VIRGINIA BEACH TALKS

VIRGINIA BEACH GROWSMART
Planting the seeds for a successful life.

Innovation Impact Snapshot

In 2019, Virginia Beach was one of 5 Cities selected by Bloomberg Philanthropies to participate in a National Early Childhood Education Innovation grant to replicate the Providence Talks early language program for children ages 0–5 years.

Like Providence Talks, **Virginia Beach Talks** uses LENA talk technology ("talk pedometer"), data insights to measure and improve a child's language environment plus modeling/ coaching adult caregivers.
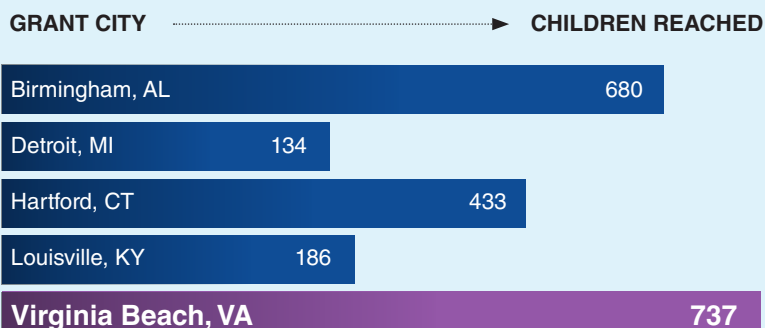
Why Early Talk Matters

If we can strengthen learning environments for young children ages 0-5 years, at home, at school/childcare, and in the community, we believe we could strengthen their healthy development and school readiness assessments, which then leads to stronger performance and success in school and life.

— BARB LITO, GROWSMART COORDINATOR

Results

During the grant period (2019-2022), Virginia Beach has reached more than **737 young children** ages 0–5 years with its three Virginia Beach Talks LENA programs.

Virginia Beach ranked 1st in Cumulative Program Recruitment among the 5 award cities!

GRANT CITY ➤ CHILDREN REACHED

GRANT CITY	CHILDREN REACHED
Birmingham, AL	680
Detroit, MI	134
Hartford, CT	433
Louisville, KY	186
Virginia Beach, VA	**737**

Source: LENA Results Snapshot: 2019-2022 to date.

Educator model (GROW)

58 Child Care classrooms and 80 teachers participated in GROW Coaching. The results— gains!

- **+142 More Adult Words.** Children were exposed to 142 more words per hour in childcare settings
- **+6 More Conversational Turns**. Children were engaged in +6 additional conversational turns per hour in childcare settings
- **75% Increase in Turns/Hou**r for children who started at lower talk levels!

    "GROW has helped focus on quality interactions. The talking tips are easy to use, and we've continued using them beyond the coaching!"

    — GROW EARLY EDUCATOR

Parent model (START)

Families participating in this program showed gains!

- **+15 Percentile Increase** in Adult Words
- **+8 Percentile Increase** in conversational turns
- **+26 Percentile Gain** in expressive and receptive language skills

    "I thought the talk pedometer was a unique and advanced way to track my child's level of engagement."

    — **START PARENT GRADUATE**

Home model (HOME)

- **+13** percentile Increase in Adult Words
- **+4** percentile Increase in conversational turns

Virginia Beach Talks LENA program results at a glance

GROW
532

START
170

HOME
35

Results are as of May 1, 2022

Virginia Beach Talks LENA Program Impact Highlights

We have seen measurable gains no matter where they started!
Source: cumulative program results per program as of the May 1, 2022 report.

Measurable Increases in 2 key language development indicators!

• Number of adult words = words spoken by adults to children
• Conversational turns = the back-and-forth interactions between children and adults.

THE "SECRET" of OUR SUCCESS?

I think our "secret sauce" is our long-term collaborative partnerships and focused investment in early childhood. We already had trusted relationships with our collaborative partners and childcare providers in our community, which led to natural connections with the programs and families on this innovation project.

— BARB LITO, GROWSMART COORDINATOR

Our Valued Partners

Virginia Beach Talks is made possible by the following partners:

VIRGINIA BEACH **GROWSMART** Planting the seeds for a successful life.

VB City of Virginia Beach

VIRGINIA BEACH PUBLIC **LIBRARY**

SCHOOL STARTS AT SUCCESS **SQUARE ONE**

United Way United Way of South Hampton Roads

VIRGINIA BEACH **PARKS & RECREATION** VBGOV.COM/PARKS

VB City of Virginia Beach Human Services

BabyCare Virginia Beach Health Department

MHK MILE HIGH KIDS Community Development Inc.

Healthy Families Virginia Beach

AND THE SUPPORT OF THE VIRGINIA BEACH GROWSMART FOUNDATION

LENA Programs at a Glance

LENA stands for **L**anguage **En**vironment **A**nalysis.

LENA GROW:
Childcare centers geared to early educators of children ages 0-5.

LENA START:
Family group model geared to parents with children ages 0-3.

LENA HOME:
Home visitors working with parents of children ages 0-3.

How LENA Technology Works

A child wears a specially-designed vest which holds a small wearable device called a "talk pedometer." The device measures adult words and "conversational turns"—back and forth conversations between a child and adult. Data from the device provides actionable feedback on the child's language environment and development.

To learn more about LENA, visit
www.lena.org

For more information about GrowSmart programs visit:
vbgrowsmart.com or call **757-385-0144**