

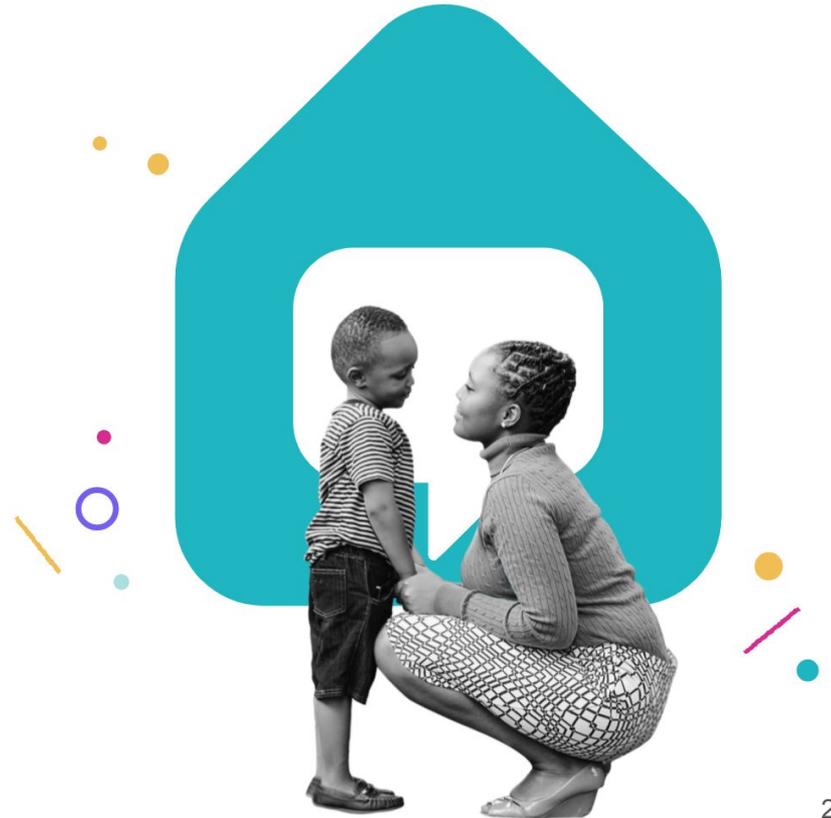


Helping children under five build a foundation for lifelong literacy

*Birmingham Talks is a partnership between The Overton Project,  
the City of Birmingham, and Bloomberg Philanthropies.*

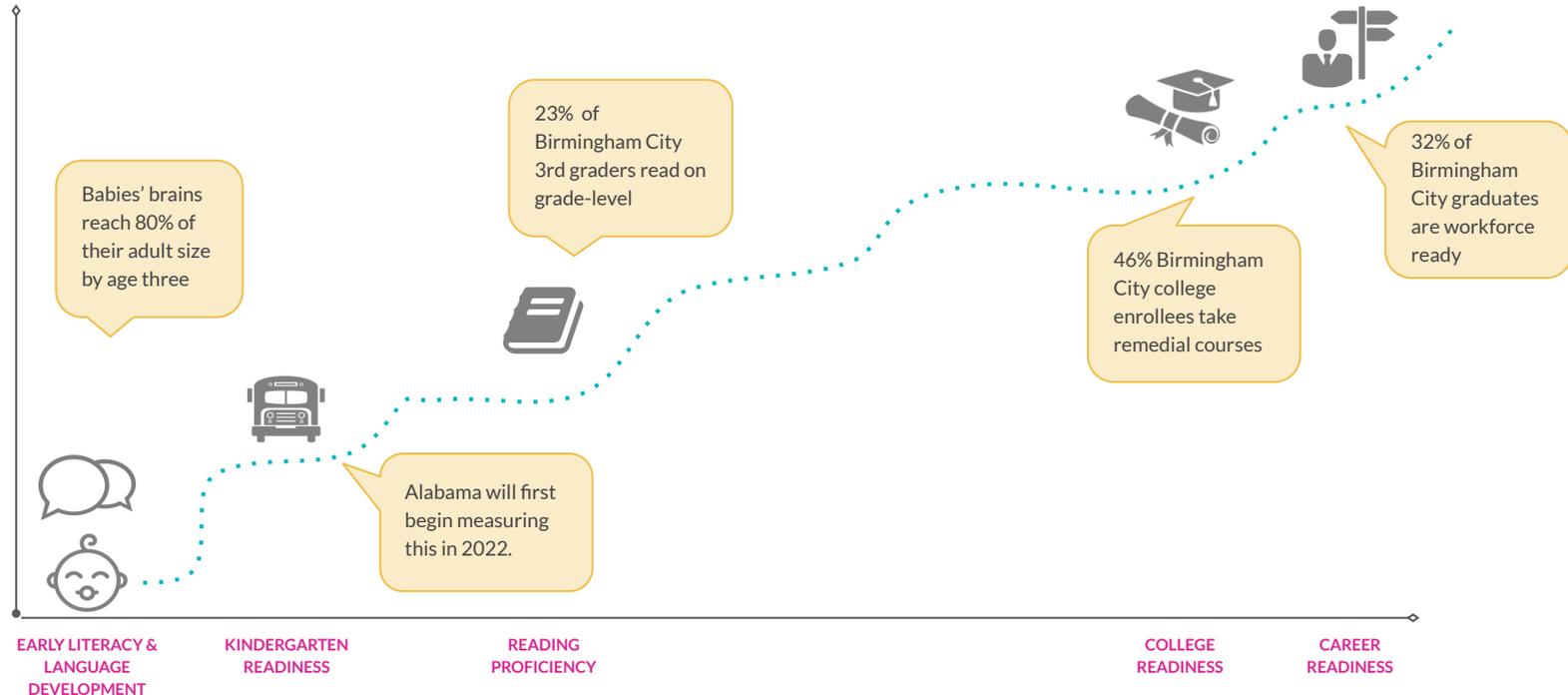
# History of the organization

- Birmingham Talks (BT) was founded in 2019 by the City of Birmingham, Bloomberg Philanthropies, and The Overton Project.
- BT is the only program in the state offering an early literacy intervention that utilizes quantifiable data.
- After 3 years of proven results, Birmingham Talks is poised to significantly expand locally -- with strong support from Mayor Randall Woodfin and the City of Birmingham.

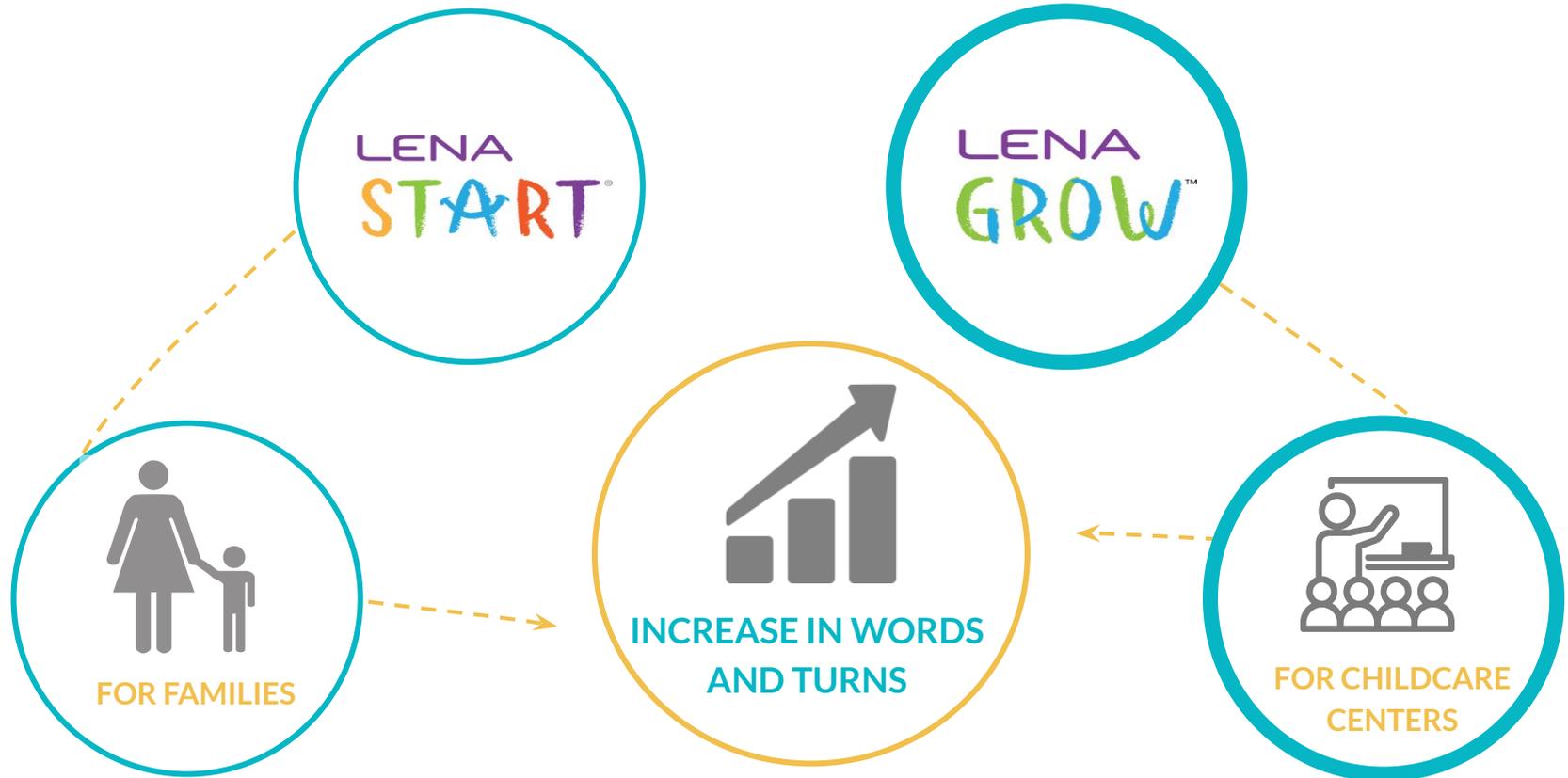


# Our big bet: investing in early IQ has life-time value

Babies need to hear roughly 21,000 words per day for optimal brain development. Many children who enter our program hear 4,000-6,000 words a day -- less than 50% of what they need to be ready for kindergarten, college, and the workforce.



# One goal, two signature programs



# Start - an empowering parent program

Start is a 8- 10 week program for caregivers of children 4 months-4 years old. The program uses a combination of technology and coaching to impact early literacy and parent/child relationships.



# How LENA technology works

LENA technology is the industry standard for measuring talk with children. LENA is comprised of technology,, curriculum, and coaching -- all of which helps adults make sustainable increases in interactive talk with children.



The child wears a LENA accessory for a full day. It counts 12-16 hours of talk.



The LENA device counts:  
a) words spoken to child  
b) “conversational turns”  
c) minutes of TV and electronic noise

# What kind of data does a LENA device generate?

LENA generates detailed progress reports that include data on adult words, conversational turns, and electronic noise. These reports are user-friendly and allow coaches to tailor the curriculum to each caregiver.

Daily totals

Adult words

Turns

TV and Electronic Sound

1

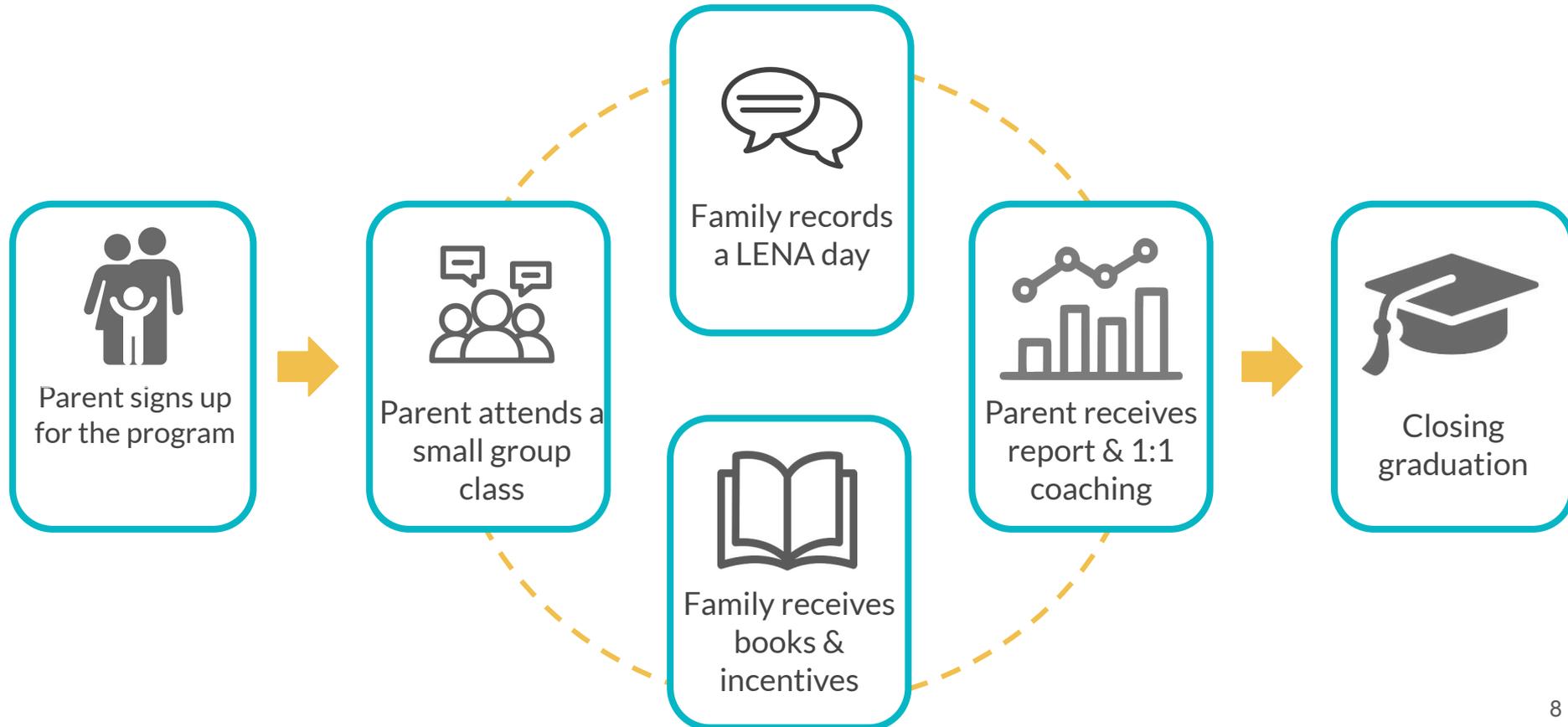
2

3



Hourly  
breakouts

# Start: 8-10 week program cycle



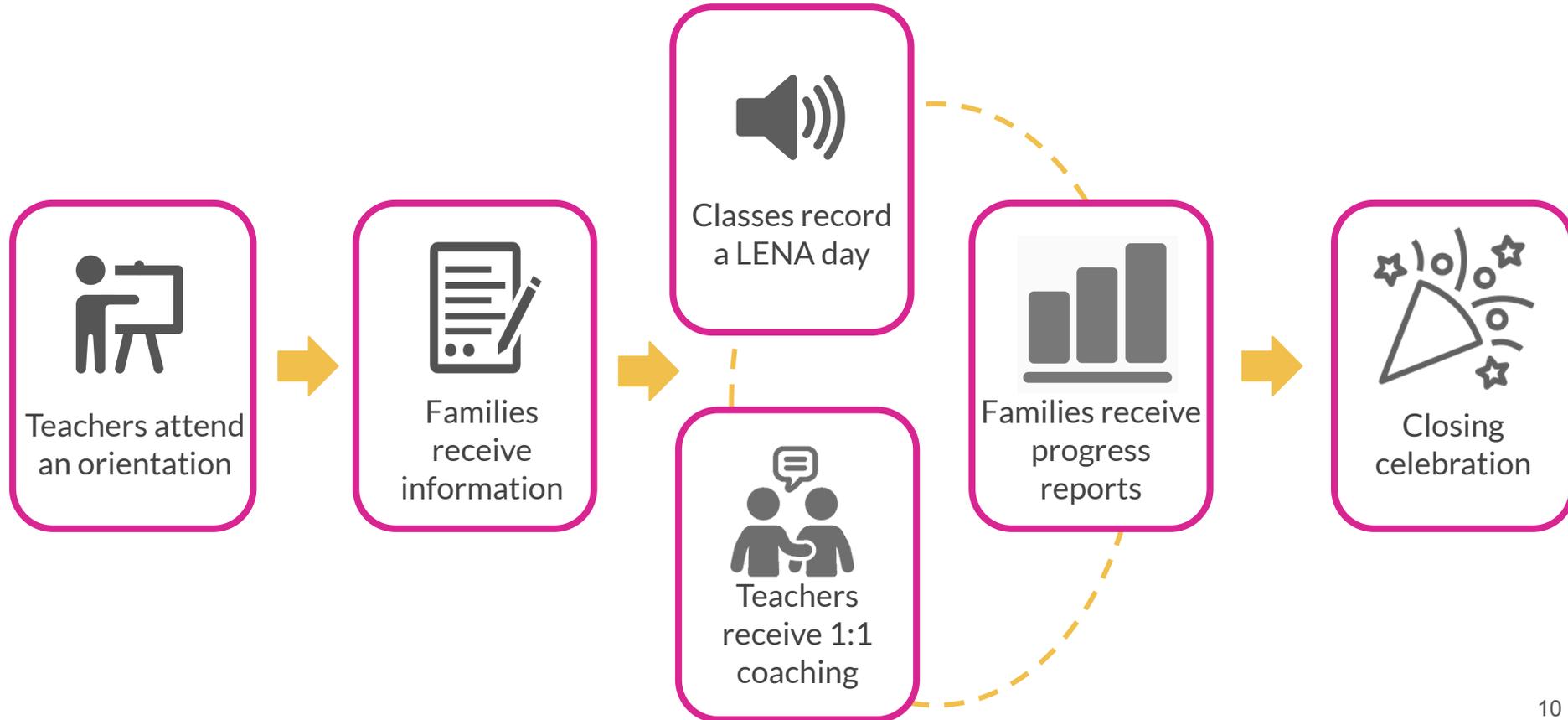
# Grow - an empowering professional development program



Grow is a 10 week program for early childhood educators. The program uses a combination of technology and coaching to impact early literacy and educator/child relationships.



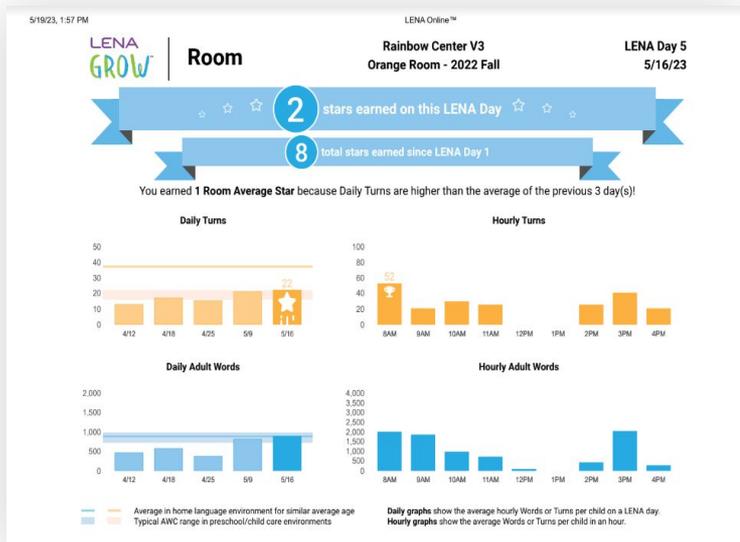
# Grow: 10 week program cycle



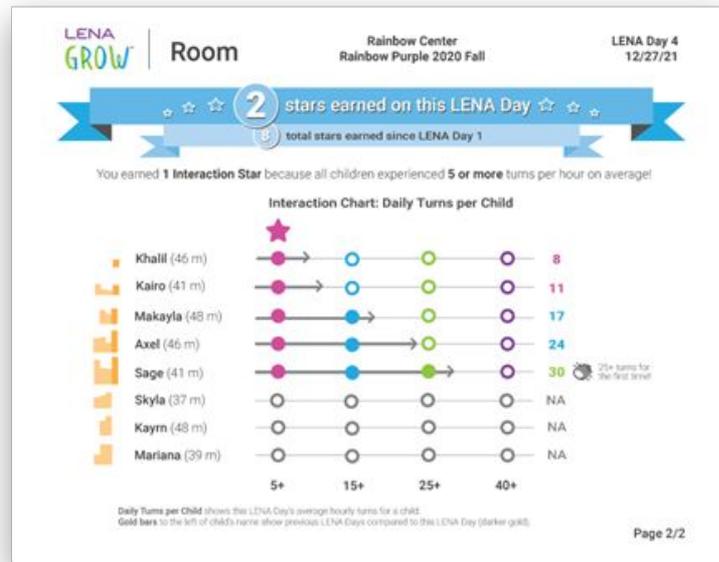
# What kind of data does LENA Grow generate?

LENA generates detailed progress reports that include data on adult words, conversational turns, and electronic noise. These reports are user-friendly and allow coaches to tailor the curriculum to each teacher.

Classroom talk summary



Individual child breakout



# Benefits of program implementation



LENA Grow  
certification

clock hours of  
professional  
development



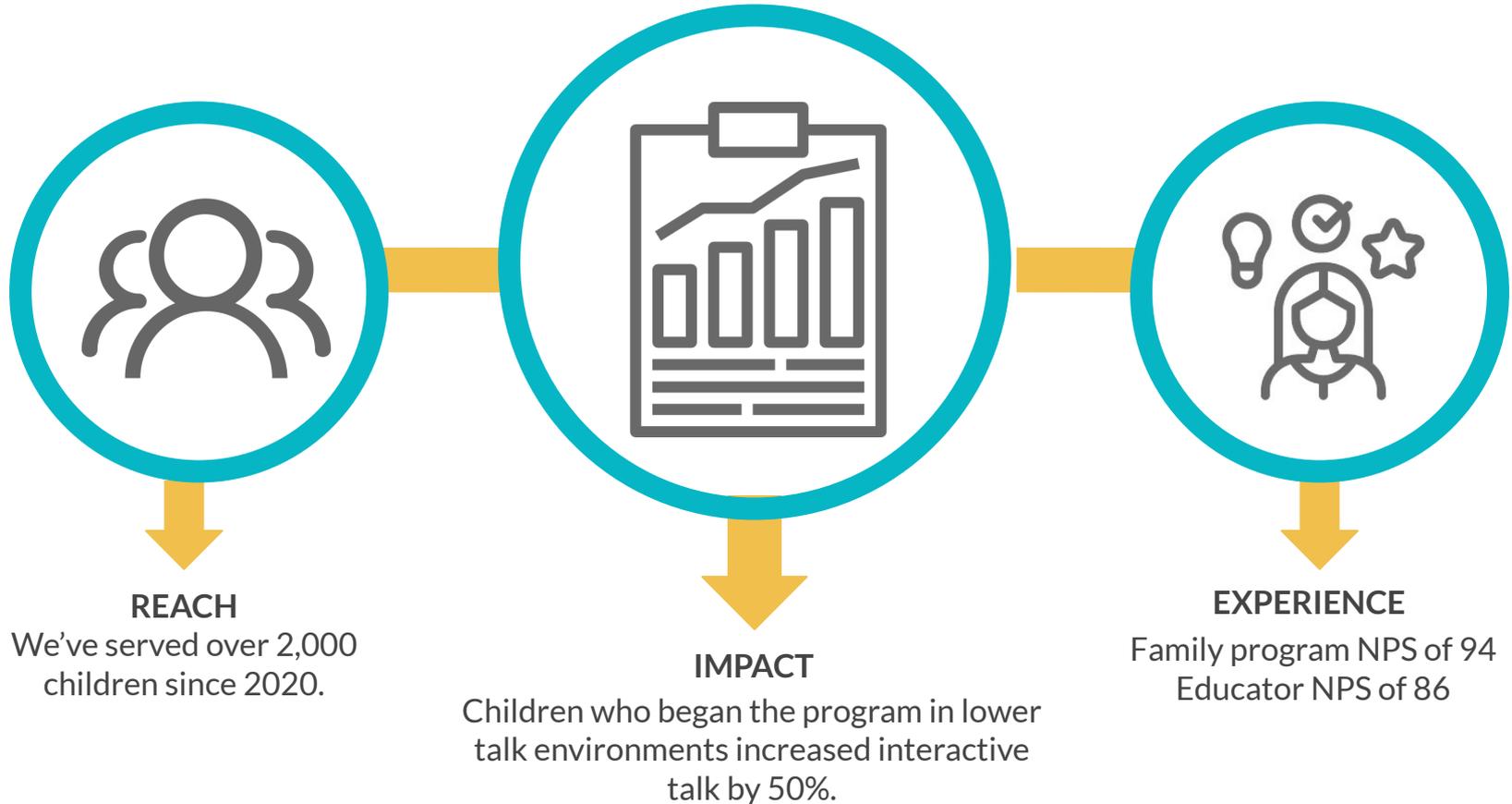
children 3x more  
likely to be ready for  
kindergarten



books and  
classroom  
resources

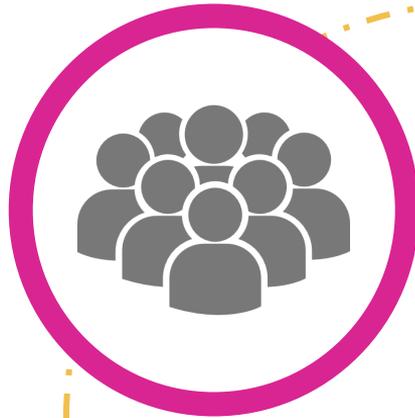
Gift cards  
for teachers





## COMMUNITY DEMAND

Desire for programming is at an all time high. 400 children were on a waitlist for services this winter; 3 families raise hands for every 1 spot.



## POLITICAL WILL

Mayor Randall Woodfin is highly invested in early childhood education broadly and Birmingham Talks specifically.

## COMMUNITY NEED

92% of children start the program hearing <21k words a day.  
62% start the program hearing <10k.





- Provides partners with recruitment fliers
- Provides consent forms to families
- Facilitates program sessions and individual coaching calls
- Provides all needed resources (technology, curriculum, family incentives, etc.)
- Manages device upload and disperses incentives for families
- Hosts graduation celebration for families

## Participating Partner Organization

- Shares program information with families via physical and/or digital means (fliers, social media, email, etc.)
- Encourages employees who have contact with families to learn more about the program and assist with recruited families within their reach
- When appropriate, allows their physical location to be used as host site for groups during the cohort cycle

Investing in children early is both a moral and a strategic imperative.



## How can you get involved in this work?

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Share our program with a friend or family member with a child under 5 years old.



When you're around a child, talk to them.



For partnerships or questions:  
Raven Johnson  
[raven@bhmtalks.org](mailto:raven@bhmtalks.org)

