



*Building brains through early talk*

## National nonprofit LENA to exhibit its “talk pedometer” technology at ALA

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Boulder, Colo. — LENA, a national nonprofit on a mission to transform children’s futures through early talk technology and data-driven programs, is proud to be a first-time exhibitor at the 2022 ALA Annual Conference & Exhibition.

LENA’s [“talk pedometer” technology](#) is the industry standard for measuring serve-and-return interactions with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers — a critical factor in early brain development. A growing body of peer-reviewed studies has linked these [serve-and-return interactions](#) to improved social-emotional development, executive functioning, language development, and brain structure and function.

Libraries around the country — large and small, urban and rural alike — [partner with LENA](#) to put this “talk pedometer” technology into the hands of parents. [LENA Start](#) is a turnkey family engagement program with long-lasting community impact. To date, over 1,200 families have participated in the LENA Start program through their public library. Library systems use LENA Start to:

- Support healthy early literacy practices.
- Entice new families to connect with library resources.
- Encourage a celebration of bilingualism in families who speak minoritized languages (LENA works in every language!).
- Provide caregivers with unique, actionable data on how to bolster their children’s development.
- Create a safe space for families from vulnerable populations to connect, organize, and unite.

“LENA has a very nice plug-and-play curriculum, where you can add information that’s specific to your community but you’re still on message during the program,” said Kathleen Harris, Early Literacy Outreach Team Supervisor at Phoenix Public Library. “It has a great impact, seeing the families sharing with one another. There was also over time a subtle impact that I noticed to our staff.”

Longitudinal analysis of LENA Start shows that children whose parents participate in the program exhibit [elevated language skills](#) at a 12-month follow-up, and that those elevated language skills endure for the longer term, at least two years. The benefits are particularly strong among those children who were at risk for language delays before their family began the program.

“It’s quickly become clear that a ‘LENA plus library’ partnership can make an immediate impact in a community,” said Caitlyn Stafford, LENA’s Growth Manager. “We are excited to engage with as many ALA attendees as we can to spread the word about the importance of early talk and how to implement a LENA program.”



**For more information, contact:**

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