

5 Essentials for Successful Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Birth to Three Settings

For Programs Serving Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants & Toddlers

A successful interdisciplinary program is built on shared partnerships, coordinated communication, and family-centered collaboration across early intervention, medical, educational, and Deaf community partners. Use these five essentials to strengthen collaborative practice, guide program implementation, and support continuous improvement.

1

Unified Program Identity & Consistent Messaging

Maintain a shared program identity and consistent messaging across all partners. Ensure families receive coordinated, accurate information through aligned materials, communication, and outreach.

2

Formalized Partnerships & Deaf Community Integration

Develop strong partnerships with key stakeholders, including Deaf-led organizations, through clearly defined roles and shared responsibilities. Engage Deaf community partners as active contributors to program planning and service delivery.

3

Shared Expectations & Team Alignment

Establish shared expectations for interdisciplinary practice through onboarding, training, and ongoing professional development. Support team members in delivering consistent, family-centered, language-rich services across settings.

4

Family & Deaf Adult Voice in Program Design

Integrate family perspectives and Deaf adult expertise into program planning, evaluation, and continuous improvement. Ensure these perspectives help shape services, priorities, and program decisions.

5

Integrated Communication & Coordination

Promote clear communication and coordinated decision-making across all partners. Use collaboration, data, and stakeholder feedback to strengthen services and improve outcomes for families.