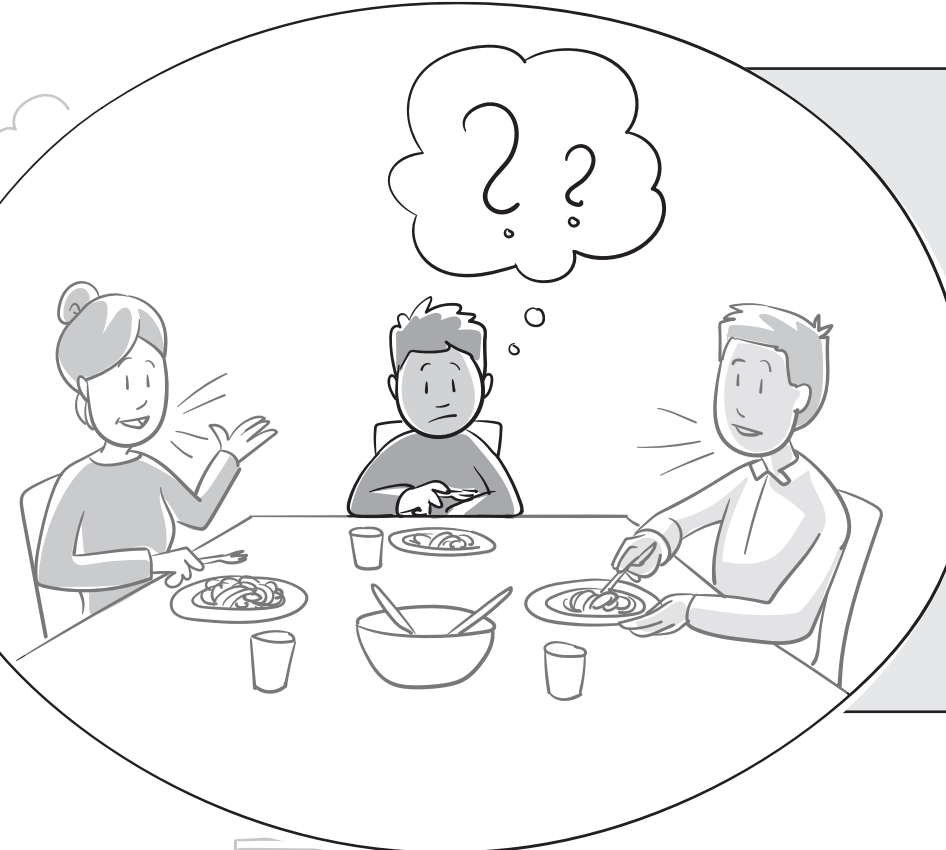# Navigating Toward Successful Postsecondary Outcomes

An illustrated view of Root Causes and Key Impact Areas

Deaf people continue to face significant barriers that contribute to education and employment gaps between deaf and hearing people. To remove these barriers, it is necessary to recognize the underlying root causes that contribute to these gaps in educational attainment and employment. Key impact areas build on evidence-based strategies for improving postsecondary outcomes for deaf people and narrowing those outcome gaps.

ROOT CAUSES

Limited Access to Language and Communication

Limited access to language and communication across a range of settings results in fewer opportunities for language development and continued incidental learning.

Reduced Social Opportunities

Reduced access to social opportunities negatively impacts social development, and cuts off access to networks critical for future success.

Negative Attitudes and Biases

Negative attitudes, biases, and low expectations can reduce deaf people's resilience to adversity and persistence in meeting their goals.

Lack of Qualified and Experienced Professionals

Many professionals do not have the appropriate qualifications and experience to work with deaf people, resulting in poor-quality services.

KEY IMPACT AREAS

Design Accessible Environments

Environments that are designed with accessibility in mind, tailored to individual needs, and allow for flexibility can maximize access to educational experiences for deaf students.

Collect and Use Data for Decision-Making

Collecting, analyzing, and using data, particularly when in collaboration with deaf people, can identify successful models and support data-driven decision making to improve outcomes.

Leverage Community Resources

Strengthening community networks, building relationships, and increasing access to deaf role models contributes to stronger social capital available to deaf people in their communities.

Promote High Expectations for Success

Parents and professionals who believe that deaf people can succeed make an important contribution to the expectations that deaf people have of themselves, and their motivation to meet their goals.

Develop Collaborative and Integrated Systems

Improved collaboration and positive working relationships between systems – within institutions, communities, and states – are critical for deaf individuals' postsecondary success.

TA&D NETWORK

IDEAs that Work
U.S. Office of Special Education Programs