

**CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY  
LIBRARY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY ACT (LSTA)  
FISCAL YEAR 2017/2018  
STATEWIDE GRANT APPLICATION**

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**ELEMENT 1: BASIC INFORMATION (please see application instructions for additional information)**

**Applicant Information**

<b>1. Library/Organization</b>	<b>2. Library's DUNS Number</b>		
Califa Group	135909930		
<b>3. Legal Business Name</b> ( <i>must match name registered with Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)</i> )			
Califa Group			
<b>4. Project Coordinator Name</b>	<b>5. Project Coordinator Title</b>		
Wayne Walker	Califa Operations Manager		
<b>6. Email Address</b>	<b>7. Business Phone Number</b>		
wwalker@califa.org	650-356-2125		
<b>8. Mailing Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Zip</b>
2471 Flores Street	San Mateo	CA	94403-2273

**Project Information**

**9. Project Title** Early Learning with Families (ELF): Year 5

**10. LSTA Funds Requested** \$203,885

**11. Cash Match & In-Kind** \$31,595

**12. Total Project Cost** \$235,480

**13. California's LSTA Goals** (*Check one goal that best describes the project*)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literate California  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bridging the Digital Divide     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Connections         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22 <sup>nd</sup> Century Tools  | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Connections           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Content Creation/Preservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Ensuring Library Access for All |

**14. Primary Audience for project** (*Select all that apply.*)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adults  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pre-School Children |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Families                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Populations              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrants/Refugees                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> School Age Children            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intergenerational Groups (Excluding Families)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Citizens                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Library Staff , Volunteers and/or Trustees | <input type="checkbox"/> Statewide Public               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low Income  | <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban Populations           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non/Limited English Speaking Persons                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with Disabilities                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Populations              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with Limited Functional Literacy               | <input type="checkbox"/> Young Adults and Teens         |

## **ELEMENT 2: PROJECT BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY**

**Describe how this project was identified as a need, how it relates to your library's strategic plan, what will be accomplished if this project is implemented, and how you will know whether your project is successful. Summary should relate to activities in the timeline (Element 4) and include statistical information to support the project.**

Early childhood is the most important phase in the human lifespan for overall development. Several decades of research have demonstrated that these early years lay the foundation for health, education and economic participation for the rest of life. Disparities between children from low socioeconomic status and high socioeconomic status families can manifest as early as 16 months of age. Differences in language as well as executive function and social skills are already apparent when children enter kindergarten [Cannon & Karoly, 2007]. By third grade, learning lags are exceedingly difficult to surmount. In 2016, 57% of California third graders did not meet state educational standards in English language arts, and 52% did not meet mathematics standards [CDE, 2016]. The Golden State ranked in the bottom third of the nation for overall childhood well-being – 36th out of the 50 states [Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2016].

Libraries have enormous potential to be key contributors to improving early learning outcomes, increasing school readiness, and ensuring that all children are reading and succeeding by grade three and beyond. To fulfill this potential, however, libraries need ongoing staff development and evidenced-based tools and resources.

For several years now, the California State Library's Early Learning with Families (ELF) initiative (under the auspices of the Califa Group) has been at the forefront of helping position public libraries as providers of high caliber early childhood services. By offering libraries training and resources, the initiative helps library staff plan, deliver and evaluate quality library services that meet the developmental needs of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, their families and caregivers. 140 of the 184 California library jurisdictions have participated in the initiative to date, and attendance at ELF workshops and meetings frequently exceeds capacity. ELF evaluation surveys have also consistently revealed significant increases in staff knowledge and confidence when working with children and families. Having staff who are more adept at meeting family needs may explain, in part, why public libraries in California are now second only to public parks as THE most frequented destination of families with young children [Applied Survey Research, 2013 School Readiness Studies]. In fact, in 2016 California public libraries had more than 3.25 million infants, toddlers and preschoolers in attendance at library programs [CSL Statistics, 2016].

To build on this momentum, the ELF initiative will continue to support libraries' early learning efforts in 2017/18 by focusing on the following multi-faceted activities:

- (1) Host regional meetings and CLA presentations to enable library staff to network and learn from each other's experiences, ideas, strategies and tools. These in-person meetings will help to foster a growing community of practice in which resources are leveraged for the greatest good, evidenced-based early learning approaches are consistently practiced, and strength-based family engagement skills are actively supported.
- (2) Maintain and refine online resources and social media platforms in order to extend the in-person community of practice. Our social media presence will serve as a virtual networking hub. ELF website and social media content will be transitioned into an archival collection of resources for the field to access into the future, should LSTA funding no longer be able to maintain an 'active' ELF online presence.
- (3) Disseminate a downloadable School Readiness Toolkit (developed by the Center for Childhood Creativity and piloted in 2016/17) statewide via CLA presentations, webinars and train-the-trainer workshops.
- (4) Pilot a borrowing program with VersaMe, the developers of the Starling — an electronic device that gives parents feedback on the quantity and quality of their parent-child verbal interactions (see attached brochure). Five libraries, distributed geographically, will pilot loaning Starlings out to families or allowing their use during Storytimes.

The ELF initiative will be successful if library staff continue to participate in ELF meetings, utilize ELF resources (both actual and virtual), and continue to report increased gains in their competence and confidence when working with families.

### ELEMENT 3: PARTNERSHIPS

Please list all formal partners for your project here. Please attach (under Element 7) a copy of your signed agreement with each partner, which outlines the role the partner will play and the resources the partner will contribute.

Partner Name	Organization Type (see instructions for valid entries)	Legal Type (see instructions for valid entries)	Role on Project	Resources That Partner Will Contribute (materials/funds/staff)
Bay Area of Discovery Musuem's Center for Childhood Creativity	Museum and Educational Organization	Non-profit	Design, disseminate and deliver statewide roll out of School Readiness Toolkit	\$5,000
VersaMe	Consumer Electronics and Early Childhood Education Company	Private sector	Oversee pilot project to test the the use of a Starling electronic device to support parent- child engagement	\$8,220

## **ELEMENT 4: PLANNING AND EVALUATION**

**Please answer each area concisely and completely. For section A-F limit responses to four pages.**

**A. Project Intent (Check only one that best describes the project)**

**Lifelong Learning**

- Improve users' formal education
- Improve users' general knowledge and skills

**Information Access**

- Improve users' ability to discover information
- Improve users' ability to obtain information resources

**Institutional Capacity**

- Improve the library workforce
- Improve the library's physical and technology infrastructure
- Improve library's operations

**Economic & Employment Development**

- Improve users' ability to use resources and apply information for employment support
- Improve users' ability to use and apply business resources

**Human Services**

- Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their personal, family, or household finances
- Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their personal or family health & wellness
- Improve users' ability to apply information that furthers their parenting and family skills

**Civic engagement**

- Improve users' ability to participate in their community
- Improve users' ability to participate in community conversation around topics of concern

**B. Project Purpose – Short statement which answers the questions: we will do what, for whom, for what expected benefit(s).**

The Early Learning with Families (ELF) initiative will leverage previous years' investments to 1) disseminate cutting-edge research, tools and strategies that have been identified as critical to the delivery of meaningful and effective library services to young children and families; and 2) offer networking opportunities at which the field can cost-effectively share best practices and inspire inter-library collaborations and innovation. The initiative will focus on the following areas: networking opportunities to support a community of practice around effective strategies for engaging with families; maintaining and refining the ELF website and social media platforms; disseminating the newly developed School Readiness Toolkit; and piloting an electronic device circulation program that enables library staff to support parental mastery related to early literacy.

**C. Anticipated Project Outputs – Measures of services and/or products to be created/provided.**

3 ELF regional networking meetings will be offered in northern, central and southern California.

3 ELF sessions will be offered at the California Library Association's (CLA) annual conference on topics related to school readiness, supporting the executive function skills all children need to succeed, and the Touchpoints approach to family engagement.

1 ELF website, 1 photo database and 4 social media platforms will be consolidated into an archival collection for easy access by the library field

1 downloadable School Readiness Toolkit will be finalized and disseminated statewide

5 1-hour School Readiness webinars will be offered focused on a review of the research and 6 key findings that have informed the toolkit's development

3 1-day School Readiness train-the-trainer workshops (distributed geographically throughout the state) will be offered that focus on how best to utilize the toolkit.

5 library systems will pilot loaning a new electronic device, the Starling, to families. The device is designed to increase the quantity and quality of parent-child interactions.

5 on-site location setup and train-the-trainer sessions for the Starling project will be provided, one for each pilot library.

1 1-hour webinar will be provided to support the pilot libraries once they have launched their Starling loan program.

**D. Anticipated Project Outcome(s) – What change is expected in the target audience’s skills, knowledge, behavior, attitude, and/or status/life condition? How will you measure these outcomes? (for examples see attachment B of the application instructions)**

Each activity will include an outcomes measurement survey specific to the content of that activity. Outcomes are anticipated as follows:

80% of all participants at the regional networking meetings and the CLA sessions will report learning something new about early childhood development and/or family engagement

80% of all participants in the School Readiness webinars and workshops will report a change in knowledge and/or attitude regarding their understanding of school readiness and the role of libraries in helping to prepare children for school

75% of all library participants in the Starling electronic device pilot project will report a change in how they interact with families to support parental mastery, while 75% of participating families will report an increase in the quantity and quality of their parent-child verbal interactions

**E. Briefly describe how this project will be financially supported in the future.**

The need for high-quality and economically viable early learning library resources and staff development opportunities will be ongoing as long as public libraries continue to attract and serve large numbers of young children and families. However, now that libraries have begun to establish themselves as credible, high-quality early learning resources in their communities, more alternative funding sources now exist to fund some of these ongoing needs. Then too, as the early learning library community grows and strengthens, smaller investments across more participating library systems can enable a cost-effective and collaborative sharing of resources and best practices going forward with less reliance on LSTA funding.

**F. Activity Information. Activities are action(s) through which the intent or objective of a project are accomplished. Four activity types have been identified, each with select methods to help you describe how you will carry out this project. Indicate activity types that require a significant commitment of resources to the project (representing 10% or more of total project resources).**

1.  **Instruction** - Involves an interaction for knowledge or skill transfer and how learning is delivered or experienced. (*Check all that apply and provide a description including whether the format will be in-person, virtual, or both*)
  - Program - Formal interaction and active user engagement (e.g., a class on computer skills).
  - Presentation - Formal interaction and passive user engagement (e.g., an author's talk),
  - Consultation - Informal interaction with an individual or group of individuals (library staff or other professional) who provide expert advice or reference services to individuals, units, or organizations.
  - Other

Description: The Bay Area Discovery Museum's Center for Childhood Creativity will officially launch the statewide dissemination of their online School Readiness Toolkit (specifically designed for public libraries) via a presentation at the CLA annual conference. This will be followed by 5 1-hour webinars and 3 full day, in-person train-the-trainer workshops focused on the research behind the toolkit as well as practical strategies for how best to utilize the programming ideas outlined in the toolkit.

The VersaMe company will host 5 on-site setup and train-the-trainer sessions, one for each of the 5 pilot libraries followed by 1 1-hour webinar to support the libraries piloting a Starling loan program.

2.  **Content** - Involves the acquisition, development, or transfer of information and how information is made accessible. (*Check all that apply and provide a description including whether the format will be physical, digital, or both*)

- Acquisition - Selecting, ordering, and receiving materials for library or archival collections by purchase, exchange, or gift, which may include budgeting and negotiating with outside agencies (i.e. publishers, vendors) to obtain resources. May also include procuring software or hardware for the purposes of storing and/or retrieving information or enabling the act of experiencing, manipulating, or otherwise interacting with an information resource.
- Creation - Design or production of an information tool or resource (e.g., digital objects, curricula, manuals). Includes digitization or the process of converting data to digital format for processing by a computer.
- Description - Apply standardized descriptive information and/or apply such information in a standardized format to items or groups of items in a collection for purposes of intellectual control, organization, and retrieval.
- Lending - Provision of a library's resources and collections through the circulation of materials (general circulation, reserves). May also refer to the physical or electronic delivery of documents from a library collection to the residence or place of business of a library user, upon request.
- Preservation - Effort that extends the life or use life of a living or non-living collection, the individual items or entities included in a collection, or a structure, building or site by reducing the likelihood or speed of deterioration.
- Other

Description: The School Readiness Toolkit, created as a pilot project in 2016/17, will be finalized and uploaded to the State Library website for easy access and download by libraries statewide.

Collections of Starling electronic devices (a highly regarded new emerging technology designed to support early language and literacy acquisition) will be purchased and distributed to 5 libraries to pilot a borrowing program to support parental mastery and encourage parent-child verbal interactions, while also highlighting libraries and increasing access to books for families.

ELF website, photo database and social media content will be assessed and consolidated for archival purposes in order to extend the availability of significant early learning resources beyond the terms of this grant.

3.  **Planning & Evaluation** - Involves design, development, or assessment of operations, services, or resources and when information is collected, analyzed, and/or disseminated. (*Check all that apply and provide a description including whether the format will be in-house or third-party*)
- Retrospective - Research effort that involves historical assessments of the condition of a project, program, service, operation, resource and/or user group.
  - Prospective - Research effort that projects or forecasts a future condition of a project, program, service, operation, resource, and/or user group.

Description: Evaluation surveys will be designed and administered for each activity area of this project: networking meetings and CLA presentations, school readiness webinars and workshops, and the Starling electronic device pilot project. The later will include one survey for staff and one for participating families. Outcomes for all efforts will be assessed based on these various evaluation survey responses and the specific content areas being measured.

4.  **Procurement** – May only be used for projects with an Institutional Capacity Intent. Acquiring or leasing facilities; purchasing equipment/supplies, hardware/software, or other materials (not content) that support general library infrastructure. (*Provide a description*)

Description:

## **ELEMENT 5: GRANT TIMELINE/ACTIVITIES**

Show each major project activity and when it will be started and/or completed throughout the project. The timeline should correspond to the activities described in Planning and Evaluation. Please put an X in each pertaining month.

## ELEMENT6: BUDGET

The budget should clearly identify the amounts requested and from what sources.

Budget Category	LSTA	Cash Match & In-Kind	Total
<b>Salaries/Wages/Benefits</b>			
Backfill for 9 public library staff to lead ELF networking meetings	\$6,300	\$7,875	\$14,175
Backfill for 10 staff at 5 Starling pilot libraries to lead project	\$7,000	\$10,500	\$17,500
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$13,300</b>	<b>\$18,375</b>	<b>\$31,675</b>

**Description:** 9 library staff representing 9 different library systems will provide the facilitation for 3 ELF networking meetings: 20 hrs of backfill per staff to plan and deliver each meeting @ \$35/hr = \$700 x 9

25 hrs of in-kind staff time to prepare for each meeting @ \$35/hr = \$875 x 9

10 library staff (from 5 pilot libraries) will participate in the development and testing of a electronic device loan program:

20 hrs of backfill per staff to set-up the program @ \$35/hr = \$700 x 10

30 hrs of in-kind staff time to plan and prepare @ \$35/hr = \$1,050 x 10

Consultant Fees			
Administrative Coordinator	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
Website/Social Media Coordinator	\$28,000	\$0	\$28,000
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$38,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$38,000</b>

### Description:

1 part-time contract Administrative Coordinator to help plan, schedule and coordinate all network meetings and conference presentations, handle logistics and manage some clerical tasks associated with the grant: 250 hours @ \$40/hr up to \$10,000

1 part-time contract Web/Social Media Coordinator to assist with daily maintenance as well as refinement and consolidation of all ELF online content: 700 hour @ \$40/hr up to \$28,000

Budget Category	LSTA	Cash Match & In-Kind	Total
<b>Travel</b>			
Travel for 9 facilitators to each attend 1 of 3 network meetings	\$5,400	\$0	\$5,400
Travel for 2 presenters to attend 3 school readiness trainings	\$3,600	\$0	\$3,600
Travel for 2 presenters to attend 5 Starling training sessions	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>

**Description:** All travel costs are based on similar costs incurred in previous years for transportation and accommodations, utilizing an average State government rate. Travel costs include 1 night hotel + transportation + meals for an approximate travel cost per person of \$600 per meeting or training session

Supplies/Materials			
100 Starling electronic devices - 20 per each pilot library	\$14,900	\$0	\$14,900
6 webinars hosted by Infopeople	\$5,700	\$0	\$5,700
Materials for 3 ELF networking meetings	\$6,750	\$0	\$6,750
Materials for 3 school readiness full-day workshops	\$2,700	\$0	\$2,700
Materials for 5 Starling train-the-trainer sessions	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$31,550</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$31,550</b>

**Description:**

Starling devices at \$149/per device

Infopeople webinar hosting at \$950/per webinar

Networking materials based on similar costs in previous years @ \$30/per person, with 75 attendees per meeting

School readiness workshop materials based on similar costs in previous years @ \$30/per person with 30 attendees per meetings

Starling train-the-trainer sessions based on similar costs in previous years @ \$30/per person with 10 attendees per session

Budget Category	LSTA	Cash Match & In-Kind	Total
<b>Equipment (\$5,000 or more per unit)</b>			
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Subtotal</b>	\$0	\$0

**Description:**

Services			
Bay Area Discovery Museum contract - school readiness project	\$70,000	\$5,000	\$75,000
VersaMe contract - Starling loan pilot project	\$17,500	\$8,220	\$25,720
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	\$0	\$0	\$0
	<b>Subtotal</b>	\$87,500	\$13,220

**Description:** Funding is requested based on the proposed scope of work to be negotiated with each named entity above:

Bay Area Discovery Museum's Center for Childhood Creativity (CCC) activities represent approximately 2080 hours divided amongst 7 CCC staff to finalize the toolkit, present at CLA, conduct a series of 5 1-hour webinars and conduct 3 full-day workshops. Total contract not to exceed \$70,000 given \$5,000 in-kind contribution by CCC.

VersaMe activities represent approximately 700 hours divided amongst 2 staff to plan, train and implement a Starling borrowing program with 10 staff from 5 pilot libraries. Total contract not to exceed \$17,500 given \$8,220 in-kind contribution by VersaMe.

<b>Project Total</b>	\$185,350	\$31,595	\$216,945
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<b>Indirect Cost Rate Applied</b>	<b>10.0 % Indirect Cost</b>	\$18,535	\$0	\$18,535
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Check one:

No Indirect       Federally negotiated indirect cost rate \*       Indirect proposed cost rate \*

\* please attach supporting documentation if required

**Description:** The 10% indirect includes costs for administrative and fiscal staff, work space, utilities, internet, IT support, office supplies and use of equipment.

<b>Grand Total</b>	\$203,885	\$31,595	\$235,480
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## **ELEMENT 7: ATTACHMENTS**

**If you have additional resources that support your grant, please attach after this page**

## **ELEMENT 8: INTERNET CERTIFICATION**

**Check the Appropriate Library Type**

**Public Library**       **Academic**       **K-12**       **Multi-Type**       **Special/Other**

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant public library, public elementary school library or public secondary school library applying for LSTA funding, I hereby certify that the library is (*check only one of the following boxes*)

**A.  An individual applicant that is CIPA compliant.**

The applicant library, as a public library, a public elementary school library or public secondary school library, has complied with the requirements of Section 9134(f)(1) of the Library Services and Technology Act.

**B.  Representing a group of applicants. Those applicants that are subject to CIPA requirements have certified they are CIPA compliant.**

All public libraries, public elementary school libraries, and public secondary school libraries, participating in the application have complied with the requirements of Section 9134(f)(1) of the Library Services and Technology Act. The library submitting this application has collected Internet Safety Certifications from all other applicants who are subject to CIPA requirements. The library will keep these certifications on file with other application materials, and if awarded funds, with other project records.

**C.  Not Subject to CIPA Requirements.**

The CIPA requirements do not apply because no funds made available under this LSTA grant program will be used to purchase computers used to access the Internet or to pay for direct costs associated with accessing the Internet.

## **SIGNATURE**

**I have read and support this LSTA Grant Application.**

Califa Group  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Library/Organization**

Early Learning with Families (ELF): Year 5  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Project Name**

Paula Mackinnon  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Library Director Name**

Interim Director  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Title**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Library Director Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

— A Complete Guide for Early-Education Organizations —

# Using Technology to Measure (and Boost) Your Programs.



A Complete Guide for Early-Education Organizations

## **Using Technology to Measure (and Boost) Your Programs.**



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and early development  
technology, visit the  
Research Center at  
[VersaMe.com](http://VersaMe.com)*

— The Result of Over 30 Years of Research —

# Discover the Incredible Power of the Spoken Word.

**The more words a child hears early in life,** the more likely that child is to reach their full potential. It's a fact. Children who hear more words than their peers are better prepared for preschool, creating a head start that they'll retain all their lives. Those children who are prepared for preschool will get more

out of it, making them better prepared for elementary school, then high school, then college, then adult life in the working world.



*The more words spoken to a child, the more likely quality words will be introduced, creating a more diverse vocabulary.*

**Despite all this,** over 30 years of scientifically proven research\*, and the tireless efforts of early education organizations, it's still an uphill battle to get parents (and often funders) to see the power of the spoken word. Perhaps therein lies the problem – **they can't actually SEE the power of those words.**

\*You can find a tidy collection of early education research online at the VersaMe Research Center - [www.VersaMe.com/research](http://www.VersaMe.com/research)



**The Sharpest Minds in the Country are Focused on Early Education.**

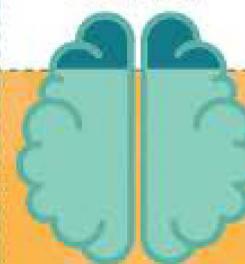
For example, Anne Fernald, director of the Language Learning Lab at Stanford University, and her colleagues. They found striking variability in how much parents talked to their children.



“ Increasing the quantity and quality of parental-child engagement could have a transformational impact on American society.”

Anne Fernald  
Director of Stanford  
Language Learning Lab

Brain growth after 4 yrs.



**Between 0 and 4 years, approximately 82% of brain growth occurs.**



## Just How Many Words Does “More Words” Mean?

Over 20 years ago, Betty Hart and Todd Risley recorded and counted the words of high-and low-income families for one hour per month at dinnertime or playtime\*. After 4 years they found that high-income families said much more than low-income families. But then they extrapolated the high income families' word count to span the entire day to posit that children should hear a very unrealistic 30,000 words per day!



**The fact is,** there is no “recommended daily allowance for words.” Why? Because every family and situation is unique. But if those language environments could be quantified, **it would be clear which children needed more words in their lives.**

Want to speak over 30,000 words a day to a child? Take a deep breath. It would be like reading Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (30,644 words) cover-to-cover, out loud, every day.

\* Learn more about this study at [www.VersaMe.com/research](http://www.VersaMe.com/research)

# Challenges That Affect Every Program's Effectiveness.



**Unfortunately**, doing a lot of good comes with a lot of frustrations. How many of these roadblocks keep your efforts stuck where they are?

## Measuring

 Even the best-planned programs have trouble measuring their effectiveness in a definitive way. You have qualitative assurance that your program is working, but it's difficult getting real quantitative data.

## Reinforcing

 Of course, parents promise to follow your program in the home. You can usually guess who will, who might, and who won't; but in the end, you won't really know anyone's real level of participation.



## Connecting

 You can't make lasting change by yourself. Peer support is a vital component to creating lasting change, but getting caregivers excited enough to build real, long-term community engagement is difficult.

## Funding

 You compete with many for what little is available from funders. And when competing programs are using similar methods to make similar achievements, it's difficult to substantially differentiate your program from the rest.

## Scaling

 Resources are in short supply, making it next to impossible to reach every family in a meaningful way. If you don't have the staff or the time to achieve your current goals, how can you grow your program in the future?

The Future of Intervention Support

# Using Technology to Inspire Parental Engagement.



Advances in technology are finally starting to appear in the early-education space. VersaMe, Inc., a pioneer in this field, has spent the last two years working closely with leading early-education researchers, pediatricians, and speech-language pathologists to create the Starling - a highly advanced wearable word measurement device.

The Starling picks up vocal sound waves (without recording) and instantly processes them into data that gives a quantitative measurement of the amount of words that were spoken. Worn by a child, the Starling will give real-time feedback of how much verbal engagement (talking, reading, even singing) they're getting. And it can do it in any spoken language. Organizations even have the ability to reach beyond sessions by sending custom messages to specific caregivers or groups.



## 1. Clip

The lightweight Starling attaches to a child's collar.



## 2. Talk

Caregivers simply talk, read, and sing to the child.



## 3. Track

See real-time feedback of verbal engagement.



**“My ultimate goal is to help all children reach their full potential ...and the Starling will be a game-changing product in helping us achieve our goals.”**

Dr. Dana Suskind  
M.D. & Author



Works in any language  
No recording  
Real-time feedback  
5-day battery life  
Waterproof

**Starling**  
by VersaMe

Technology like the Starling is impressive, but what is really exciting is what a device like this can do to aid your programs. You could use the Starling to measure the participation level of each family in your program while helping to boost their verbal engagements. That's just the start.



The Starling is an ever-present reminder of your program, so parents tend to engage more with their children. More engagement = better participation.

# How Sound Waves Turn Into Measurable Data in Seconds.

The Starling uses advanced technology to bring the future to early education.

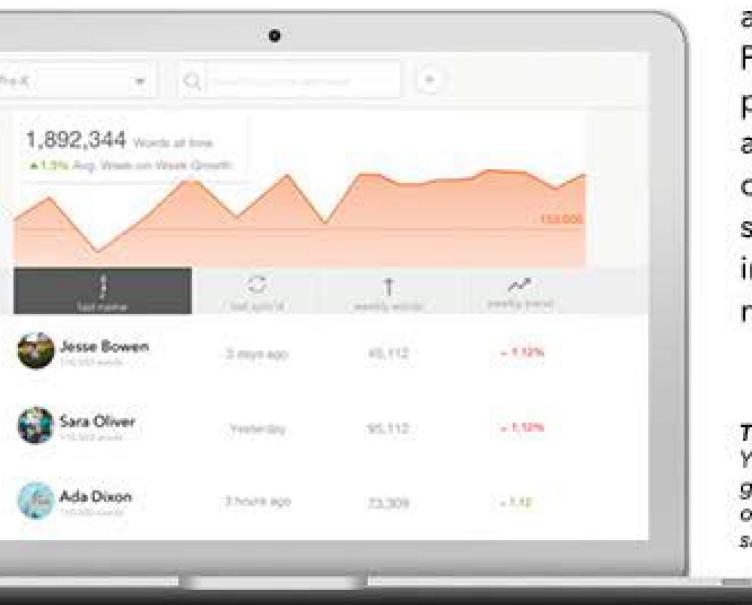


Valuable, Actionable, Accessible Data

# Know Every Detail of Your Program, Minute by Minute.

## If adding tech to your intervention

sounds like a boon for reaching parents, wait until you see the data you get back. The Starling, for example, comes with a web-based dashboard. Log in and access as much data as you want, whenever you want it. See an overall snapshot of how everyone in your program is doing.



See who's struggling and give them more attention at the next check-in. Reward those you see who are doing well. Drill down to an individual family for a more detailed assessment of their progress. Now you can better manage families and increase their (and your) impact.

**In the end, you'll have a complete set of** analytics of your program's effectiveness. From this data, you'll be able to discover previously invisible blind spots and make adjustments for future programs. Best of all, you'll finally have the hard data to show funders to prove that your interventions are working. (Better start making those expansion plans.)

**The Starling Partner Dashboard** gives you more than data. You'll be able to send custom messaging to your entire group or individual families. Through the Starling app or texts, they'll receive your custom messages on their smartphones and can easily respond.



**The Starling is an excellent tool on two levels. It promotes awareness for the parents we work with to talk more to their kids. It puts a halo effect on talking. And then it also provides us with a strategy for evaluation, where we can look at programs and really see what the effects are.**

**Jeri Levesque**  
Evaluator and Grant  
Making Consultant,  
Education Specialist

# Communicate Through the Sessions and into the Home.

*By adding multiple reinforcing touch-points, you'll keep families engaged longer, and they'll participate more.*



Finally, you can give caregivers and stakeholders informed feedback on their progress. The Starling Dashboard gives you access to your entire group's data as well as individual analysis, but you also have the option of printing out reports. Review data with a family to help them improve, or even create a physical record of a child's progress that can follow them through your program.

**Sessions are impactful**, but imagine your sessions reaching into the home. Reinforce your program's curriculum with custom texts or in-app messages. Assign activities, event reminders, or simply offer encouragement. Extend your reach and extend your impact.

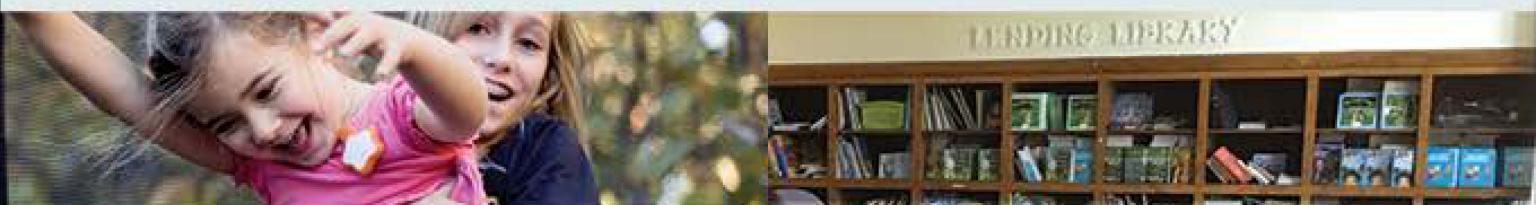
## Send custom messaging to remind, motivate, encourage, and reward.



**The Starling lets you stay in touch with your families like never before. Using in-app messages you send from your computer or phone, you extend your reach past the sessions and into the home.**



# How Organizations like Yours Are Using the Starling.



## Childcare Programs:

For daycares, preschools, and other programs that work with and supervise young children.

With the Starling, childcare programs can get verbal-engagement statistics and build communities. We recommend assigning a Starling to each child in a classroom.

- Increase connection and communication between teachers and caregivers
- Show parents a picture of the verbal engagement children receive in the classroom
- Send custom messages and activities centered around classroom topics
- Give group challenges to families to build community within your program
- Help teachers improve their verbal engagements in the classroom
- Allow teachers to see a picture of verbal engagement in the home

## Library Programs:

For children's libraries and libraries that do community outreach programs for families with young children.

In a library setting, the Starling helps drive home the importance of early reading and gives parents feedback on whether they're giving their child enough verbal engagement. We recommend that libraries add the Starling to their catalog to loan out or to use within their library programs.

- Loan Starlings out to families to help them track the verbal engagement their children are getting through reading
- Let families use the Starling during storytime in the library
- Send tips through the Starling app to help parents make the most of reading time
- Implement the Starling in community-based programs to show families the power of words



**“**  
“I really like using [the Starling] - I work all day so it helps me make sure I'm paying enough attention to my baby even when I come home exhausted.”

**“**  
Parent Participant  
NCFL Program, Detroit



**“**  
“It's so cool to see how many words my son hears per day - we love the tips, too!”

**“**  
Parent Participant  
NCFL Program, Detroit

## Can Group Programs Work like Individual Sessions?

The **National Center for Families Learning** uses custom messaging to work beyond their sessions and into the home.

### Group / Community Intervention:

The Starling helps group interventions measure growth in their families and reinforce session messages when off-site. Each child participating in the intervention receives a Starling for the program's duration.

- Watch a family's word count grow over time as they learn through your program
- Award prizes to the families with the highest word count each week, or create group challenges to bond your cohort
- Use measurement results to show the success of your program and get more funding
- Assign and track reading sessions for families
- Use a custom curriculum that aligns with your program goals



## Hospital Programs:

For Neonatal Intensive Care Units, Obstetrics, Pediatrics, and Child-Life programs in hospitals.

In hospitals, the Starling helps keep track of the verbal engagement received by developmentally vulnerable populations and can be used as an education tool for parents. We recommend that Starlings be used with children who are at risk of developmental delays.

- Place a Starling by every NICU baby to be sure they're getting the verbal engagement they need
- Have pediatric patients wear Starlings to make sure they're getting enough words to stay on track developmentally
- Include a Starling in classes for new parents to show them the importance of verbal engagement early in life

## Early Literacy Programs:

For programs focused on improving early literacy and increasing access to books for young children.

The Starling can help early literacy programs drive home the importance of reading and vocabulary development in raising a school-ready child. We recommend that these programs use the Starling in conjunction with books to boost the effects of early reading.

- Use word count and reading sessions to track verbal engagement and reading time
- Message custom book activities to families through the Starling app to remind and encourage caregivers to keep reading
- Give parents a stream of reading tips to help them use techniques like dialogic reading when reading with children
- Create custom goals to build parent confidence

## Individualized Interventions:

For providers that work with families and children on an individualized basis, whether through home visitation or appointments

- For individualized interventions we recommend loaning the Starling to the families in your program for the duration of their participation.
- Use the word count and reading sessions to keep track of verbal engagement levels
  - Send custom messages and activities to reinforce program goals
  - Issue challenges to parents to keep them motivated and reward goal achievement
  - Monitor the progress of all your families on our partner dashboard - see which families need the most attention at any given time

## Custom Program Design:

The Starling Partner Team will work with you to identify your measurement goals and create a custom path toward achieving them.

- You'll get the data you need while boosting the impact of your intervention
- The Starling can fit into any program that works to improve the outcomes of young children
- You'll get the most of all the Starling's features to be sure your participants stay engaged

## Experiment Design:

The Starling Partners Team includes data scientists who can help you create a plan to measure your program's performance.

- Find a baseline of verbal engagement before your intervention and after, showing the program's effect

# Some Organizational Early Adopters Who Have Become Early Achievers.

More and more organizations are embracing technology to validate their work, improve their programs, and increase their funding.

Bilingual families use the Starling to improve their parent education program.



The Carolinas chapter of Reach Out and Read is using the Starling to boost and measure their reading programs.

The NCFL is evaluating their program while promoting habit change with the Starling.



Suffolk County libraries are loaning Starlings out to their community to show parents the power of words.

— A Guiding Hand Through Your Entire Program —

# High-Tech Implementation with High-Touch Interaction.

For 2 years the creators of the Starling worked closely with non-profit leaders, pediatricians, speech-language pathologists, early-education researchers, and librarians to design a device that would be useful across all disciplines.



Every week, your dedicated Starling project manager guides you through the data to help you stay up-to-date on your program's effectiveness.

families that benefit from those programs. That's why the creators of the Starling are among those involved with your team throughout your program, adding more hands to help your group's efforts.



From the very start, one of the Starling's creators will work closely with you to design the parameters of your intervention's goals.



Once goals are set, one of the Starling's creators will come train your staff, help your families get onboarded, and help add to the excitement of your program's kick-off.

## From Start to Validation in 5 Simple Steps.

No matter what your goals, this is how the Starling integrates into your program.



**1. It all begins with you.** You're the expert when it comes to your interventions. From your first phone call, you'll be working with a Starling co-founder who's an expert in program design - heading up your dedicated Starling Partners Team.



**2. Getting on the same page.** The Starling Partners Team will dive deep into understanding your organization, help you define your goals, and design a program that leverages the Starling to deliver results you can use.



**3. Train the trainers.** The Starling Partners Team will come to you to meet and train your team of coordinators. Your team will learn all about the Starling program, how to send custom messaging to families, and how to access and monitor the data on their Starling Dashboard.



**4. The big kick-off.** Your Starling Partners Team will also be on-site to meet your families and help explain what the Starling does, how it works, and how it will help them succeed over the course of your program.



**5. Review results.** Every week your Starling project manager will review the data coming in. You'll have the insight to make any adjustments to the program if needed. In the end, you'll have a complete data set on the progress your intervention made.

### A Friendly Face Makes a Difference.

Our Starling Partners Team is full of passionate, friendly coordinators who want to help your families as much as you do.



Helping Parents Help Themselves

# Passion for Early Education Fuels Innovation in the Field.

 **VersaMe's mission** is to help all children reach their full educational potential. How? By helping parents be more attentive, talkative, and mindfully present. To achieve this goal, Nicki Boyd and brothers Jon and Chris Boggiano created the Starling, VersaMe's first product. As Sloan Fellows at Stanford

University in 2013, the trio discovered a shared passion for early education. With the help of Anne Fernald, Director of Stanford's Language Learning Lab, they were able to consult with experts in all areas of early education and begin working on a way to bring emerging technology to the field.



## Meet the Creators of the Starling.

Chris and Jon come from a family of speech therapists while Nicki grew up with a deep interest in early education. Together, they're changing how parents think about engaging with their children.



Chris and Jon's children and Nicki's nephew are, of course, avid Starling users. Their feedback was helpful in the Starling's design and function.



To date, the Starling has helped multiple organizations boost their interventions while giving them a useful measurement of their program's effectiveness. As you'd expect, VersaMe has an office in Silicon Valley that is headed up by Nicki Boyd. There you'll find the Starling's software engineers, hardware engineers, and data scientists. In the North Carolina office, Chris and Jon Boggiano help the Starling Partners Team support programs across the country. Custom content, curricula, and activities are planned and created here as well as plans for future feature developments for the Starling.

**The entire Starling team works** toward providing data to show the quantitative effectiveness of the good work being done by non-profits interventions, libraries, speech-language therapists, schools, daycares, and hospitals. By introducing the Starling into those programs, organizations can achieve their goals faster and better than before while boosting results.



The Starling has been reviewed and featured in many articles about the role of technology in early education.



The Modern Toolkit

# All You Need to Measure (and Boost) Your Programs.

**It's surprisingly simple.** With just a few small devices for each of your families and your laptop computer, you could be on your way to finally getting quantitative measurement of your program. And with that data in hand, you'll be able to apply for the additional funding you need to expand.



#### The Starling

- measures verbal engagement without recording
- measures speech in any spoken language
- can measure background noise levels
- Bluetooth enabled
- holds 4 days of data
- 5-day battery life
- waterproof
- made from BPA-free, medical grade plastic
- the size and weight of a pacifier



#### The Starling Clip Attachment

- clips tight to child's shirt collar or waistband
- coated in soft silicone rubber
- comes with 2-ft. USB charging cord and plug adapter
- easily insert and remove Starling from clip



#### The Starling Charging Dock

- Starling clicks into dock and is held magnetically
- receive in-app messages, activities, reminders, curriculum, etc.
- locate a missing Starling using "Find My Starling"



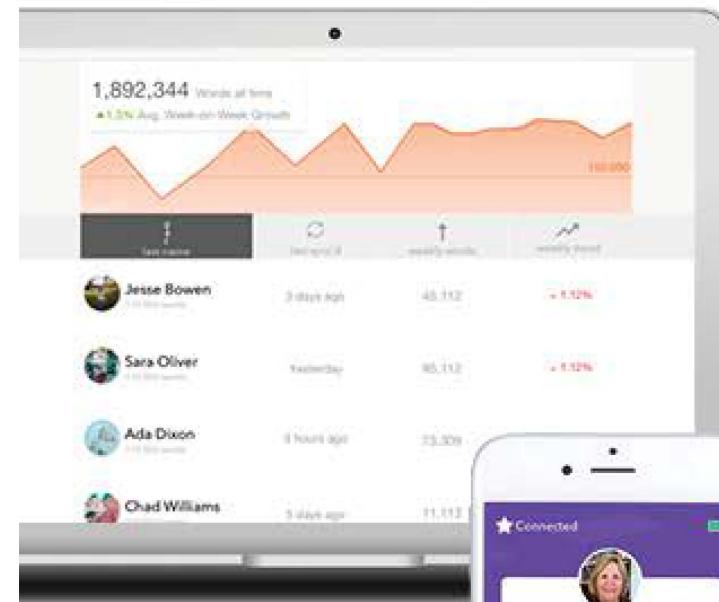
#### Works with Any Budget.

The Starling system is surprisingly affordable, and the Starling Partner Team is available to help you craft your grant proposals so you get the Starlings your program needs.



#### The Starling Smartphone App

- for Android and iPhone
- see real-time measurement of your verbal interactions
- receive in-app messages, activities, reminders, curriculum, etc.
- locate a missing Starling using "Find My Starling"



#### The Starling Partner Dashboard

- access your Starling Dashboard on your desktop computer, laptop, or smartphone
- see snapshot data of every family's participation and performance in one view
- see detailed data on individual families' verbal communication
- send reminders, activities, encouragement to your participants' smartphones
- message all parents at once or just individual families
- print detailed reports



#### Starling Partner Curriculum

- choose one of our existing curricula or design your own
- activity packs for every age group



#### Starling Co-Creator Support

- Chris, Jon, or Nicki will design, implement, and guide your Starling experience
- your feedback directly impacts the Starling system
- on-site training of your staff
- on-site onboarding of your families



#### Starling Partner Team Support

- friendly, knowledgeable staff is available for questions and advice
- schedule weekly data calls to help interpret and review program data

# Unsurprisingly, the First Step to Success is Talking.

*Speak Directly with One of the Starling's Co-Creators Today.*

**650-600-1231**

**Starling**  
by VersaMe

**Phone**

650-600-1231

**West Coast**

*Nicki Boyd*  
855 Oak Grove Ave  
Suite 105  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
[nicki@versame.com](mailto:nicki@versame.com)

**East Coast**

*Chris Boggiano*  
*Jon Boggiano*  
8936 Northpointe Exec. Pk. Dr.  
Huntersville, NC 28078  
[chris@versame.com](mailto:chris@versame.com)  
[jon@versame.com](mailto:jon@versame.com)

**Online/Social**

[Versame.com](http://Versame)  
 /Versame  
 /VersaMeTech  
 /versame\_tech  
 /starlingbyversame



## Emerging Technology Can Bring Measurement, Connectivity, Increased Funding, and Scalability.



Early education organizations are using high-tech solutions to solve more than the age-old challenges of intervention measurement. In this guide you'll discover how any organization

can add easy-to-use technology to provide quantitative data while simultaneously *inspiring caregivers to increase what they say, read (and sing) to the children they want to help.*



April 24, 2017

California State Library  
c/o The Califa Group  
2471 Flores Street  
San Mateo, CA 94403

Dear Mr. Wayne Walker,

We are looking forward to working with you and the California State Library. We intend to partner with you to design a Starling program that will help public libraries collect valuable quantitative data that can enhance their early learning services for young children and families.

The Starling is a wearable device that counts the number of words parents or caregivers speak to a child. The Starling counts words without recording any audio, works with any language, and stays attached to the child by a very strong clip. Word counts provide an expedient, non-invasive and privacy protected window into a child's life. The Starling and its dashboard provides data about parent-child interactions at home that can help form linkages between the library and home environments.

We have committed 100 Starling devices for use by 5 California public libraries to pilot a lending program. The devices and one year of software fees are valued at \$27,400 and we intend to make an in kind donation of \$8,220 as a discount to you.

We are grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with you.

Sincerely,

  
Chris Boggiano  
Co-Founder of VersaMe



Bay Area  
Discovery  
Museum

April 26, 2017

California State Library  
c/o The Califa Group  
2471 Flores Street  
San Mateo, CA 94403

Dear Mr. Wayne Walker,

The Bay Area Discovery Museum's Center for Childhood Creativity (CCC) has been a proud partner with the State Library's Early Learning with Families (ELF) initiative since 2016 when we piloted a School Readiness Toolkit with 6 California libraries.

We are reaching a tipping point in understanding the importance of the early years of a child's development. However, many are missing the mark on preparing children for learning and achievement by equating "school readiness" with a finite checklist of academic skills to be mastered by age 5. Through the CCC's recent research-backed report on "Reimagining School Readiness," we approach school readiness as a robust developmental process that spans the early childhood years of approximately 3-8. All children are capable of developing the complex thinking skills necessary to succeed in school and beyond if adults provide developmentally-appropriate and rich experiences to boost learning and cognitive development. And libraries are the perfect institutions to help parents, caregivers and the children themselves achieve this.

We are excited to again partner with ELF to continue the work from our 2016-17 pilot and provide resources for libraries statewide to provide quality school readiness programming to their patrons. Through this partnership, the CCC agrees to:

- Lead a 3-hour workshop at the CLA conference in November 2017 focused on all of the library-specific resources created by the CCC.
- Incorporate learnings from the school readiness toolkit pilot that took place in 2016-17 and finalize the toolkit to include: research-based key findings, a series of best practices and practical tips for librarians to implement the key findings, a suite of parent facing resources, case studies of implementation within current library programming, and a tool for program planning and reflection.
- Create a final designed set of toolkit files that can be easily distributed to libraries statewide.
- Conduct a series of five, 1-hour long webinars focused on the research behind the toolkit and the 6 key findings that inform the toolkit
- Conduct three, full day in-person workshops at library sites distributed throughout the state to prepare and support library staff to implement school readiness strategies into their daily work.

The CCC will provide the above activities over the course of the coming year at a contracted cost not to exceed \$70,000. An additional \$5,000 of in-kind services and staff time will be contributed by CCC to this undertaking. Thank you for your consideration of this important and timely work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Regalla".

Lisa Regalla, PhD  
Associate Director, STEM & Informal Learning