound on 08/08/23' showing peaks at 12P and 7P. The report footer includes the URL 'https://o.lena.org/start3prep/525/print?preplist=INDIVIDUAL_REPORT_LIST' and the page number '6/10'.

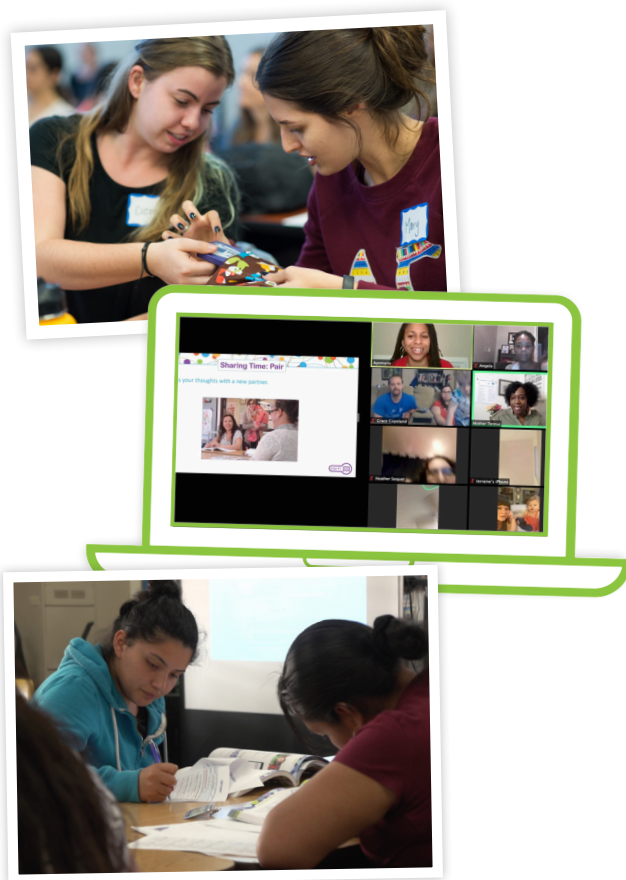
What do you notice about hourly turns this week?

Wow, our turns are really high mid-morning, but not as high around 12 o'clock or the evening. That's usually when she eats.

Interesting! This week we are actually going to talk about ways to increase talk during mealtimes. Maybe there are some strategies you can use during breakfast, lunch, or dinner?

LENA Start Group Session Schedule

The LENA Start curriculum includes content for 10 weekly one-hour sessions. The first four “core content” weeks explain the importance of early talk and the basics of LENA Start. Weeks five through 10 focus on helping families increase talk during everyday routines and activities.

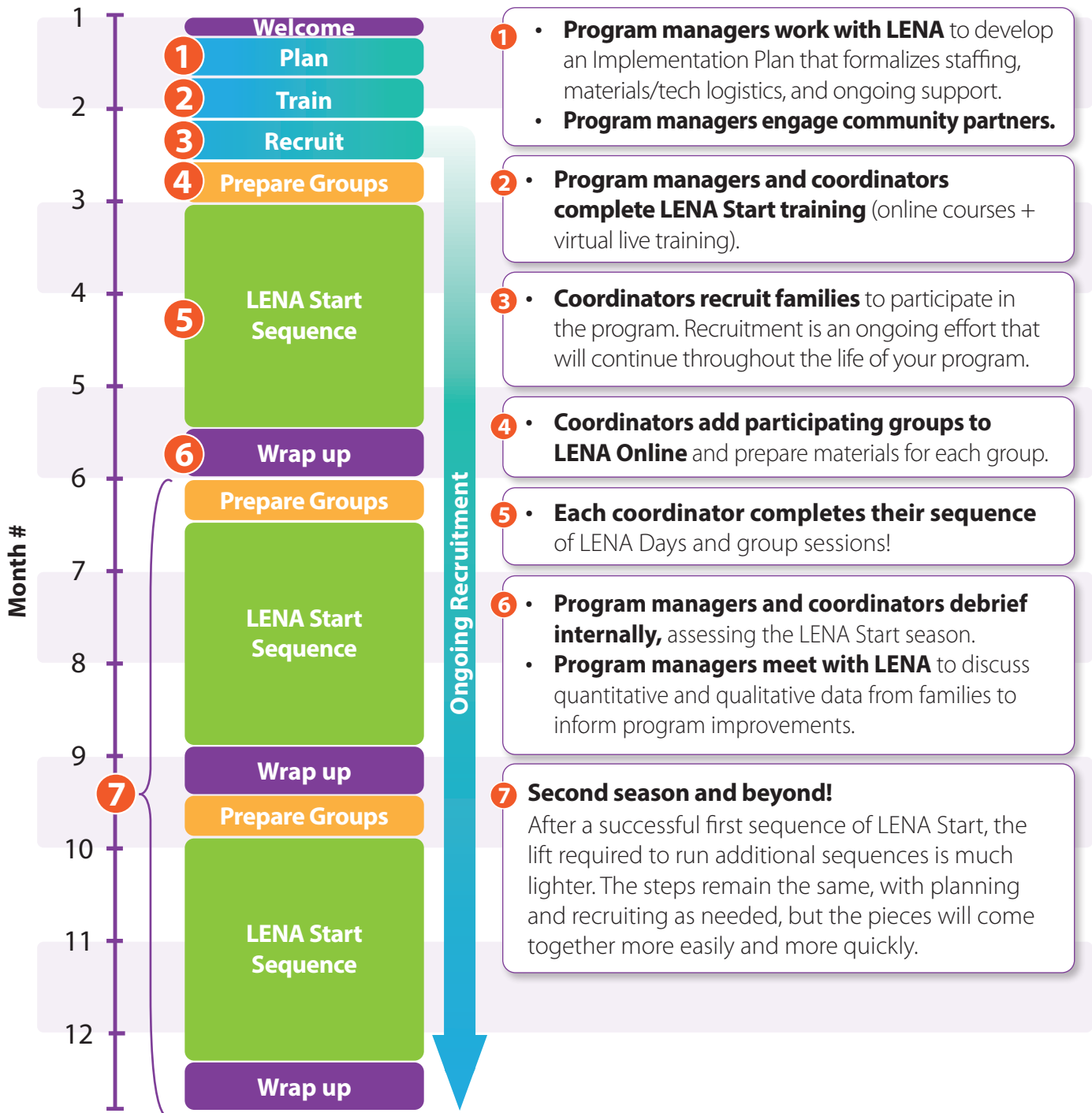


Session Number	LENA Sessions
1	Introduction to LENA Start
2	LENA Reports & The 14 Talking Tips
3	Shared Reading
4	Songs and Rhymes
5	Language of Food
6	Math Talk
7	More About Your Baby's Brain
8	Building Brains by Asking Questions
9	Out & About
10	Graduation Day!

LENA Start can be delivered virtually, in person, or through a combination of in-person and virtual sessions. All sessions offer a unique opportunity for families to connect and learn from one another, providing an antidote to the increased stress, tension, and social isolation many parents experience. Choose the delivery option that works best for your organization and the families in your community.

Launching LENA Start

LENA's Partner Success Team will work with you through the launch process. The figure below shows what the first year generally looks like. Keep in mind, however, that the schedule is designed to move at whatever speed is comfortable for your team. Understanding these steps will help you work within your own organizational schedule and targeted end date to determine when to begin the launch process.



Staffing Your LENA Start Program

Staffing and clear delegation of responsibilities are key to the successful launch and implementation of a LENA Start program. Your organization will designate a program manager and coordinator(s) to implement the program. A program assistant may also be helpful for larger implementations to support inventory management, data entry, and other administrative tasks. Likewise, in smaller implementations, one person may fill multiple roles.



The **program manager** is the lead for LENA Start program planning and implementation and is responsible for the overall success of the program. They will:

- Provide strategic leadership, build partner relationships for sustainability, and ongoing oversight of groups.
- Oversee recruitment strategy with a global view of yearly contract and reach goals.
- Monitor overall implementation and impact by frequently checking key performance metrics, meeting regularly with stakeholders and the LENA team, and addressing challenges as they arise.
- Champion the program by engaging staff, building buy in, and removing barriers.

Time commitment: *Time commitment is greater with the very first implementation. On average, we estimate between 5-10 hours per week, taking into consideration staff familiarity with program delivery and implementation size.*

Coordinators support families in behavior change using LENA data and a strengths-based approach. They will:

- Assist with recruiting families to enroll in LENA Start.
- Provide weekly groups sessions to caregivers in their group. Support them to feel successful, reengaged, and motivated to increase interactive talk using simple strategies.
- Use LENA Online to monitor the families in their group and adequately prepare for weekly content.
- Meet regularly with the program manager to communicate progress and/or setbacks.

Time commitment: *About two hours per week per group.*

The **program assistant** is an optional role for larger implementations that assists the program manager and acts as the point person for all inventory and LENA technology support. They will:

- Store, manage, and oversee the distribution of materials.
- Assist with data entry and management in LENA Online.
- Provide tech troubleshooting and support for coordinators.

Time commitment: *About three hours per week.*

What's Included With LENA Start?

An investment in LENA Start is an investment in children, families, and long-term community impact. All LENA Start materials are available in both English and Spanish. Here are the nuts and bolts of what comes with LENA Start:

LENA Technology

LENA devices are small, wearable, child-safe “talk pedometers” that capture talk interactions between adults and children. Also included: **LENA clothing** designed to position devices in the ideal location to detect a child’s language interactions.

Your LENA Online subscription provides secure access to LENA data from any computer or device, with numerous administrative supports and built-in, real-time measures of effectiveness.



Program Materials

- The **LENA Start Coordinator Notes** serve as a road map and script for the program. Coordinators have the content provided to them through slides and videos and also the freedom to personalize their approach to promote engagement and create a fun group atmosphere.
- The **Facilitation Guide for Virtual Sessions** provides an easy-to-follow framework and includes specific talking points for delivering sessions in a virtual format.
- The **Parent Guide** provides all of the resources caregivers need to complete the LENA Start program, including LENA’s 14 Talking Tips (simple, research-based strategies for increasing talk throughout the day).
- Families also use the **LENA Developmental Snapshot™** to learn more about their child’s language skills relative to their age. Filled out multiple times during the program, this assessment helps measure progress in achieving language developmental milestones. The Snapshot is available for children under age three.

LENA Support

Receive step-by-step guidance from a dedicated Implementation Specialist, system-wide remote training, software configuration assistance, and general program assistance.

Privacy and Security

LENA takes confidentiality and data security seriously. We have implemented robust physical, electronic, and managerial procedures to safeguard the personal information we collect and to prevent unauthorized access and use of such data. No one can listen to LENA Start audio recordings, and the audio is deleted once processed into data. We are System and Organization Controls (SOC) 2 Type II compliant (visit www.LENA.org/security to learn more). While not all customers require this level of data security and protection, we operate to the most stringent requirements in our systems, technology, and processes. More information can be found at www.LENA.org/privacy.

Additional Cost Considerations

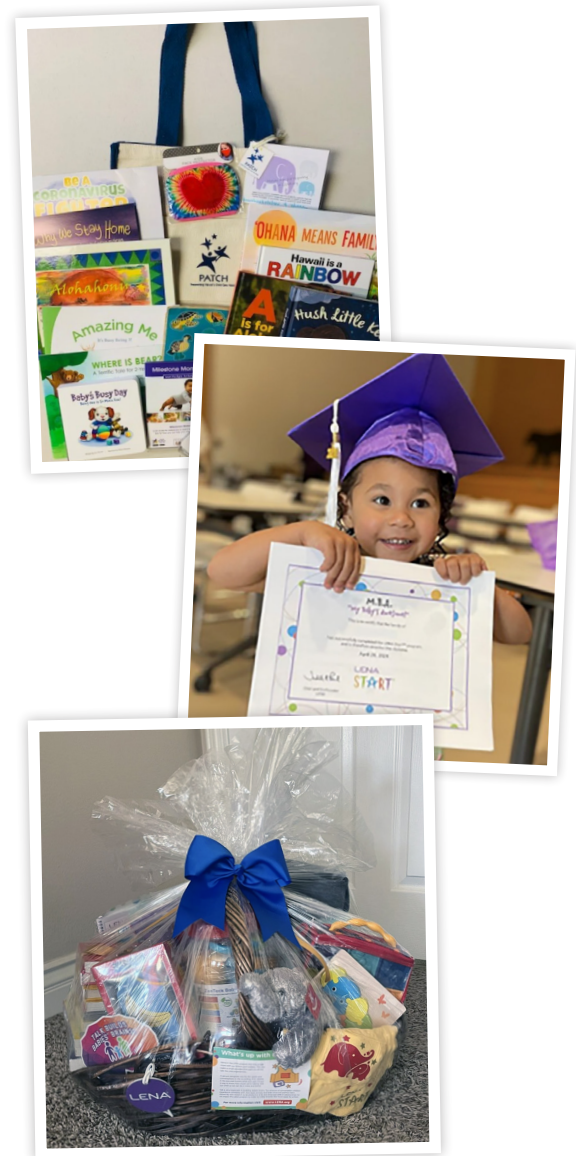
In addition to the materials, technology, and support provided by LENA, additional costs to consider include:

- Inventory storage (clothing, kits, books).
- Recruitment collateral (LENA provides templates) and incentives.
- Printing, distribution, and processing of materials for recruitment, enrollment, Snapshots, and LENA reports.
- Internet/Wi-Fi access during sessions.
- Shared reading books (age appropriate).
- Funds or sponsorship for incentives (optional).

For in-person sessions:

- Meeting rooms for family group sessions.
- Child care for group sessions.
- Local laptops/projector to present material.
- Meals or snacks during meetings.

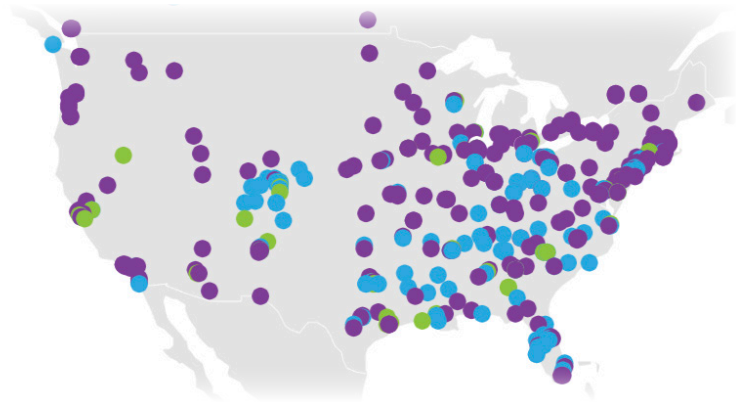
Actual costs for these vary considerably based on availability of pre-existing resources, volunteer vs. paid staff, donations from community partners, and so forth. LENA can supply worksheets and other assistance to help plan costs in specific situations.



Keys to Success

Over 10,000 families across more than 50 partner organizations have successfully participated in a LENA Start program. Here are a few elements they've shared that helped them start off with success and scale up in Year 2 and beyond:

1. **A highly engaged program manager** who (with support from LENA) creates and communicates a clear implantation plan to key staff and stakeholders, ensuring that adequate time and resources are in place for coordinators to effectively plan and lead parent groups.
2. **Maintaining the feedback cycle** is an integral part of achieving program outcomes. Families must consistently complete their LENA Days between each weekly session and receive feedback on their child's talk environment in the form of their weekly talk report.
3. **Recruiting families through established community partners** and relationships leads to stronger initial program enrollment and retention. (For example, partnering with libraries or family resource centers that have already established trusted relationships with families.)
4. **Leadership** plays a vital role in building enthusiasm for the value of the program. Program managers and coordinators are most successful when they believe the LENA program will impact families positively.



LENA program locations in the U.S.

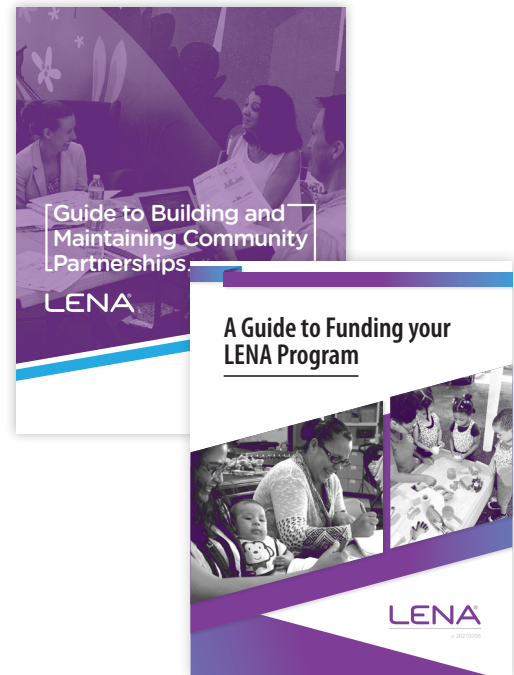
Explore our interactive map of current LENA partners at lena.org/where-are-lena-programs!

Next Steps

After you review the attached estimate, LENA will provide a quote and program agreement to formalize the partnership with a mutually agreed upon effective date.

We have resources to support you both in securing funding and presenting LENA Start to internal teams and potential community partners.

Following the signing of your program agreement, LENA's Partner Success Team will work closely with you to initiate your program launch!



Sole Source Letter

August 28, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

As of this date, the LENA System™ is the only validated tool for automatically measuring adult word counts, conversational turn counts (a proxy for serve and return interaction), child vocalization counts, and other metrics associated with the child's natural language environment. It is used in a wide variety of research studies around the world and has been integrated into programs focused on improving interactive talk between parents/caregivers/teachers and children. More information on the core technology is provided here: <https://www.lena.org/technology/>.

The patented and proprietary LENA System comprises: the specially-designed recording device; acoustically-designed clothing to properly hold the recorder; LENA software that offloads, uploads, and/or processes the audio data; and LENA Online™, the cloud-based data and reporting system. Information on LENA's patents can be found here: <https://www.lena.org/patents/>. The LENA System has been integrated into the proprietary LENA Start® (<https://www.lena.org/lena-start/>) and LENA Grow® (<https://www.lena.org/lena-grow/>) adult learning (professional development) programs delivering objective feedback on the natural language environment and coaching tips to parents/caregivers and teachers. This feedback has unique advantages: comprising a sequence of full day of objective data versus short-duration snippets and is specific to each child (because the child wears their device). LENA SP™ (<https://www.lena.org/lena-sp/>) is a proprietary configuration of LENA Online designed to meet the needs of researchers and other language professionals.

The LENA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity based in Colorado and is the sole source provider of the LENA System, LENA Start, LENA Grow, and LENA SP. LENA Foundation sells and distributes all LENA products as reflected on the then internally-published price list. All products are sold at the same price level under the Foundation's standard or other comparable terms and conditions to all educational institutions, not-for-profit, and for-profit organizations. Volume discounts are offered to all customers.

Sincerely,



Stephen M. Hannon President and CEO