



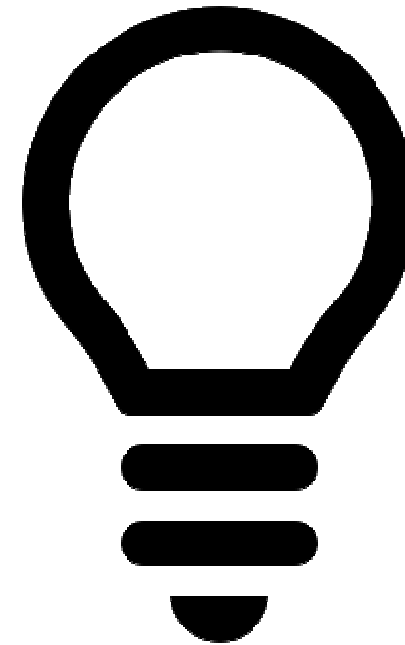
Social Science at the Center of Policymaking: The Texas Policy Lab

Rice University School of Social Sciences

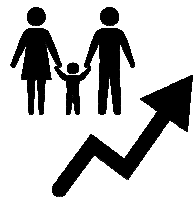
November 26, 2018



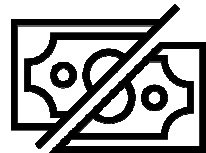
1. WHAT IS THE LAB?



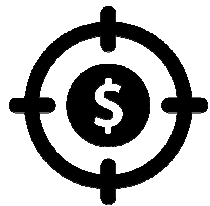
The need



Texas has a rapidly growing population...



...which has strained public resources...



...creating urgency for funding what works



Our model



A different model of relationship between academic researchers and policymakers:



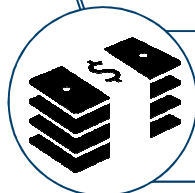
Government lacks the capacity to answer critical questions

We put policymakers' questions and concerns first:
how can academics help solve their problems?

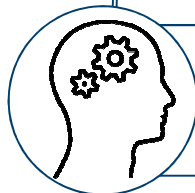
Our mission



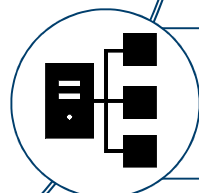
Put science at the center of policymaking



Make most of taxpayer dollars



Foster public discussion on data-driven policy

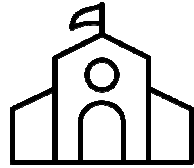


Break silos and link datasets



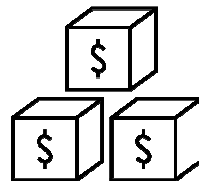
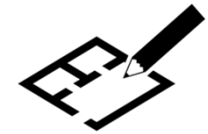
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Getting started



Housed in School of Social Sciences

Result of a vision in preparation for years



Funded by School of Social Sciences and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation

Official launch on the steps of the capitol -
August 30, 2018



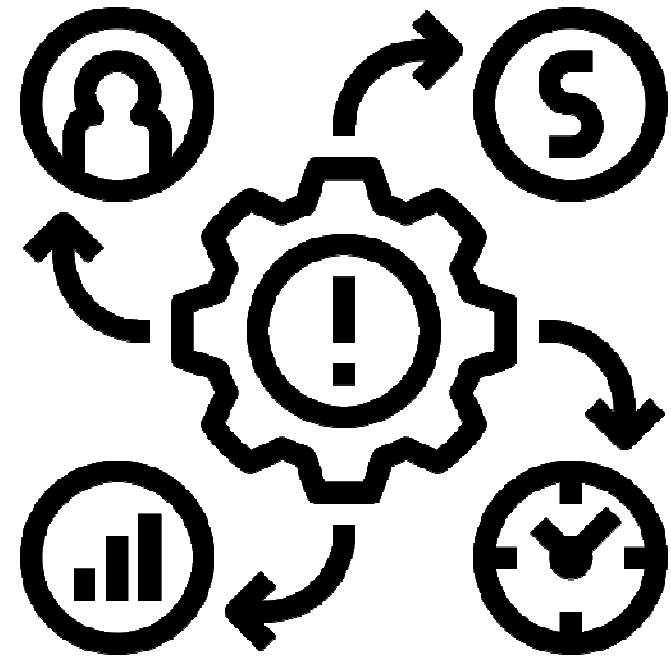
National
model



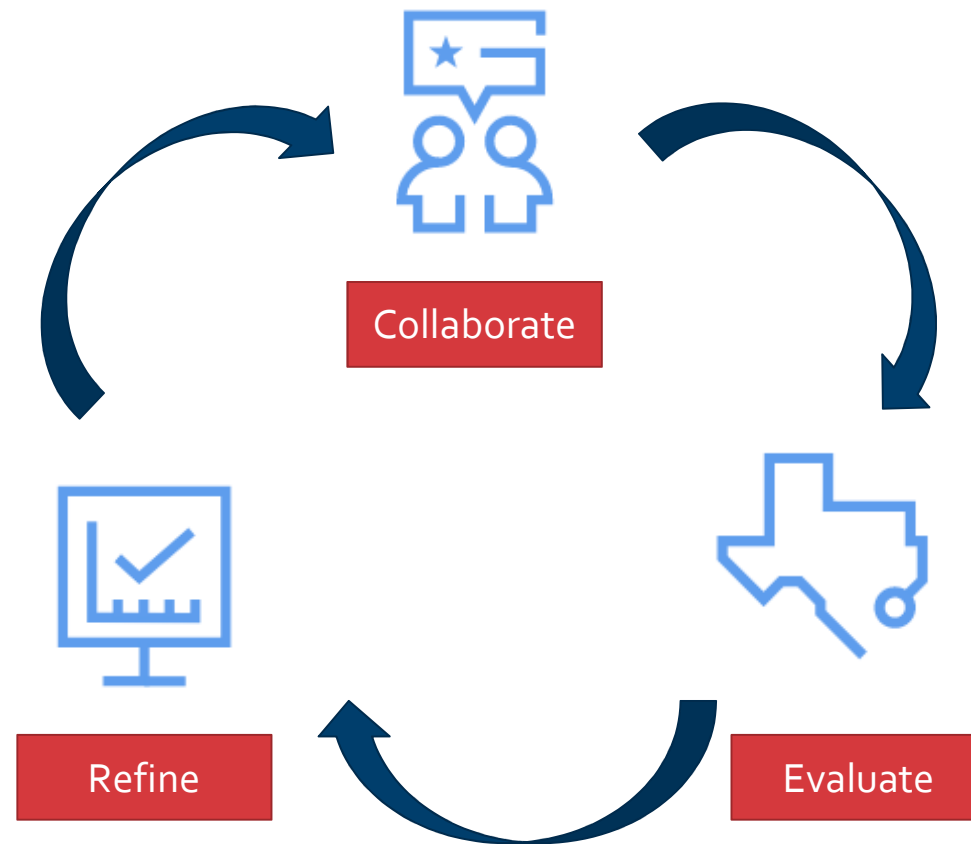
We are one of nine labs in six states and the
District of Columbia



2. OUR PROCESS



How we
partner





3. OUR PARTNERS

Current priorities



Our partners work across four priority policy areas:



Criminal & Juvenile Justice



Early childhood & youth development








Public health and healthcare



Labor markets



Texas Policy Lab Research Priority Areas and Projects (as of 10/31/18)

	Policy Area	Key government partners	Current projects
	Criminal and Juvenile Justice	Texas Department of Criminal Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TDCJ's Three-Phase Re-entry program Acceleron Learning Re-entry Program
		Texas Juvenile Justice Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Violent Offenders Program
	Early Childhood and Youth Development	Department of Family & Protective Services (PEI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurse Family Partnership Community Youth Development
		Texas Workforce Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Texas Rising Star (child care quality)
		Harris County Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WIC Brain Development Seminar Program
		Alief ISD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language Development w/ IENA Start
	Public Health and Healthcare	Harris County Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asthma Open Airways Program
	Labor Markets	Texas Workforce Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TWC Shared Work Program
		Texas Veterans Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TVC Employee Training Programs

Example partnership and project:

TDCJ's Three-Phase
Reentry Program



Phase I – Identification Processing.

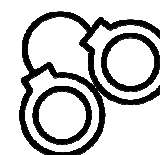
Phase II – Assessment and Reentry Planning.

Phase III – Community Reentry Services.



Example partnership and project:

TDCJ's Three-Phase Reentry Program



Does the program reduce recidivism?

Does the program improve offenders' employment outcomes?

Should TDCJ expand the program?



DFPS's Community Youth Development Program

- The CYD Program serves youth age 10-17.
- A vast array of services, including:
 - academic support services,
 - life skills and career development,
 - character education,
 - conflict resolution,
 - youth sports and recreational services, and
 - programs that promote family support and involvement.



DFPS's Community Youth Development Program



Does the program reduce youth involvement with juvenile justice?

Does the program increase schooling?

Does the program improve labor market outcomes?

TJJD's Capital and Serious Violent Offenders Program



We are working with TJJD to develop new programs for youths that are committed for murder or if the offense involved the use of a weapon or deadly force.

Development of new program uses state of the art evidence from brain development in adolescence.



TJJD's Capital and Serious Violent Offenders Program

Format:

- Group-based program.
- Lasts 16 weeks (about one hour per week).
- Goal: Help teens cope more effectively in the moment, enhance self-efficacy, connect with others and establish supportive relationships, cultivate awareness, & create meaning in their lives.



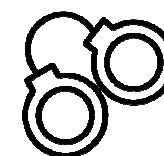
TJJD's Capital and Serious Violent Offenders Program

Skills:

- Mindfulness;
- Problem-Solving;
- Meaning-Making;
- Relationship building/Communication Skills;
- Distress Tolerance, and
- Psychoeducation regarding stress, trauma, and triggers.



TJJD's Violent Offenders Program

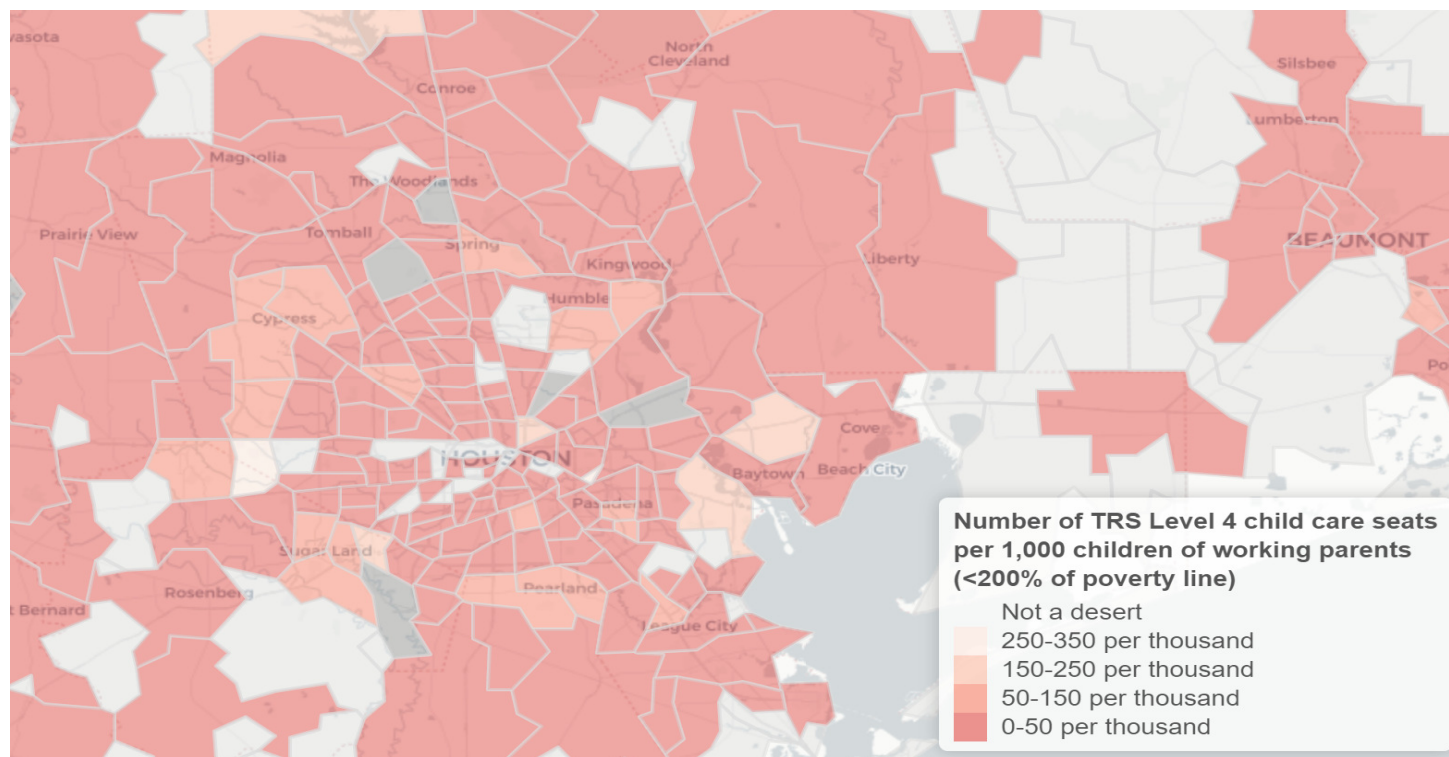


Is it possible to improve emotional regulation?

Does the program reduce youth further involvement with juvenile justice?

TWC's Child Care Program

*Example
Project*



Example partnership and project:

TWC's Child Care Program



Are children in higher quality child care better-off?

Can TWC's reimbursement policies incentivize higher quality child care?



Example partnership and project:

LENA Start Program



- An important issue is low literacy skills of children growing in low-income families.
- Low literacy skills are preceded by low levels of language development.
- Can we change this reality?



LENA Start Program



INFORMATION



KNOWLEDGE



FEEDBACK



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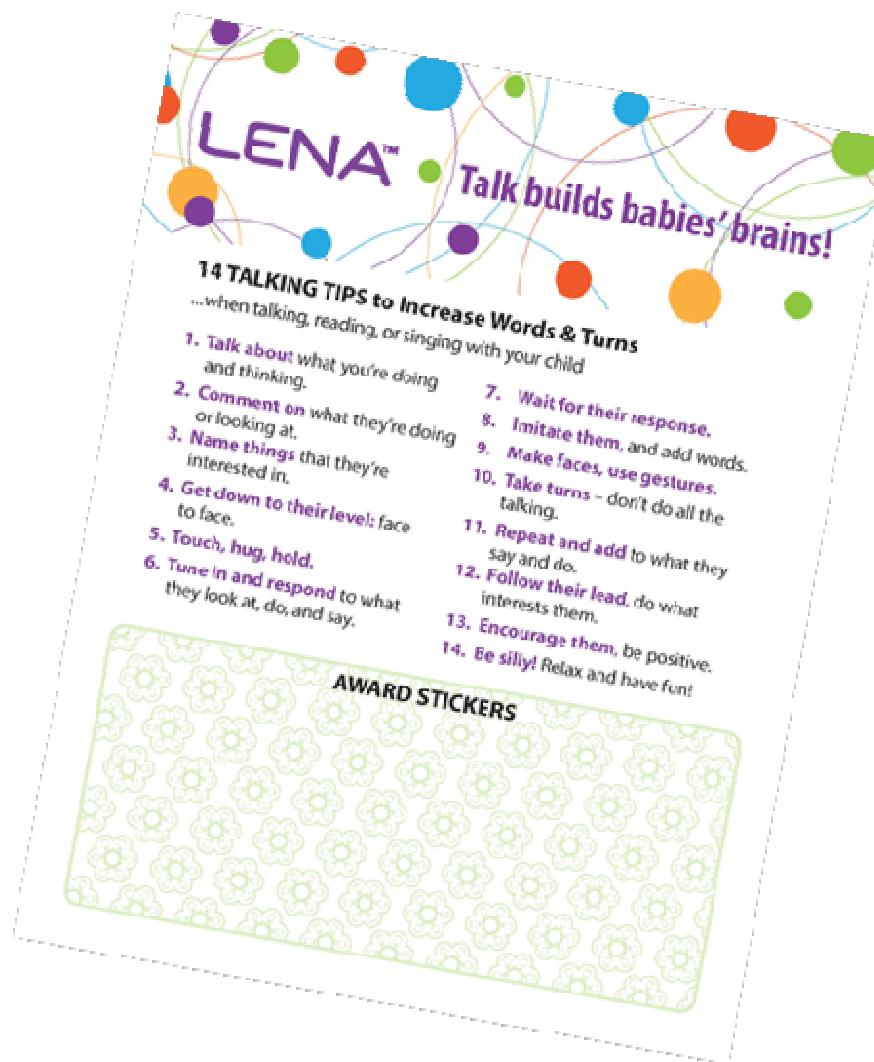
LENA Start Program: Information



Session Number	Title
1	<i>Introduction to LENA Start</i>
2	<i>LENA Reports & the 14 Talking Tips</i>
3	<i>Shared Reading</i>
4	<i>Songs and Rhymes</i>
5	<i>Talking Tips Practice & Group Report</i>
6	<i>More About Your Baby's Brain</i>
7	<i>Midpoint Reflections</i>
8	<i>Math Talk: Movement</i>
9	<i>Building Brains by Asking Questions</i>
10	<i>Language of Food</i>
11	<i>Math Talk: Space</i>
12	<i>Out and About</i>
13	<i>Graduation Day!</i>



LENA Start Program Knowledge



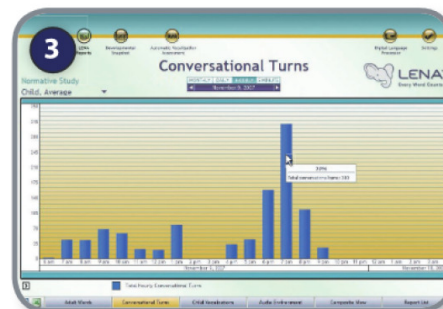
LENA Start Program Feedback



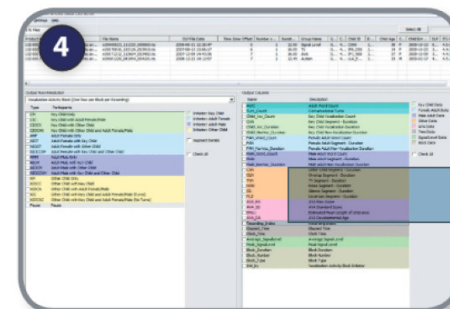
Turn on the DLP and place it in the pocket of the child's LENA clothing.



After completing recording, plug the DLP into a PC running LENA Pro. The sophisticated language environment analysis software automatically uploads and processes the audio file.



The software generates the LENA reports and other analyses.

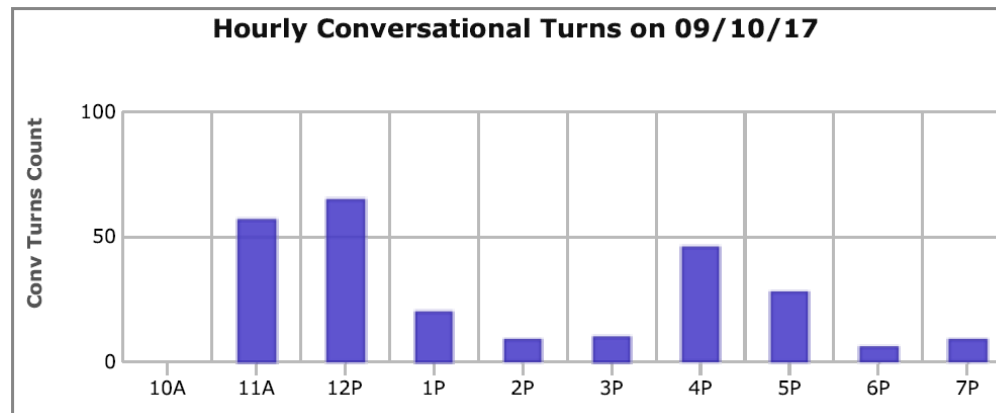
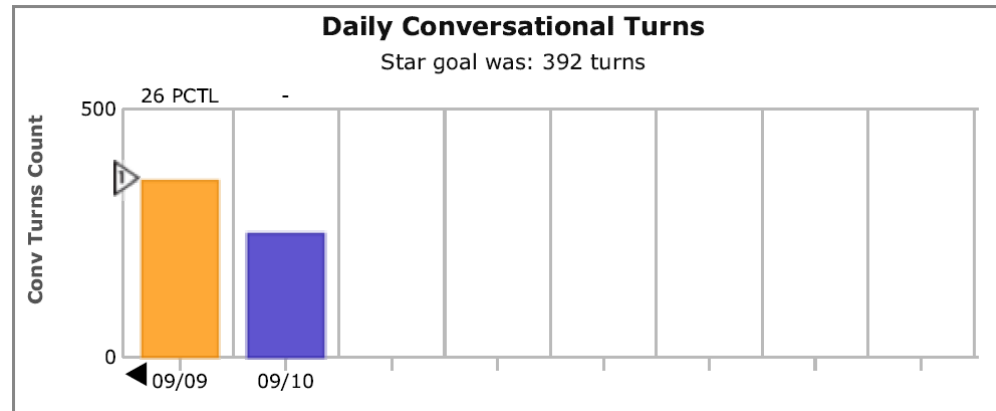


Export data from LENA Pro to mine your LENA data and perform custom in-depth analyses.

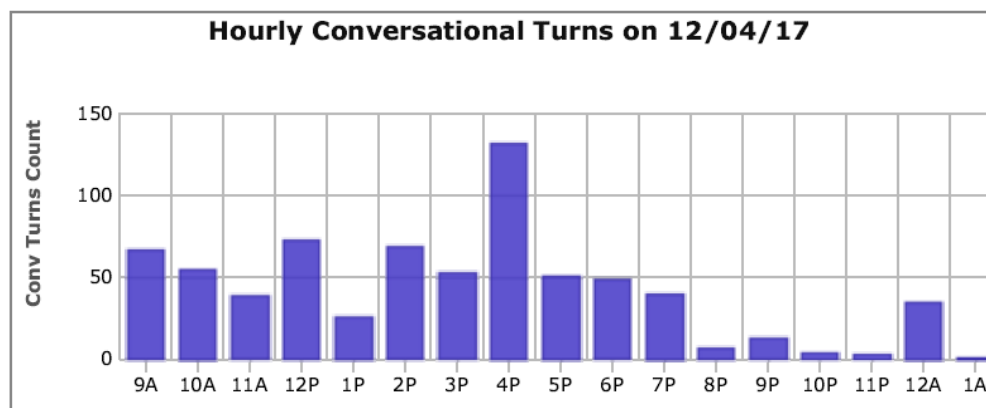
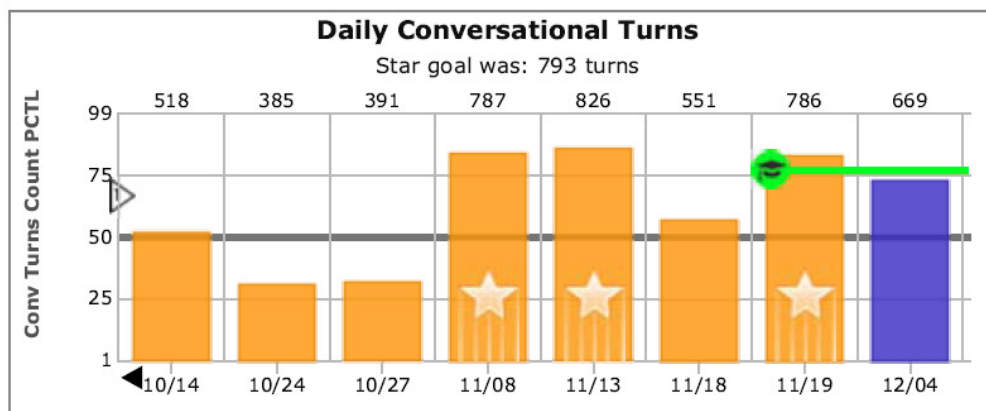


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LENA Start Program: Baseline



LENA Start Program: Three Months Later



LENA Start Program: Impacts



- Conversation turn counts increase by **44% of a standard deviation.**
- Maternal beliefs about the importance of conversation for language development increases by **40% of a standard deviation.**

Example partnership and project:

LENA Start Program



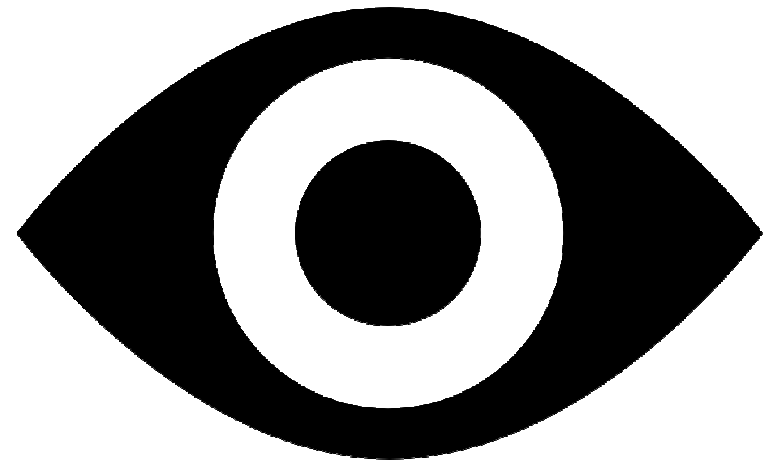
Possible to improve language development of very young children?

Will it lead to improvement in literacy?

Is it possible to be implemented at large scale in schools?



4. WHERE WE ARE HEADED



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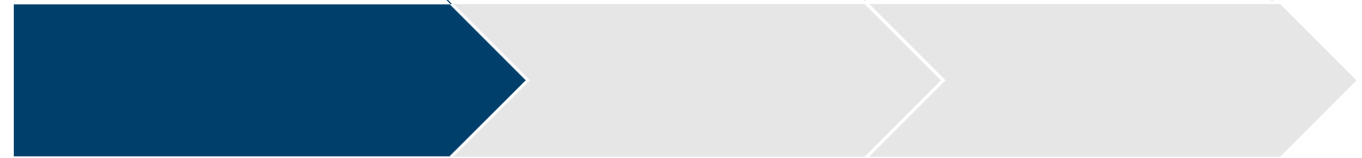
Short-term goals



2019

2021

2025



Establish and formalize
all key partnerships



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Short-term goals



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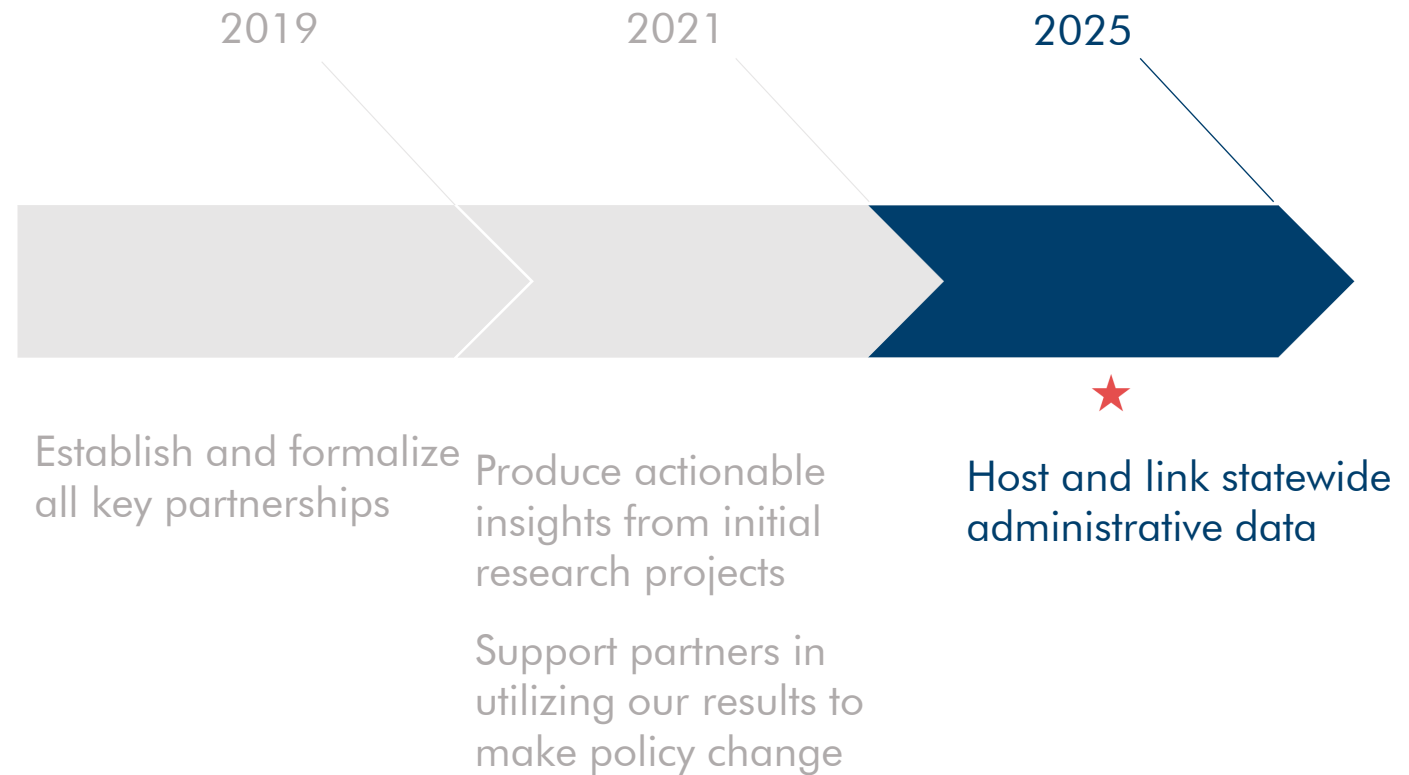
Produce actionable
insights from initial
research projects

Support partners in
utilizing our results to
make policy change



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Short-term goals



Why does it matter for Brazil?



Brazil has serious conflicting challenges in the next years:

1. We need to solve fiscal crisis at federal government and majority of state and local governments.
2. At the same time, we need to improve the quality of services provided by public sector.

Why does it matter for Brazil?



- The solution to this conflict requires, among other things, a major effort in increasing the rate of innovation in the public sector in Brazil.
- Innovation in the public sector requires, among other things, reliance on high-quality Research & Development.



Why does it matter for Brazil?



- Universities in Brazil can help public sector innovate by:
 - Identifying policies that have evidence of success.
 - Evaluate fidelity of implementation and impact of ongoing policies.
 - Design new policies that have strong theoretical background.



Thank you

www.texaspolicylab.org

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