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## Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Council

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## Introduction

The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH) plays a crucial role in supporting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing across Maine. One of its primary focuses is on providing quality education and support services to deaf and hard of hearing children and their families. MECDHH primarily serves individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, including children, adolescents, and adults, across the state of Maine. Their services and programs are designed to support these individuals in various aspects of their lives, including education, communication, accessibility, and advocacy. Additionally, MECDHH also works with families, educators, service providers, and the broader community to promote awareness, understanding, and inclusivity for individuals with hearing impairments.

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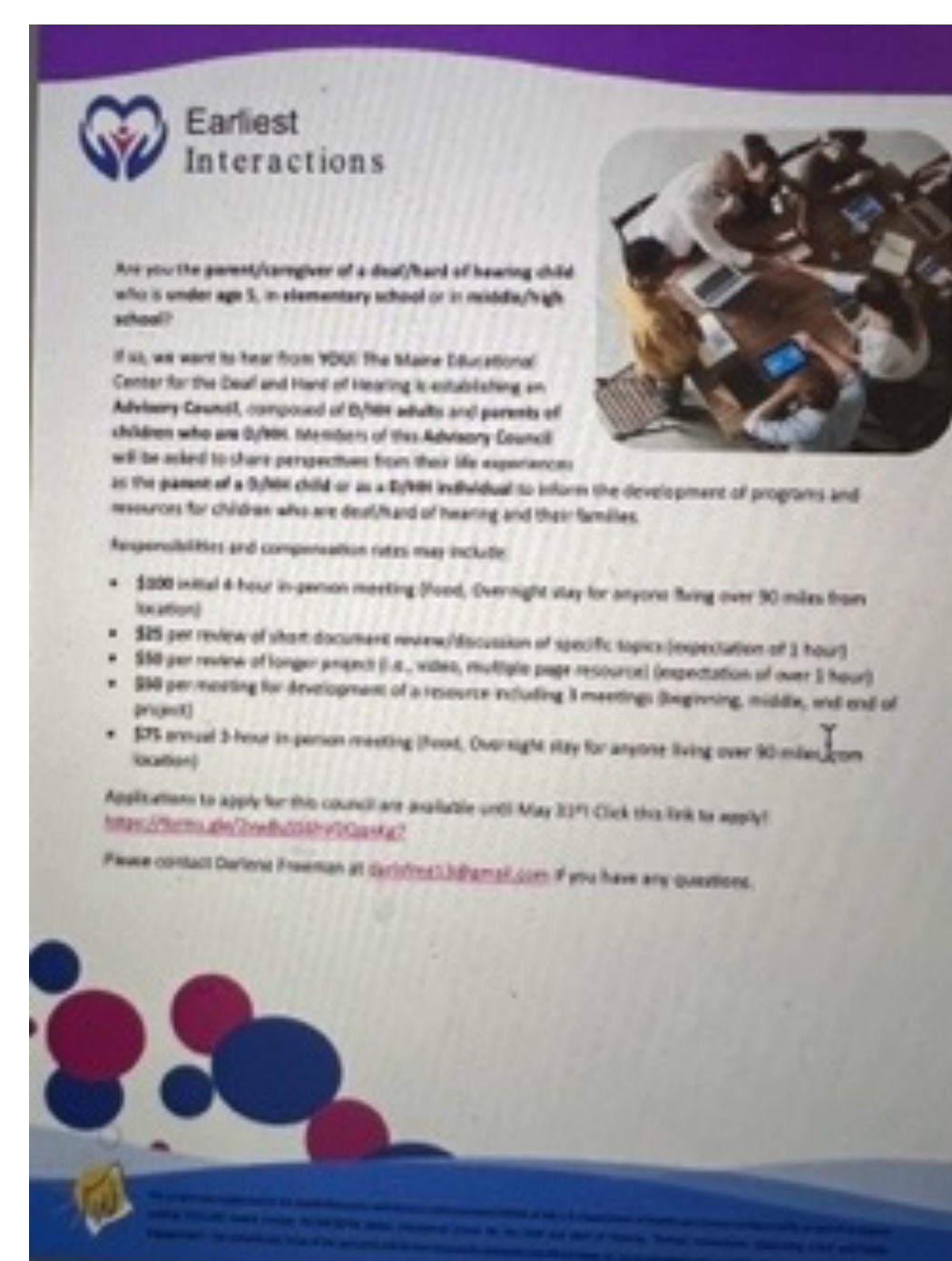
In addition to education, MECDHH also offers various outreach and advocacy programs to promote awareness and understanding of deafness and hearing-related issues in the community. These programs aim to eliminate stigma, improve accessibility, and foster inclusivity for individuals with hearing impairments. MECDHH collaborates with local organizations, government agencies, and stakeholders to advocate for policies and initiatives that enhance the quality of life for the deaf and hard of hearing population in Maine.

## Advisory Council

### Why Advisory Council:

- Parent Perspective needed.
- Deaf or Hard of Hearing adult perspective needed.
- Diversity

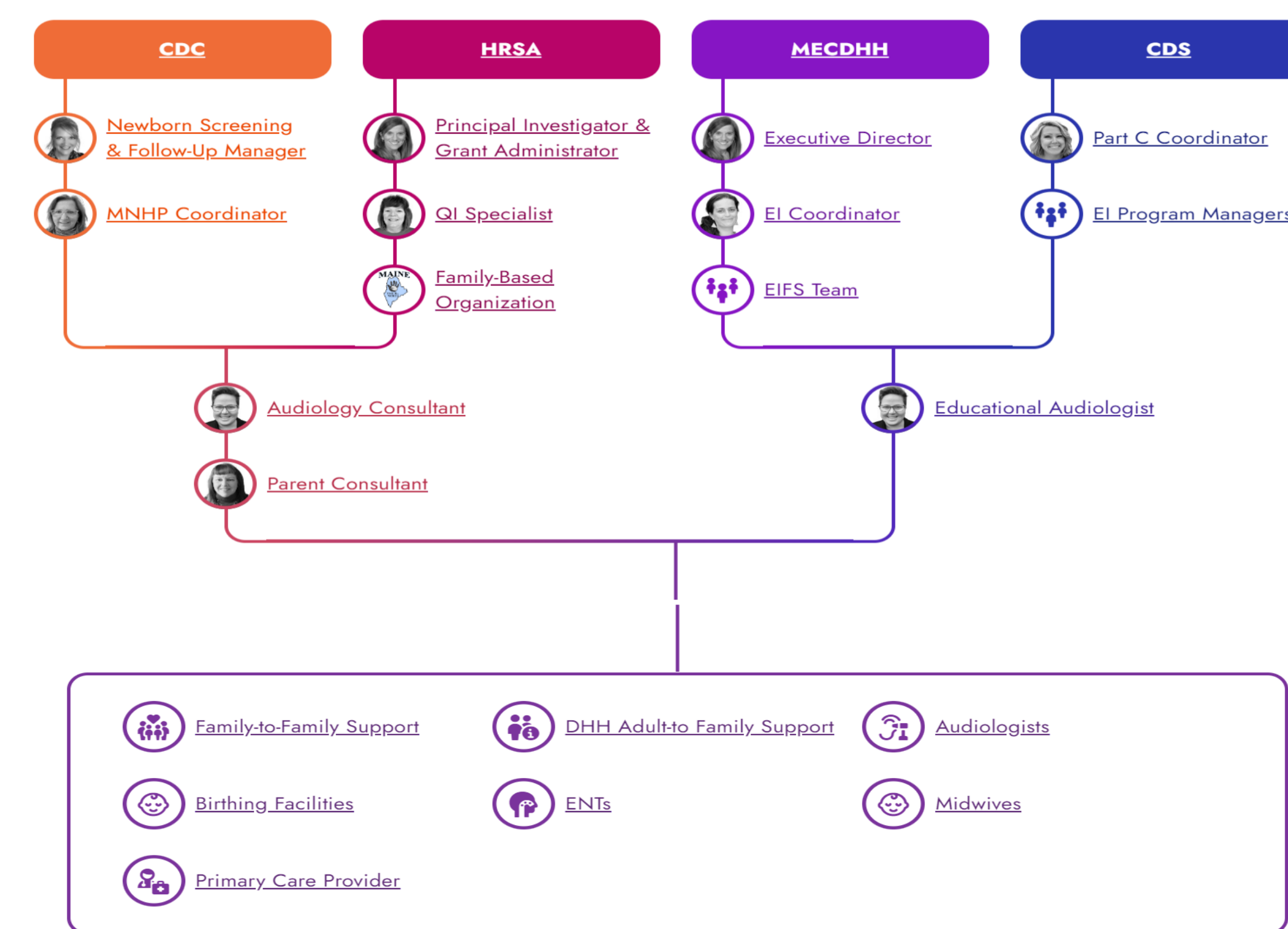
### Flyers:



## Advisory Council

- Help develop new resources and provide feedback throughout development process
- Complete surveys to provide parent/D/HH perspectives as needed
- Reach out to other parents/D/HH adults to gather more input on specific projects
- Participate in focus groups/videos/trainings as needed
- The advisory council members are paid a stipend for their time working on these projects?

## Advisory Council will Work with



## Advisory Council Project

The advisory council was already active when I began my leadership placement at Maine Educational Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH). I participated in three distinct projects with them. First, I worked on The Parent Road Map/Who's Who project, which involves creating a guide for parents of infants who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing, offering information about necessary steps, support resources, and relevant websites. The goal is to ensure early intervention following specific timelines. This project aims to ease the overwhelming experience for parents by providing essential information and links to support services for both children and adults with hearing differences.

Next, I contributed to the audiogram project, initially designed to explain audiograms interactively. It evolved into a web-based tool on the Earliest Interactions website, allowing parents to plot their child's audiological testing and understand the results. The advisory council directly influenced the project's design and functionality through collaboration with the web designer.

Lastly, I was part of the initiative to remove the term "Hearing Loss" all the new resources developed. This change was suggested by the advisory council to avoid offending individuals who celebrate their diversity, as the term implies losing something rather than embracing their differences from birth.

In conclusion, the involvement of the advisory council in projects such as The Parent Road Map/Who's Who, the audiogram project, and the initiative to eliminate the term "Hearing Loss" from new resources underscores the crucial role of collaboration and community input in addressing the needs of individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. These projects demonstrate the council's dedication to providing essential resources and support to parents and individuals with hearing differences, ensuring early intervention, understanding of audiological testing, and respectful terminology. Such initiatives highlight the significance of advisory councils in driving positive change and promoting inclusivity within organizations like MECDHH, ultimately improving outcomes and experiences for those they serve.



## References

<https://www.mecdhh.org>



[iod.unh.edu/nh-me-lend](http://iod.unh.edu/nh-me-lend)

