

Exploring Language and
Communication Opportunities:
A Process of Empowering Families through
Reflective Practices

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- ★ Early Intervention and Family Services Coordinator.
- ★ Serve on the Maine Newborn Hearing Program Board, the Maine Interagency Coordinating Council, and active member of the Earliest Interactions Maine/ HRSA team.
- ★ Initiated and continuously refine the ELCO process.
- ★ Live in Southern Maine exploring both ocean and mountains with my husband and two young daughters.



Disclosures

Amy Spencer is a paid employee of MECDHH/GBSD as their Early Intervention and Family Services Coordinator.



Today's Objectives:

Participants will identify **the 4 key** components of the Exploring Language and Communication Opportunities (ELCO) process.

Participants will summarize how the ELCO process aids in the reflective process.

Participants will analyze their system of sharing language and communication opportunities and develop a 3 step action plan for empowering families in the process.



ELCO

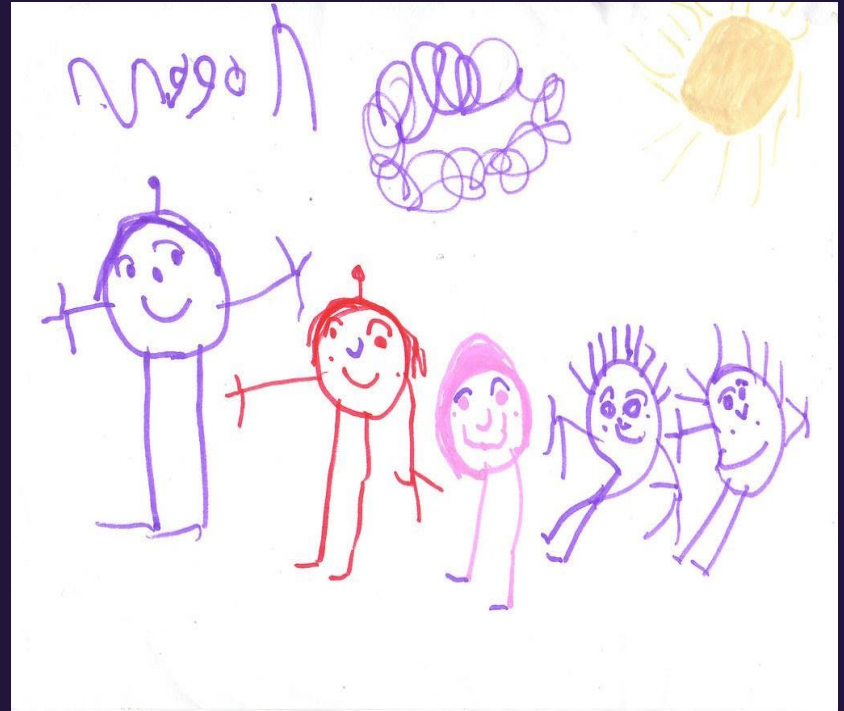
Professional Guide and Sources &
Resources Available



<https://earliestinteractions.com/resources/professionals>

WHY ELCO

- Family empowerment to make evidence informed decisions.
- Parent-child interactions highly predict language outcomes.
- Language outcomes are **HIGHLY** dependent on family involvement.
- Family/ Culture/ Values.
- Importance of accurate, comprehensive, consistent information.
- CONNECTION/ACCESS/ EXPOSURE** for language acquisition.



Guide NOT a script.

Supporting caregiver-child interactions as a foundation throughout.

Many pieces are happening simultaneously.

Explicit about our role as informer/ guide/ facilitator.

Families role as the explorer and expert on their family system and child -
What will work for *them*?
Future vision?

Encourage exploration and REFLECTING.

Pivot as needed without judgement.



HOW

Meeting families where they are.

Developing TRUSTING PARTNERSHIPS.

Foster baby/ parent relationship as a foundation.

Proficient EI specialist for deaf and hard of hearing children & their families.

Continuity of resources/ information that are comprehensive & digestible.

Parent-to-Parent Support.

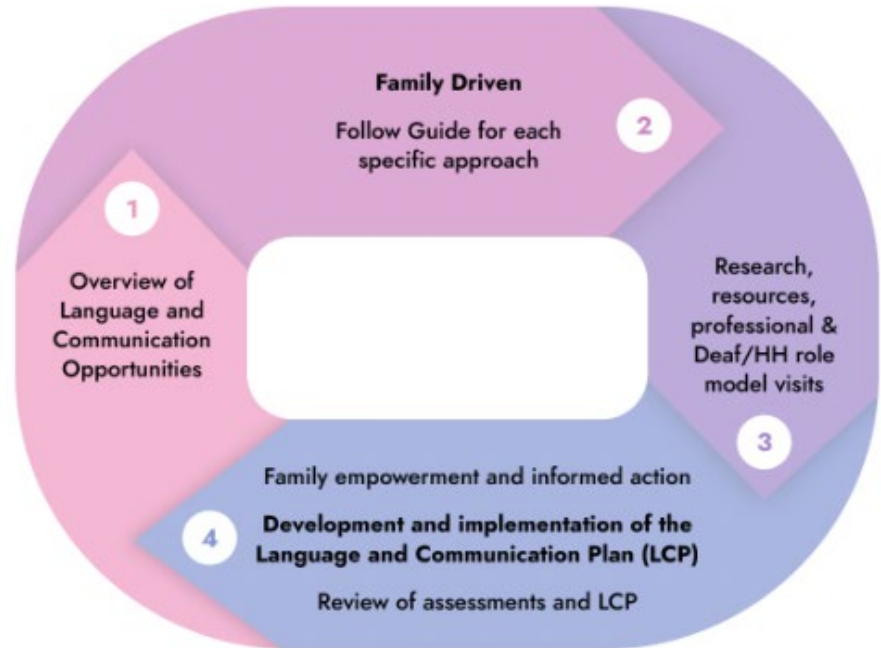
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Adults.

Ongoing Assessment and guided REFLECTION.

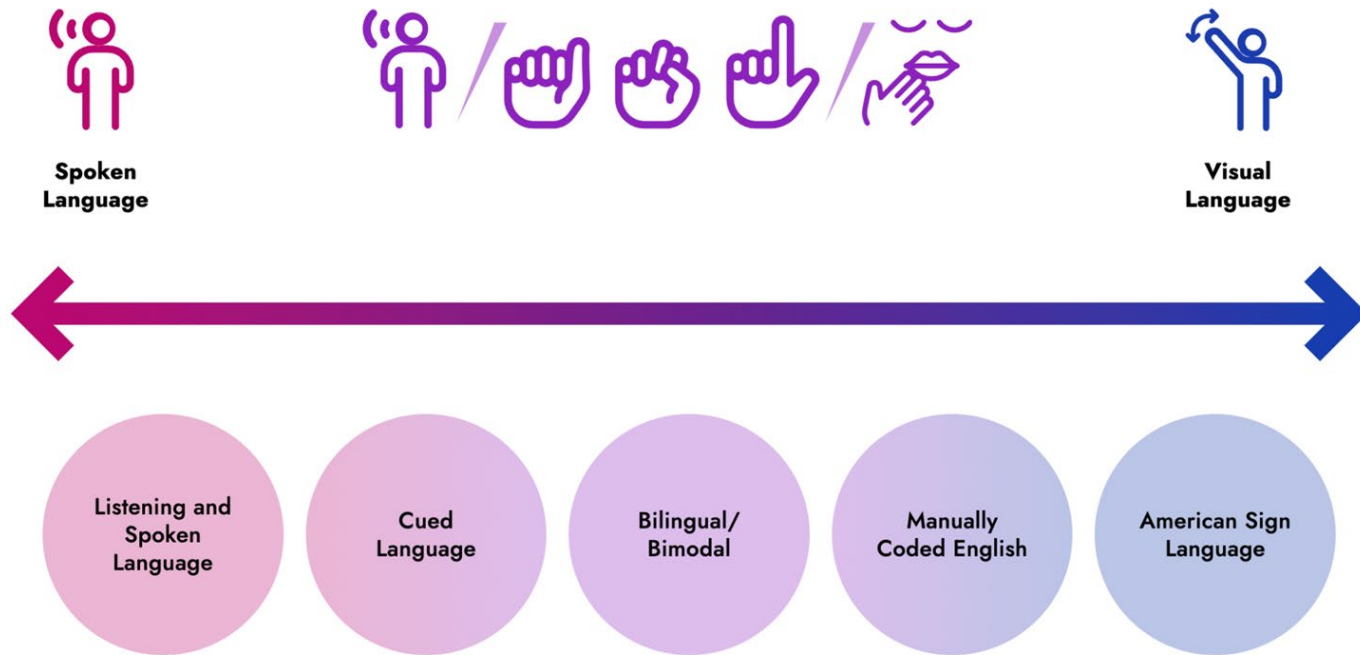


Reflective Practices

Professional Approach



Communication & Language Opportunities for Children Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing



<https://earliestinteractions.com/elco>



Ongoing Assessments

Maine's Kindergarten Readiness Legislation

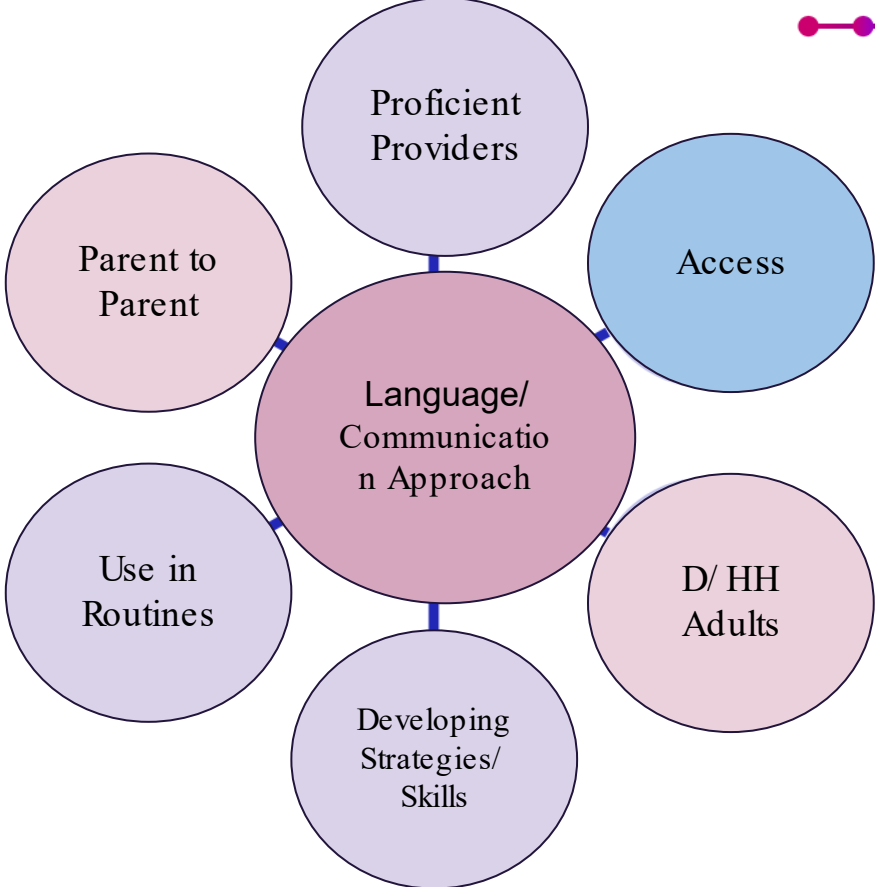
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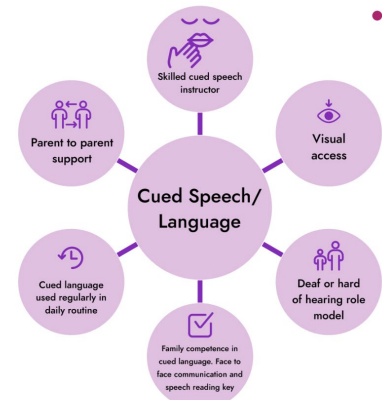
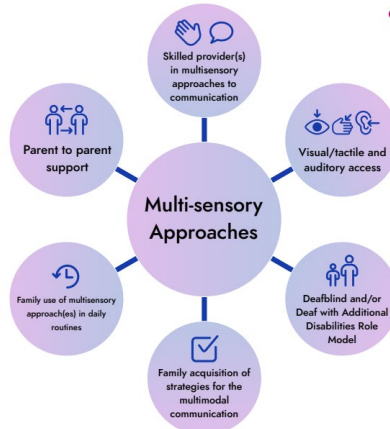
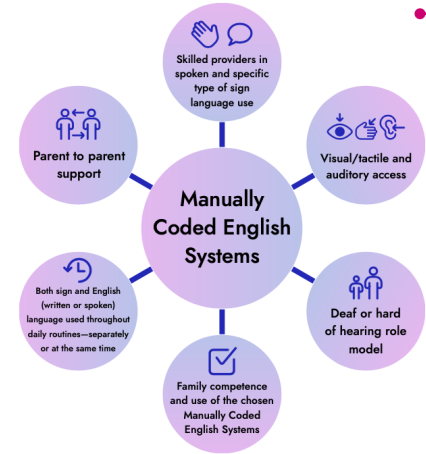
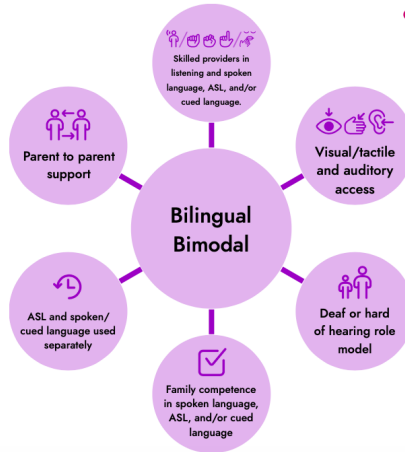
Assessments every 6m prior to IFSP:

- ★ DAYC- Developmental Assessment of Young Children
- ★ Cincinnati Auditory Skills Checklist (if applicable)
- ★ MacArthur Bates (Words & Gestures or Words & Sentences)- Says/Signs
- ★ SKI-HI Language Development Scales - Spoken/Visual Language
- ★ Pragmatics Checklist
- ★ EI for ME MEISR- Measurement of Engagement, Independence & Social Relationships



Reflecting Upon Components Needed for Each Opportunity



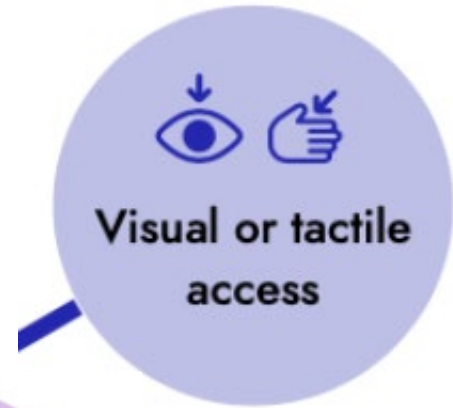


ACCESS

Consistent access

Access quality

Technology challenges



EXPOSURE

Proficient providers

Family Competency building.

Integration into daily routines.

Deaf/HH Adults

Peers using same language



ASL Providers,
Deaf Mentor



Family competence
in spoken language,
ASL, and/or cued
language



Integrated listening
and spoken language
throughout daily
routines





Parent to parent
support

CONNECTIONS

Parent/ Child Interactions



Peer Interaction Opportunities



Deaf or hard
of hearing role
model



Reflect - Know the Family Vision

- ★ Regular discussions about the future.
- ★ Reviewing language acquisition through assessments and experience.
- ★ WATCH, WAIT, WONDER together...
- ★ Revisit ELCO overview to keep opportunities fresh in families minds.
- ★ Explore benefits/ limitations of the approach.
- ★ Identify and align family vision with needs to support that.
- ★ Reflect on where we are, where we want to go, and how we will get there....



Summary

- ★ Ensure families have:
 - Knowledge and resources about ALL language and communication approaches.
 - Access to ALL INFORMATION to feel empowered
 - Parent-to-Parent support
 - Deaf/Hard of Hearing role models
- ★ Family involvement & caregiver-child interactions are two most important factors of success, no matter the approach.
- ★ Benefits & limitations to each approach are not static, but dynamic to each family's connection, culture, and values.
- ★ Ongoing assessment and REFLECTION in a TRUSTING PARTNERSHIP are essential part of the process for language planning for optimal language acquisition.



Exploring Language and Communication Opportunities

Advice From Parents

<https://vimeo.com/761194758/ba29c4d72a>



How do you share language and communication opportunities with families?

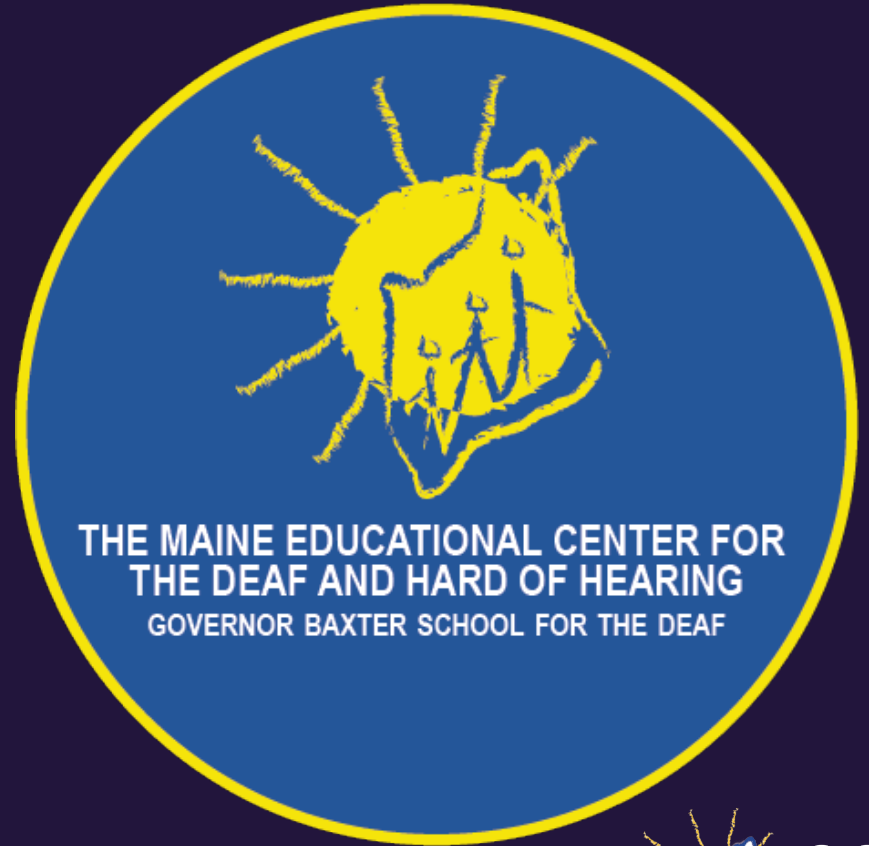
What are 3 things you can do to improve family empowerment in this process?

How does REFLECTION impact this process?



QUESTIONS?

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