



For Immediate Release
April 14, 2021

Contact: Robyn Bland
215.780.1487

Salus University Seeks Philadelphia Area Families for Baby Talk Program



A new grant-funded program through Salus University's Department of Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) will use data collected from the LENA Start "talk pedometer" (pictured above) combined with virtual parent group meetings to help Philadelphia area families improve adult-child talk.

Elkins Park, Pa. — Salus University's Department of Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) is currently recruiting Philadelphia area families to participate in a free language program for parents and babies from newborn to 33 months of age.

A recent grant from the Language Environment Analysis (LENA) helped the University launch LENA Start, a national nonprofit with a mission to strengthen school readiness and

communities through accelerated language development. The grant will enable SLP faculty and students to work with 100 families over the next two years to help parents and caregivers learn about the importance of interactive talk along with ways to incorporate more conversation into daily routines. Families use LENA's "talk pedometer" as a measure for the child's language environment.

Salus SLP faculty Beth E. Davidoff, PhD, CCC-SLP, assistant professor, and Robert Serianni, MS, CCC-SLP, FNAP, chair and SLP program director, obtained the training, technology and materials to bring the program to local families and caregivers. Combined with the use of LENA technology to measure the home language environment, parent group meetings will also teach simple techniques to improve the quantity and quality of adult-child talk.

Additional grant funds from the Make-A-Smile Foundation in Cranbury, New Jersey, also helped purchase books to give to families who are enrolled in the program.

Weekly sessions will take place virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Families who are interested in finding out more about LENA Start can go to www.salusuhealth.com/lena-start.

About Salus University

Salus University, founded as the Pennsylvania College of Optometry in 1919, today is a diversified, globally recognized professional academic center of learning that offers a wide range of degree programs in the professions of Optometry, Audiology, Physician Assistant, Blindness and Low Vision Studies, Biomedicine, Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Pathology. Salus operates four clinical facilities in Philadelphia and Montgomery counties that provide highly specialized vision, hearing and balance, and speech-language pathology services. The University has more than 1,200 students, and more than 14,000 alumni worldwide. For more information, please visit www.salus.edu.