

**Communication Options and Opportunities**  
**Exploration Process for Early Intervention Specialists from MECDDH**

**Early Childhood and Family Services (ECFS) is now embedded in the Child Development Services (CDS) Early Intervention (EI) process, which means:**

- ❑ Every child with hearing loss or suspected hearing loss will start with ECFS as the initial Primary Service Provider (PSP) for at least 6 visits OR will have up to 6 consults to support the PSP and family.
- ❑ When another professional is Primary Service Provider, after the 6 visits, ECFS will be written on the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) for consult visits, twice annually or quarterly as needed.
- ❑ As an Early Intervention Team Members, ECFS professionals may:
  - Attend weekly Early Intervention Team Meetings
  - Provide support to EI team members during coaching opportunities at team meetings.
  - Review and interpret audiological evaluations.
  - Join the service coordinators at intake visits.
  - Participate in multi-disciplinary team evaluations.
  - Complete Routine Based Interviews (RBI).
  - Attend IFSP meetings.
  - Serve as Primary Service Provider, Consultant, or complete joint visits with PSP.
  - Request joint visits with professionals for a further detailed look at communication opportunities, or support with other areas of development, based on child and family outcomes.

**6 Visit Process (as PSP or Consult)**

- ❑ Early Visits 1-3: Review Maine Newborn Hearing Program Binder. (MNHP)
  - Clarify audiological testing, discussing what is known and yet to be.
  - Review anatomy, types of hearing, hearing levels and auditory development.
  - Support early interactions between baby and parent/caregiver.
  - Discuss foundations of language and early communication strategies.

- Provide an overview of all communication opportunities.
- Highlight the variety of available resources in Maine and Nationally.
- Provide an overview of hearing assistive technology (i.e. hearing aids/cochlear implants, BAHA's)
- Introduce Maine Hands and Voices, Guide by Your Side and Deaf Mentor Programs to families.

☐ Next Visits 4-6

- Explain, demonstrate, compare and contrast communication opportunities that the family has expressed interest in exploring.
  - American Sign Language
  - Auditory Oral (Listening and Spoken Language)
  - Auditory Verbal (Listening and Spoken Language)
  - Bilingual Bimodal
  - Cued Speech
  - Pidgin Sign Language/ Manually Coded English
  - Combined Approaches
- Explain the role of professionals who work with children specific to each communication opportunity.
  - ASL Family Trainer
  - Audiologist/ ENT
  - Cued Speech Teachers
  - Deaf and Hard of Hearing Mentors
  - Dual Sensory Impaired Specialists
  - Listening and Spoken Language Specialists
  - Speech Language Pathologists
  - Teachers of the Deaf (Auditory/Oral & ASL)
- Utilize Part C coaching opportunities for joint visits with professionals to provide more in depth information about specific opportunities.

- Explain child specific hearing assistive technology and equipment management.
- Provide child specific resources regarding hearing levels and implications.
- Review outcomes and complete the communication plan.

**At an IFSP meeting or after the 6 Visits – The team will discuss the most appropriate possible Primary Service Provider based on outcomes and current communication plan.**

**When another professional is Primary Service Provider, ECFS will be written on the IFSP for quarterly consult visits in order to complete:**

- National Early Childhood Assessment Project (NECAP) Language Assessment
  - This provides state data on language development for children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
  - Will share findings and use assessments in conjunction with the PSP to consolidate progress monitoring.
- Communication Plan
  - Review child's language progress and current plan.
  - Update communication plan.
- Preparation for IFSP and outcome development