Response to Intervention for Behavior (RtI:B):

*A Technical Assistance Paper**

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What is Response to Intervention for Behavior?

Response to intervention, commonly referred to as RtI, focuses on "the practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions that are matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying student response data to important educational decisions." (NASDSE, 2007)

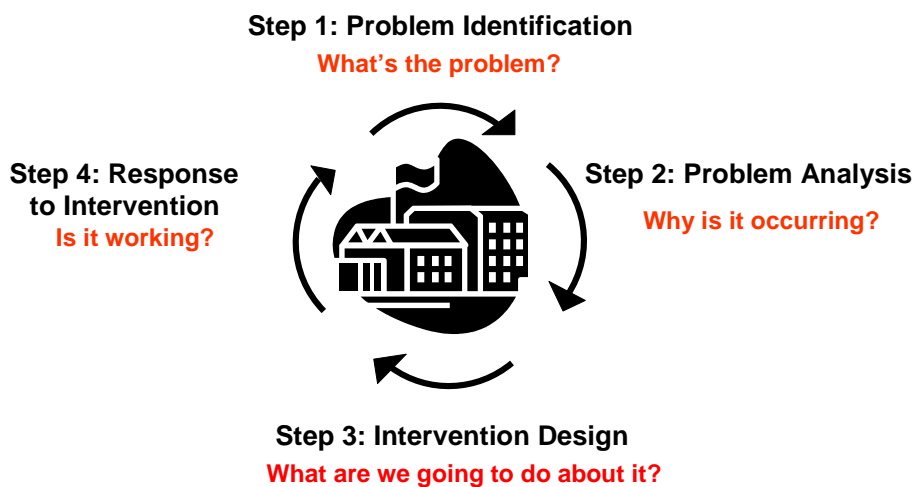*What are the core principles of RtI for Behavior?*

Response to Intervention strategies can be applied to students' student social behavior, as well as to academic achievement. The core principles of RtI remain the same regardless of the problem-solving target. A Response to Intervention approach is based on three main components:
1. Continual application of a structured problem-solving process;
2. Reliance on an integrated data system that is used to inform problem solving; and
3. Utilization of a multi-tiered model of support delivery that enables the efficient use of school resources.

What is a structured problem solving process?

Although there are variations in the problem-solving process across the country, Florida has adopted a four-step process that includes:

Problem Solving Steps

Step 1: Problem Identification
What's the problem?

Step 4: Response to Intervention
Is it working?

Step 2: Problem Analysis
Why is it occurring?

Step 3: Intervention Design
What are we going to do about it?

Step 1: Problem Identification (What's the problem?)

Step 2: Problem Analysis (Why is it occurring?)

Step 3: Intervention Design (What are we going to do about it?)

Step 4: Response to Intervention (Is it working?)

The four-step, problem-solving model of RtI for Behavior looks very simple. First, problem behaviors of all students, groups of students or individual students must be identified. Next, it is critical to understand why those behavior problems are occurring. This step is the problem analysis. Based on an understanding of why the behavior is occurring, school personnel and teams can develop effective and efficient interventions to address the problem behavior and then progress monitor whether students are responding to the interventions.

Why is an integrated data system so necessary for problem-solving?

The success of the RtI for Behavior process is dependent on a number of critical features. First, the problem-solving approach requires the use of accurate data for decision-making, at each level and step of the process. This means that schools have to have ways of collecting, maintaining, and accessing their data that are easy to use, relevant, and accessible to decision makers, and easily summarized in a way that's understandable to teachers and parents.
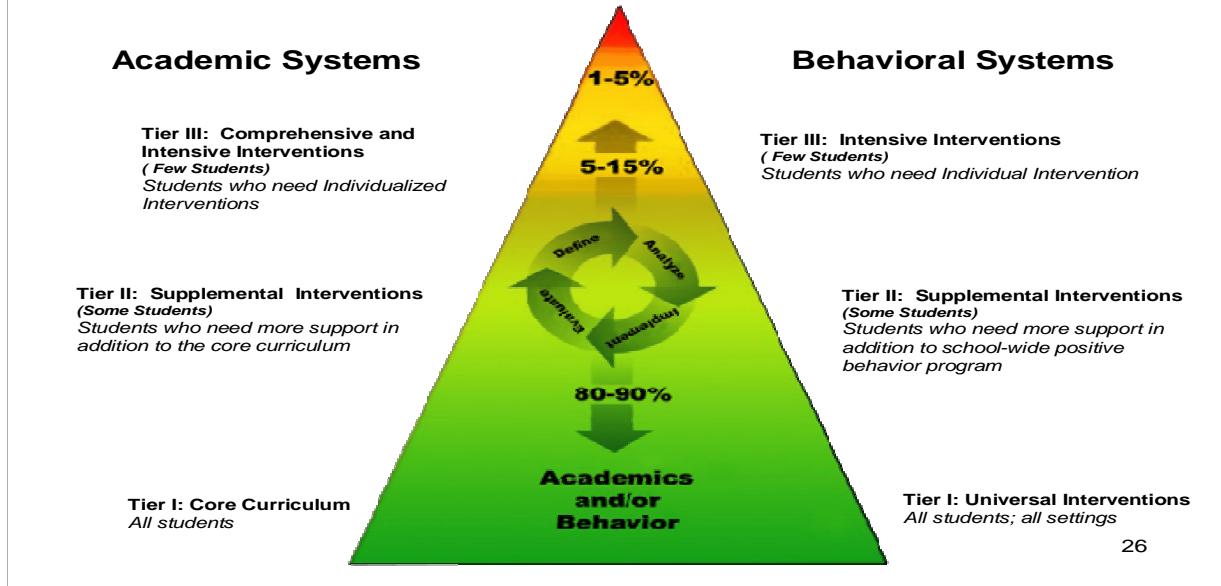
The types of data collected will differ according to the focus of the problem-solving process. For example, problem solving at the entire school level requires the analysis of summary data that is based on the behaviors of the entire student body; while problem solving for an individual student requires the analysis of specific patterns of behavior for that student. Understanding which kinds of data to collect requires a deeper understanding of each level or tier of support.

What does this multi-tiered support system look like?

A three-tiered model for instruction and intervention expresses the concept that academic and behavioral supports are provided at a **core or universal level** that is intended to effectively address the needs of all students in a school. This is sometimes referred to as Tier 1. However, not all students will respond to the same curricula and teaching strategies. As a result, at Tier 2 some students with identified needs would receive **supplemental or targeted instruction** and intervention. Finally, at Tier 3, a few students with the most severe needs receive **intensive and individualized** behavioral and/or academic support.

Three Tiered Model of School Supports: Example of an Infrastructure Resource Inventory

Academic Systems

Behavioral Systems

1-5%

Tier III: Comprehensive and Intensive Interventions
(Few Students)
Students who need Individualized Interventions

Tier III: Intensive Interventions
(Few Students)
Students who need Individual Intervention

5-15%

Define Analyze Evaluate Implement

Tier II: Supplemental Interventions
(Some Students)
Students who need more support in addition to the core curriculum

Tier II: Supplemental Interventions
(Some Students)
Students who need more support in addition to school-wide positive behavior program

80-90%

Academics and/or Behavior

Tier I: Core Curriculum
All students

Tier I: Universal Interventions
All students; all settings

26

This three-level support system allows educators to identify the needs of all students, match the level of support to the severity of the academic and behavior problems and then assess the students' response to intervention. On the "behavior" side of the triangle, an approach called School-Wide Positive Behavior Support provides a problem-solving and response to intervention model that aims to prevent inappropriate behavior and teach and reinforce appropriate behaviors.

What is School-Wide Positive Behavior Support?

A major advance in school-wide discipline is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, restrooms, etc.). Positive behavior support (PBS) is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occurs. In other words, PBS uses evidence-based practices to change our school systems, our school environments and ultimately the behavior of our staff and students. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining universal (school-wide), supplemental (classroom and targeted groups), and intensive (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional.

Why is it so important to focus on teaching positive social behaviors?

In the past, school-wide discipline has focused mainly on reacting to specific student misbehavior by implementing punishment-based strategies including reprimands, loss of privileges, office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions. Research has shown that the implementation of punishment, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Introducing, modeling, and reinforcing positive social behavior is an important part of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. The purpose of School-Wide PBS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.

What is a systems approach in School-Wide PBS?

An organization is a group of individuals who work together to achieve a common goal. Systems are needed to support the collective use of best practices by individuals within the organization. The School-Wide PBS process emphasizes the creation of systems that support the adoption and durable implementation of evidence-based practices and procedures, and fit within on-going school reform efforts. School-Wide PBS is an interactive approach that includes opportunities to correct and improve four key elements:

- Outcomes: academic and behavior targets that are endorsed and emphasized by students, families, and educators.
- Practices: interventions and strategies that are evidence based.
- Data: information that is used to identify status, need for change, and effects of interventions.
- Systems: supports that are needed to enable the accurate and durable implementation of the practices of PBS.
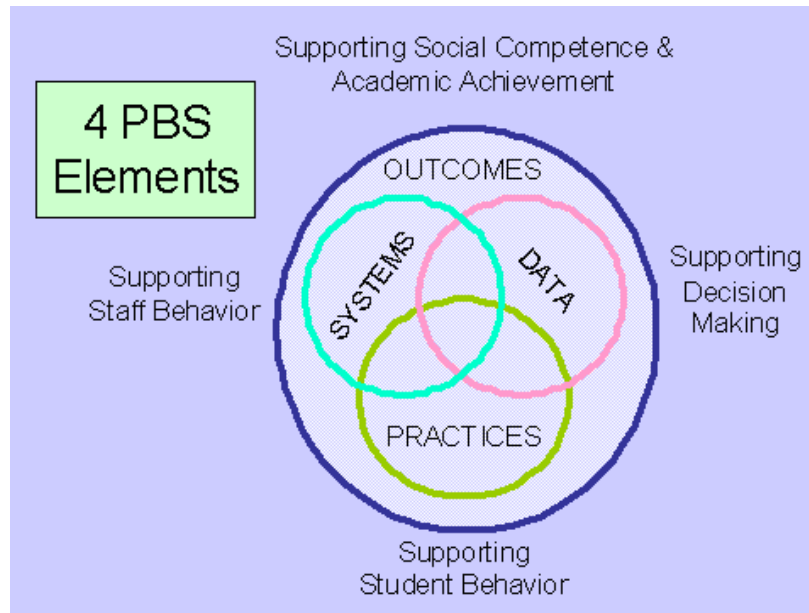
What is Tier 1 Response to Intervention for Behavior?

The goal of RtI:B at the Tier 1 level is the prevention of problem behavior and promotion of positive behavior by establishing processes that should facilitate success for ~80% of the student body. An effective Tier 1 system should reduce the number of students who need more expensive and time consuming resources at Tiers 2 and 3. So, if more than 80% of students respond to Tier 1 supports, the school has maximized their resources and is able to meet the needs of more students more effectively.

What is Tier 1: Universal Support?

Tier 1: Universal Support involves system-wide efforts to prevent new cases of a condition or disorder. For example, giving children vaccinations against common diseases such as measles and chicken pox is done to prevent initial occurrences of these diseases. As a system-wide Universal Support effort in schools, positive behavior support consists of rules, routines, and physical arrangements that are developed and taught by school staff to prevent initial occurrences of problem behavior. For example, to prevent injuries to students caused by running in hallways, schools may develop Universal Supports by 1) establishing and teaching the rule, "walk in the hallways;" 2) creating a routine in which staff station themselves in the hallways during transition times to supervise the movement of pupils; or 3) altering the physical arrangement, such as making sure that an adult is with any group of students when they are in the hallways.

What are we trying to prevent?

It goes without saying that we want to prevent the major "behavioral earthquakes" that we hear about in the news: violent acts against teachers or other students, theft, bullying behavior, drug

use, and the like. However, research has taught us that efforts to prevent these serious problems are more successful if the "host environment"—the school as a whole—supports the adoption and use of evidence-based practices. Practices that meet these criteria include teaching and rewarding students for complying with a small set of basic expectations for conduct, such as "be safe," be responsible," and "be respectful." These expectations translate into sets of rules that differ according to various settings in the school. Thus, on the playground "be safe" means stay within boundaries and follow the rules of the game. In hallways and on stairs, it means to keep your hands and feet to yourself and to walk on the right side. Some parents and educators believe that students come to school knowing these rules of conduct, and that those who don't follow them simply should be punished. However, research and experience has taught us that systematically teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding. It also establishes a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm. Finally, the use of Universal Support strategies has been shown to result in dramatic reductions in the number of students being sent to the office for discipline in elementary and middle schools across the United States and Canada. In effect, by teaching and encouraging positive student behavior (i.e., positive behavior support), we reduce the "white noise" of common but constant student disruption that distracts us from focusing intervention expertise on the more serious problems mentioned above.

What are the steps involved in setting up a school-wide system of discipline?

An effective school-wide system of discipline or positive behavior supports is only as good as the structures and processes that are in place to support their sustained use. When setting up a school-wide system of discipline or positive behavior supports, the following steps should be followed:

1. Establish a school-wide leadership or behavior support team to guide and direct the process. This team should be made up of an administrator, grade level representatives, and support staff. Schools are also encouraged to include parents on the team and consider including students on secondary school teams.
2. Secure administrator agreement of active support and participation.
3. Secure a commitment and agreement from at least 80% of the staff for active support and participation.
4. Conduct a self assessment of the current school-wide discipline system.
5. Create an implementation action plan that is a result of data-based decision-making.
6. Establish a way to collect office referral and other data on a regular basis to evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide PBS efforts.

How do you get started with Tier1: Universal Support in a school?

As with any effort to create change in an organization, it is important to gain consensus on several issues. This can be accomplished by following the first three steps of the four step problem-solving process:

Step 1: Problem Identification: Is there a problem that we need and want to address in our school?
Step 2: Problem Analysis: What is the nature of this problem in our school?
Step 3: Intervention Design: What are we going to do about it?

The most efficient way to establish consensus is to arrange a meeting of the entire school staff (teachers and aides, administrators, office and cafeteria workers, custodians, counselors, etc.) to discuss these questions. If the majority of staff respond positively to these questions (e.g., "Yes, student behavior is a problem and we want to do something about it;" "The rates of office disciplinary referrals from classrooms and the cafeteria have increased 50% since the last quarter;" "We will implement a school-wide disciplinary plan based on positive behavior support"), the next step is to conduct further assessments, as necessary, and then to agree on a set of strategies to address the problem(s). Development of a Tier 1: Universal system may be one set of strategies that will be considered.

An important rule for establishing consensus is that at least 80% of all staff should agree on the problems and the strategies to address them, and make a commitment to implement the strategies as planned. Systems change literature indicates that 80% of personnel should be committed to a change process for the systems change to be effective. **While the Florida PBS Project uses the 80% target as a goal for the school, we have never refused to train or support a team that does not have 80% buy-in.** We will, however, discuss the probable lack of success of the school with the administrator and district if school personnel have little buy-in or the administrator is the only person committed to a change. The PBS Project has also provided numerous strategies for getting greater buy-in at a school level and has actually modeled those strategies in targeted schools. Obviously, some Universal Support strategies will be easier to implement than others. This is why it is important for all staff in the school to have input and agree on which strategies will be implemented.

What are the components of a comprehensive Tier 1: Universal system of discipline or positive behavioral interventions and supports?

All effective school-wide systems have seven major components in common a) an agreed upon and common approach to discipline, b) a positive statement of purpose, c) a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff, d) procedures for teaching these expectations to students, e) a continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations, f) a continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behavior, and g) procedures for monitoring and evaluation the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis.

Can a school buy a ready-made or published Tier 1: Universal discipline curriculum?

Many published school-wide discipline programs that can be purchased have the necessary features. However, every school has its unique features (for example: students, size, staff composition, geographic location) that must be taken into account when any discipline program is selected. The best approach is to assess what is currently in place in your school, whether it is

effective, and what needs to be added or improved. Once this assessment is completed, a program that best addresses the features of your school can be selected.

What relationship does a Tier 1: Universal system of discipline or positive behavioral interventions and supports have with other school initiatives, like safe and drug-free schools, IDEIA 2004, character education, early literacy?

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support is not considered a new initiative. Instead, it is a set of problem solving strategies and processes that can be used to build upon a school's existing strengths. However, School-Wide PBS has a lot of characteristics that overlap with other initiatives. Proactive school-wide discipline systems create environments in which: a) learning and teaching are valued, and aggressive, unsafe behavior are discouraged; b) respect, responsibility, cooperation, and other highly valued character traits are taught and encouraged; c) individual differences are valued rather than criticized (i.e., a strengths –based approach); d) educating students with disabilities can be supported more effectively and efficiently, and e) teaching fundamental skills like reading and math can be maximized.

How do we know if Tier 1: Universal Support systems of discipline or positive behavior supports are effective?

Many schools make the mistake of implementing a school-wide system of discipline or positive behavior support without monitoring its effectiveness on a regular and frequent basis. Regular monitoring and evaluation are needed to a) prevent ineffective practices from wasting time and resources, b) improve the efficiency and effectiveness of current procedures, c) eliminate elements of the system that are ineffective or inefficient, and d) make modifications before problem behavior patterns become too durable and resistant to change.

Different kinds of data can be used to assess the outcomes and fidelity of Tier 1 supports and include:

1. **Office discipline referrals** (ODRs) provide a school-wide measure of the impact of Tier 1 activities for all students.
2. **Out-of-school and in-school suspensions** (OSS/ISS) provide a measure of the impact of Tier 1 activities on students who may require Tier 2 and 3 supports.
3. **Exceptional education referrals/requests for assistance** may provide a measure of whether classroom support processes are lessening the need for teachers to consider referrals for more intensive supports
4. **Faculty surveys** will provide a measure of the overall attitude and response of the faculty to changes in Tier 1 supports.
5. **Observations** of school settings including classrooms can provide data on the fidelity with which interventions are being implemented and the outcomes of those interventions.

6. **School Climate Surveys** can identify if staff, students and parents are pleased with the PBS process and outcomes (i.e., school is safer, students are able to learn, system is easy to implement, etc.).

These outcome data can be used in conjunction with other measures that determine the level of fidelity of a Tier 1 program (the degree to which procedures reflect best practice and are carried out as intended). Formal evaluations of fidelity, such as the Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ), School Evaluation Tool (SET), or custom measures are typically used at least once a year while additional tools can also be used to evaluate outcomes and fidelity on a more frequent basis

So what are the decisions that the RtI for Behavior team will need to make at Tier 1?

The first question is "Did we do what we said we would do?" If Tier 1 procedures are not carried out the way they were designed, then schools can not say whether students are having poor responses to the intervention and will not likely reduce the overall number of students who need more intensive services.

The second question is "Did it work?" Teams will use their data to make this decision. If all or most of the students are not responding to the Tier 1 intervention, then the Tier 1 supports may need to be reassessed and reworked.

Many of the interventions in Tier 1 will target all the school environments, but it is likely that the Tier 1 team's regular data analysis will identify the need for some classroom-level supports. For instance observations, ODRs, referrals for support and other data might indicate that many teachers and classrooms are experiencing behavior issues.

Referrals by Location
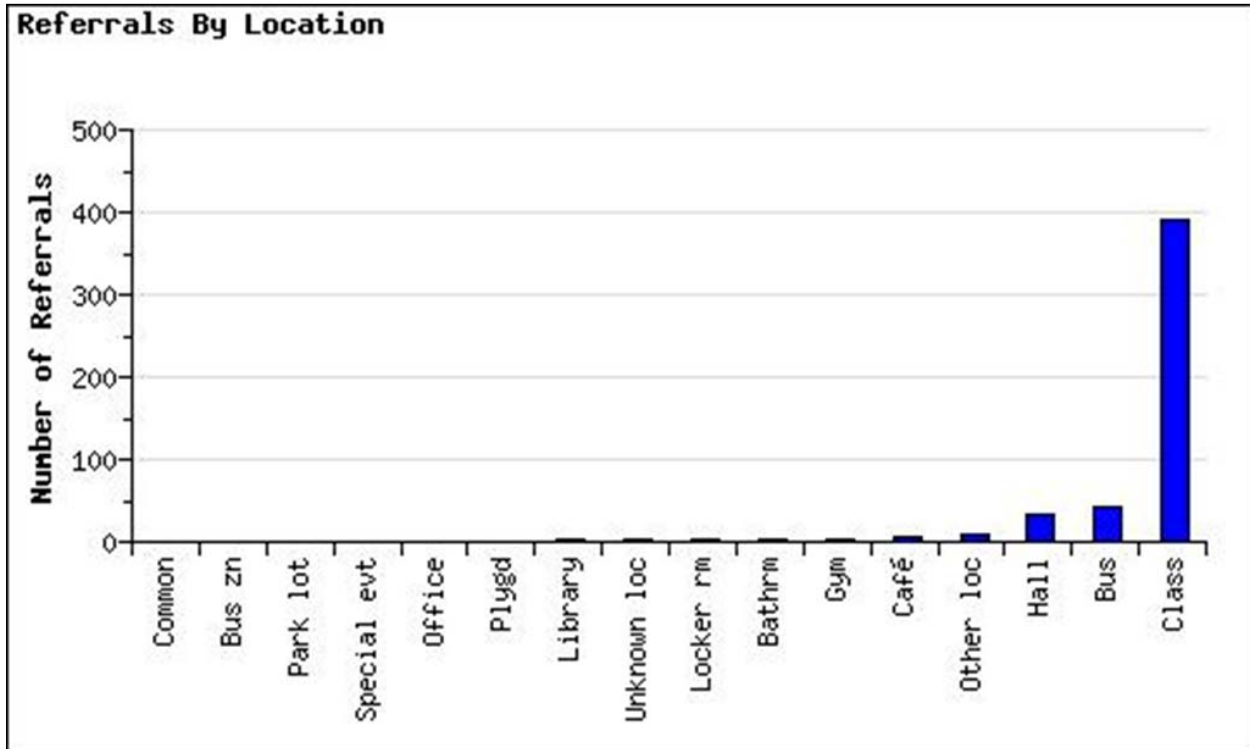
Therefore, the entire school faculty would benefit from professional development activities that focus on classroom behavior supports.

When a few staff generate lots of referrals, targeted support should be provided to those teachers.

Referrals by Staff

Referrals By Staff

Three teachers refer most of the students

(Y-axis: Number of Referrals, 0 to 70)
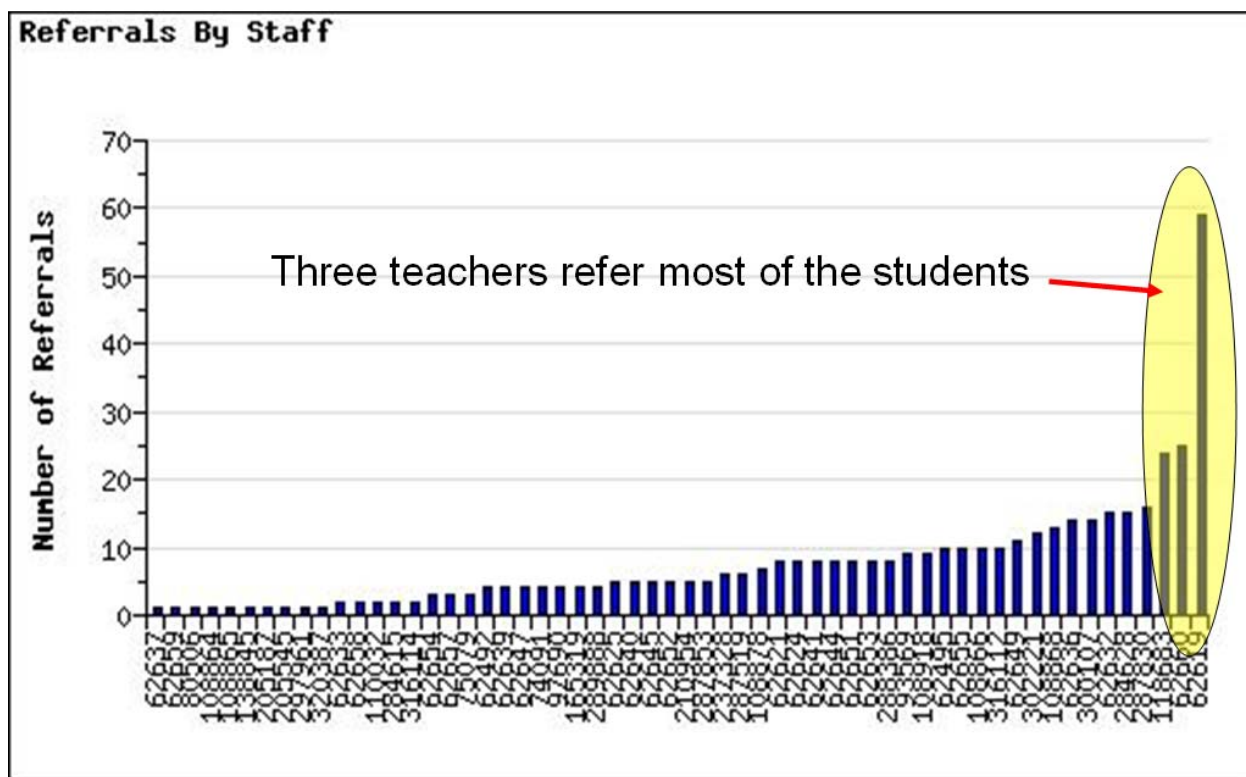
The FL PBS Project offers a Classroom Consultation Guide that contains resources in the areas of behavior support, curriculum design, instruction, and ecological adaptations that can assist with this process.

What if Tier 1: Universal Supports don't work?

Tier 1: Universal support, through positive behavior support, does work for over 80% of all students in a given school (based on a criterion of the number of students who have one or fewer office discipline referrals per month). But obviously, it will not work for everyone. For a variety of reasons, some students do not respond to the kinds of efforts that make up Tier 1: Universal Supports, just as some children are not completely protected by vaccinations. Putting into place systematic Tier 1: Universal strategies offer several advantages. First, it reduces the "white noise" caused by large numbers of office discipline referrals for minor problems. As we suggested earlier, this volume of referrals obscures and distracts our attention from more serious problems. Second, having a system for documenting the occurrence of problem behaviors (e.g., office discipline referrals) provides a way to determine which students need more intensive intervention. For example, one criterion for considering the need for moving into supplemental Support for a student or group of students might be four or more office discipline referrals in a month. Without Tier 1: Universal Supports, of course, the number of students meeting this

criteria and needing additional help will be much larger. Finally, a Universal system identifies if the school is meeting the needs of all students before considering more intensive and expensive Tier 2 and 3 supports for a few students.

Are there other ways to identify students who may need additional support?

While Tier 1: Universal Supports delivered at the entire school or classroom level are most cost effective, there are still students who need more support. While ODRs are one way to identify these students, ODRs will identify *some* students in need of intervention, but not a large portion of students who have additional mental health or behavioral needs. If schools are trying to implement RtI with fidelity, they will need to develop a process for identifying students in need of supplemental supports who are not identified by ODR data.

Consistent with the RtI philosophy, screening measures should be used to make sure we identify students who need additional supports EARLY, and not wait for them to have ongoing problems. Just as with academic screening tools, behavioral screening needs to:
1) Be easy to administer,
2) Be completed quickly,
3) Provide accurate data about students who need more intensive services,
4) Identify students with internalizing *and* externalizing mental health issues, and
5) Be administered up to 2-3 times each year, or on an as-needed basis for new students and students with sudden changes in their mental health needs.

There are psychological instruments available commercially that can identify these students and the FL PBS Project has developed a Teacher Nomination Form, which was adapted from the Student Screening for Behavior Disorders (SSBD). In a pilot study, 75% of the students identified by this process were also found to be at exhibiting or at risk of severe behavior problem.

Once students have been identified through a screening process, schools need to determine whether those students have been taught the school-wide expectations in context, and whether they have been rewarded for displaying those expectations. If not, then schools can not assume the student is having a poor response to the Tier 1 interventions and teams should consult with these students' teachers to increase their use of the school-wide system.

How do we organize our school's team to provide effective RtI for Behavior?

As schools move towards providing a more comprehensive and systemic system of behavioral supports for their students, they will need to investigate ways in which their staff members can work together more effectively and efficiently.

With RtI, schools will need to identify a group of individuals who can lead their school through the problem solving process at all tiers of service, for academic problems as well as behavior problems. Many of the members of this team would be the same people who participate on a

Student Support Team; however, different or additional staff may need to be called in to ensure adequate representation and expertise.

One example of how schools have structured their RtI team comes from Osceola County, FL.
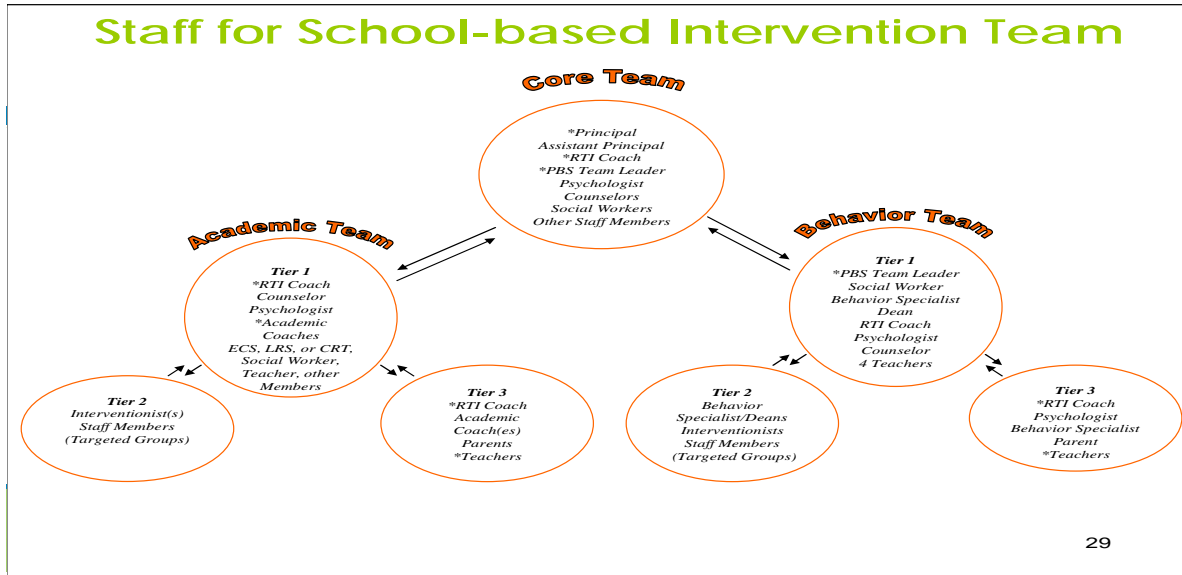
In their model, each school establishes a Core team, made up of people from the school who have the power to make decisions about time and resources (principal, AP), people who have expertise in the problem-solving process (psychologist, guidance counselor), and people who understand the different factors involved in the student learning process (social workers, teachers).

The Core team is responsible for looking at school-wide data for academics and behavior. They look to see if the majority of their students are being successful, and whether there are systems that are problematic. When school-wide academic or behavioral problems are identified, subcommittees meet to work through the problems in more detail. The subcommittees will have some representation from the Core team, and they will have additional representation from school or district personnel who have additional expertise in the problem area.

As these subcommittees identify students that require more intensive services (such as those provided at Tier 2 and Tier 3), additional subcommittees are formed. As the problem solving process moves forward, communication between the subcommittees and the Core Team will be essential to ensuring effective problem-solving is taking place.

Osceola's example is just one idea for how schools may structure their support teams; schools will have to develop their own model based on the resources and needs of their building and district.

What are Tier 2 Supplemental Supports?

Tier 2 Supplemental Supports are designed to provide additional or targeted interventions to support students who have access to Tier 1 Universal Supports and are not responding positively to them. Supplemental Supports are more intensive since a smaller number of students within middle part of the triangle are at risk for engaging in more serious problem behavior and need more support. Common Supplemental Support practices involve small groups of students or simple individualized intervention strategies. Supplemental Support is designed for use in schools where there are more students needing behavior support than can be supported via intensive and individual Tier 3 support, and for students who are at risk of chronic problem behavior, but for whom high intensity interventions are not essential. Supplemental Support often involves targeted group interventions with a few students or larger groups (30 students or more) participating. Supplemental Supports are an important part of the continuum of behavior support needed in schools, and there is a growing literature documenting that targeted interventions can be implemented by typical school personnel, with positive effects on up to 67% of referred students. Supplemental interventions also are recommended as an approach for identifying students in need of more intensive, individualized interventions. Specific Supplemental Supports include practices such as "social skills club," "check in/check out" and the Behavior Education Plan.

How many students may need Tier 2 Supplemental Supports?

Approximately 15-20% of your student body may need Tier 2 supports. This percentage is not absolute; schools with strong Tier 1 supports will have a reduced need for Tier 2 supports.

Can students receive individual behavior support plans at Tier 2?

Yes. Individual PBS plans at the Tier 2: Supplemental Support level involve a simple assessment to identify the function a problem behavior serves (Functional Behavioral Assessment or FBA) and a support plan comprised of individualized, assessment-based intervention strategies that include a range of options such as: (1) teaching the student to use new skills as a replacement for problem behaviors, (2) rearranging the environment so that problems can be prevented and desirable behaviors can be encouraged, and (3) monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing this simple plan over time. This assessment and behavior planning process may be simple and involve a brief consultation with the student's teacher(s) and one or more strategies that match the context of the classroom and the function of the student's problem behavior.

What differentiates Tier 2: Supplemental Supports from other systems of positive behavior support?

The main difference between supplemental and other levels of positive behavior support is the focus on supporting students at risk for more serious problem behavior. Supplemental Intervention addresses the needs of students who require more support than is available for all students (i.e., Universal Support) and less support than is available for individual students who need flexible, focused, personalized interventions (Tier 3: Intensive Support). This means that

Supplemental Intervention allows teams to select features of the process (e.g., types of programs or interventions, data collection tools used, information gathered, and degree of monitoring) to provide more focused behavior support to students with behavior needs that do not require intensive, individualized plans.

When should a program of Tier 2: Supplemental Supports be implemented and who should be involved?

Decisions to implement Supplemental Supports are usually grounded in records of student behavior compiled by classroom teachers or other professionals. In some schools, students with five or more office referrals are considered eligible for supplemental, targeted behavior support. The decision to use Supplemental Supports is typically made by the school's behavior support team. Supplemental Support is most effective when approached as a collaborative (rather than expert-driven) process.

Tier 2 interventions should be research-based, easy to administer to small groups of students, and require limited time and staff involvement. The types of interventions applied within a school building should be dictated by the needs of its student population. However, the delivery of those interventions is complicated by the fact that many Tier 2 interventions have little or no research to support their effectiveness, making the requirement of implementing "research-based" interventions difficult. Schools should make the best choices possible when selecting interventions, using those that have an appropriate research base whenever possible. In addition, schools should rely on progress monitoring procedures to ensure that their interventions are effective and appropriate for students. With effective progress monitoring in place, schools are, in essence, providing the research base for their selected interventions. The FL PBS Project has identified several Tier 2 interventions that are research-based and available commercially. A list of these interventions can be accessed on our website.

What are the key features of Tier 2: Supplemental Supports?

Tier 2: Supplemental Supports are implemented through a flexible, but systematic, process. Key features of Supplemental Support interventions include:

1. Continuous availability,
2. Rapid access (within 72 hr),
3. Very low effort by teachers,
4. Consistent with school-wide expectations,
5. Implemented by all staff/faculty in a school,
6. Flexible intervention based on assessment,
7. Match between the function of the problem behavior and the intervention,
8. Adequate resources for implementation (weekly meetings, plus 10 hours a week),
9. Student chooses to participate, and
10. Continuous monitoring of student behavior for decision-making.

With limited resources, how do we prioritize the students who may need or benefit most from Tier 2 supports?

Initially, schools may not have the interventions, personnel, or resources to address the needs of every student identified in the school-wide screening process. Teams will need to develop a process for prioritizing students according to their level of need. Data that can inform this process include:
1. # teachers recommending each student,
2. # ODRs,
3. # minor classroom incidents,
4. Academic level,
5. Special education status, and
6. # absences, etc.

Students with behavior concerns who are below grade level academically should receive interventions to address <u>both areas of need</u>. Students who do not meet priority criteria may be waitlisted and continue to receive Tier 1 supports until Tier 2 supports become available.

How do we know if we are implementing our Tier 2: Supplemental Support programs with fidelity?

Even the best interventions, if they are implemented poorly, will be ineffective in changing a student's behavior. Teams can not make decisions about whether an intervention was effective in helping a student unless the intervention was implemented as intended.

If interventions are being implemented in non-classroom settings, fidelity will need to be measured in two locations: first, to be sure the intervention is being implemented as intended in the non-classroom setting, and secondly in the classroom, to be sure a generalization plan is being followed.

For example, teachers of students receiving pull-out, supplemental social skills lessons will need to know what skills are being taught during each session, so they can prompt for those skills and provide recognition as the student displays them in the classroom. Similarly, the facilitators of the pull-out sessions will need to hear from the classroom teachers about their students' progress outside of pull-out group.

Some Tier 2: Supplemental Supports may offer their own tools for measuring implementation fidelity. Schools may also have to develop their own measures and procedures for determining whether implementation plans are being followed. School-based fidelity measures for Tiers 2 and 3 may also be available from the FL PBS Project and from the Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports at www.pbis.org.

How do we know when a supplemental intervention plan is effective?

Effective supplemental interventions produce measurable changes in behavior and improvements in a student's quality of life (e.g., participation in integrated activities, improved social relationships, independence and self-sufficiency). Direct observations and frequent monitoring of progress are widely-used methods for evaluating these outcomes, and determining adjustments that might be warranted when progress does not occur within a reasonable time.

Traditionally, evaluation of intervention effectiveness usually occurs only after a student has been receiving an intervention for several weeks. With RtI for Behavior, students' progress under different interventions is tracked much more consistently, and with much more specific data. While teacher ratings may still be used as the primary data source, the ratings are given **at least** once each day, and a specific numerical value is assigned to them so that they may be graphed. This attention to detail allows for more timely and accurate decision making.

Progress monitoring tools should have the following characteristics:
1. They assess specific behaviors or skills that directly relate to the student's area of need,
2. They can measure small amounts of growth over time,
3. They can be completed efficiently,
4. They can be administered repeatedly, and
5. They can be easily summarized in graphic format.

The **Behavior Report Card** is one such progress monitoring tool that can be used across the day with multiple teachers to track a student's progress appropriate behaviors. The Behavior Report Card can also be adapted to collect student data on a wide range of Tier 2 interventions.

Adapted from Crone, Horner & Hawken (2004)

Behavior Report Card

Name: _____Lisa Overton_____   Date: __2/1/08_____

Points Possible: __72___
Points Received: __55__
% of Points: __76__
Goal Achieved?   Y   (N)

Rating Scale: 3=Good day   2= Mixed day 1=Will try harder tomorrow

GOALS:

	HR	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	L	5th	6th
BE RESPECTFUL Listen quietly during lecture:	3	2	3	1	1	3	3	3
BE RESPONSIBLE Come to class on time	3	2	3	1	1	3	2	2
BE PREPARED Completing homework	3	1	3	3	1	3	3	2

Teacher Comments: I really like how…
_____
_____
_____
_____

Parent Signature(s) and Comments: _____

How do we determine whether a student is making an adequate response to intervention at Tier 2?

Progress monitoring data should be collected on a daily basis and examined on at least a bi-weekly basis, with the goal of identifying students who need different or additional supports early on, and responding to that need in a timely manner. Data can be examined for each group of students receiving the same intervention. This will give teams information about the overall success of an intervention, as well as the typical student's response to that intervention. These graphs show two different examples of a positive response to intervention.

Sample graph showing a quick, positive response to intervention…
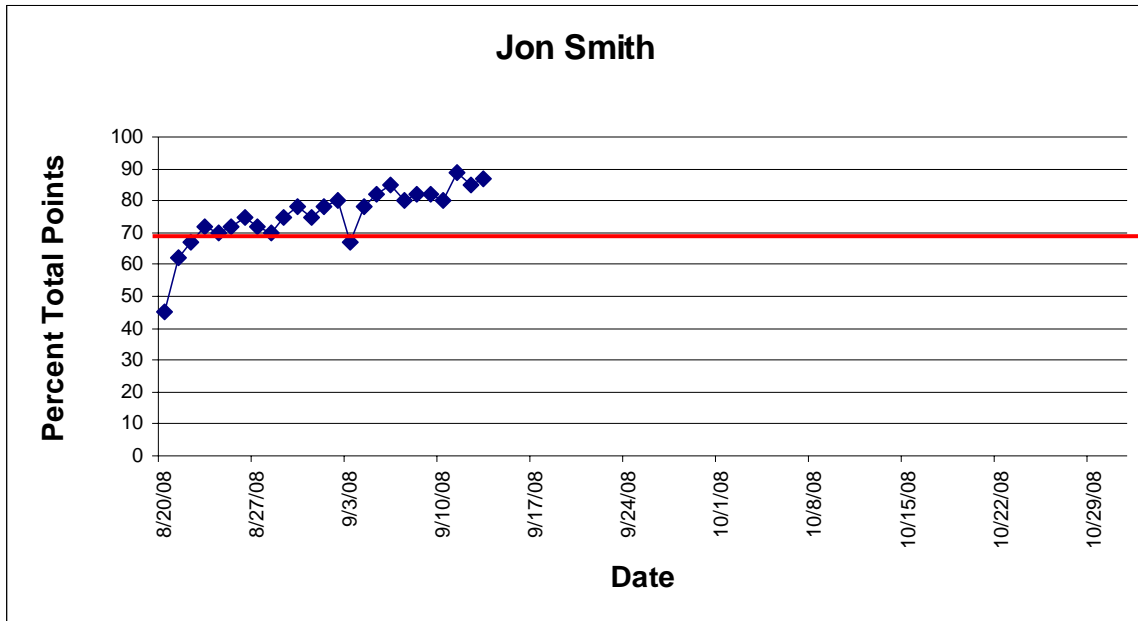
Sample graph showing a slow, positive response to intervention…

Dalton Parker
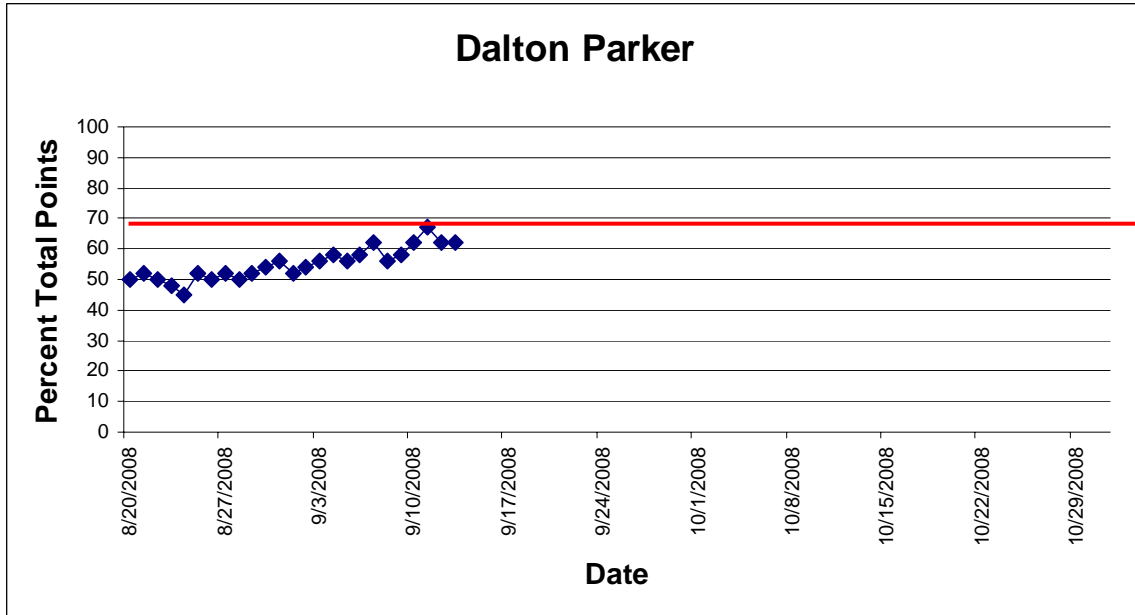
Data for students who are receiving lower ratings than the rest of the group, or who are not consistently meeting their goals, can be examined in more detail, and adjustments to their supports/interventions can be made. Increased support or a different Tier 2 intervention may be necessary for these students.

Sample graph showing random response…

Carl Rodriguez
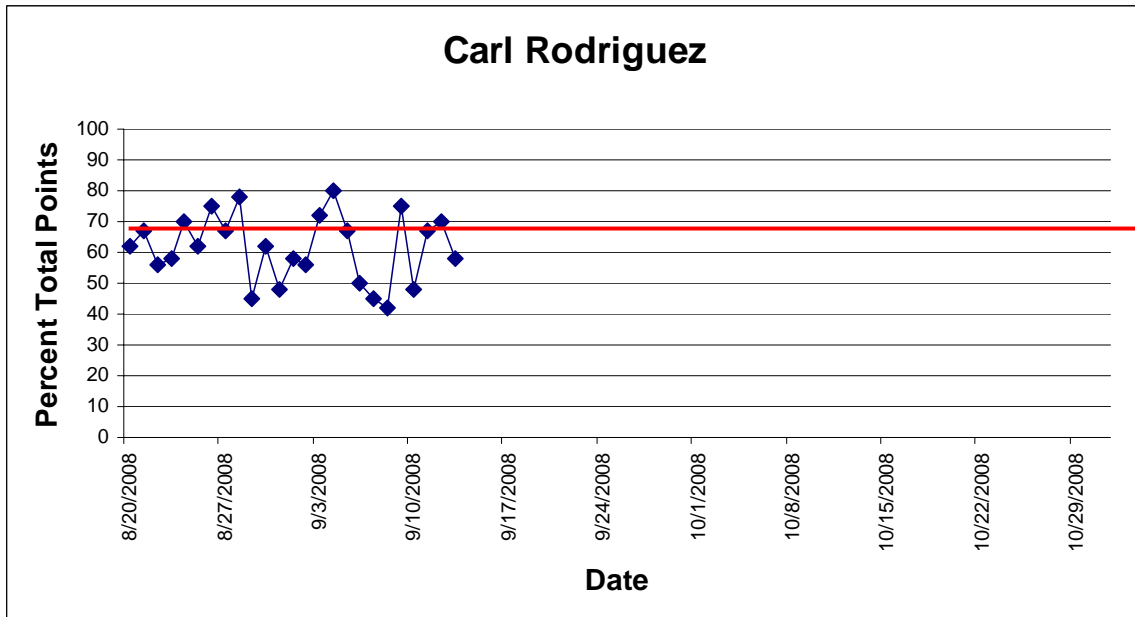
Sample graph showing behavior getting worse…
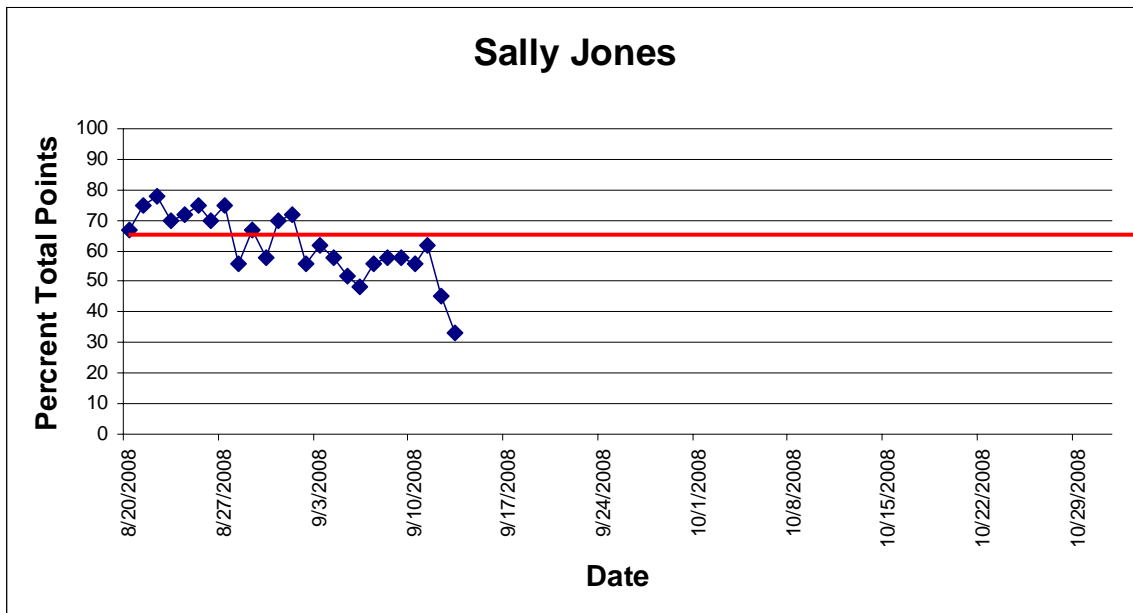
If a student is not making progress in spite of repeated Tier 2: Supplemental interventions, they may need to be considered for Tier 3 services.

Tier 2: Supplemental Supports are designed to be quick and efficient, and can be used with small groups of students as soon as their needs are identified. Once the additional supports are delivered and the students are responding positively, they may fade back to only receiving Tier 1: Universal supports; others will continue to need the supplemental supports in order to be successful in a general education environment.

What is Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports?

Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports were originally designed to focus on the needs of individuals who exhibited patterns of severe or extreme problem behavior. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of positive behavior supports in addressing the challenges of behaviors that are dangerous, highly disruptive, and/or impede learning and result in social or educational exclusion. PBS has been used to support the behavioral adaptation of students (and other individuals) with a wide range of characteristics, including developmental disabilities, autism, emotional and behavioral disorders, and even students with no diagnostic label.

Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Support is most effective when there are positive universal and supplemental systems in place. In addition, the design and implementation of individualized supports are best executed when they are conducted in a comprehensive and collaborative manner. The process should include the individual with behavioral challenges and people who know him/her best all working together as a behavioral support team (BST). Support should be tailored to a student's specific needs and circumstances. It should involve a comprehensive approach to understanding and intervening with the behavior, and should use multi-element interventions. The goal of Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Support is to diminish problem behavior

and, also, to increase the student's adaptive skills and opportunities for an enhanced quality of life. Tier 3 should also meet the behavioral needs of students with the most intense and/or persistent problems in the most effective and efficient manner and in the least restrictive setting possible.

What are the critical components of Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports?

Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports involve a process of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that investigates why a behavior is occurring in more detail and development of a behavior implementation plan (BIP) that includes more intensive research-based interventions, closer and more detailed progress monitoring, and more staff time and resources dedicated to problem solving for individual students. The BIP should be comprised of individualized, assessment-based intervention strategies, including a wide range of options such as: (1) guidance or instruction for the student to use new skills as a replacement for problem behaviors, (2) some rearrangement of the antecedent environment so that problems can be prevented and desirable behaviors can be encouraged, and (3) procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing of the plan as necessary. In some cases, the plan may also include emergency procedures to ensure safety and rapid de-escalation of severe episodes (this is required when the target behavior is dangerous to the student or others), or major ecological changes, such as changes in school placements, in cases where more substantive environmental changes are needed. However, this action should occur only after Tier 3 interventions have been attempted and have been proven ineffective?

Tier 3 supports can be provided at different levels of intensity, depending on the student's level of need. Students with less intensive or frequent behavior problems may benefit from a simplified consultation process between the teacher and a skilled behavioral support specialist, during which information for a brief FBA is collected and the formal problem-solving process is applied to the individual student.

Students with more intense behavior problems, or a continued poor response to intervention developed through a brief consultation, may be supported through a more comprehensive process that includes a structured consultation with the student's teachers, which gathers specific information for a detailed FBA and the development of a more targeted and comprehensive BIP. In order for this process to be most effective, behavior support specialists may need to have a more involved role in training and coaching teachers and other school personnel in the individualized interventions, assessing whether the interventions are being implemented as planned, and assessing whether the interventions match the context of the school and classroom so that they are likely to be implemented after direct consultation and coaching are discontinued.

Finally, a very small number of students with the most severe needs may require what is called wraparound services, which continues to utilize the same FBA and BIP components, but include processes for identifying and coordinating family and community services.

What differentiates Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports from other systems of positive behavior support?

The main differences between Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports and other levels of positive behavior support are the focus and intensity of the interventions. The defining features of Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports (i.e., identification of goals, data collection and analysis, summary statements, multi-element plans, and a monitoring system) address the needs of individual children in a more comprehensive manner. Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports allow teams to vary features of the process (e.g., data collection tools used, breadth of information gathered, specificity and number of hypotheses generated, extent of the behavioral support plan, and degree of monitoring) to provide the most individualized behavior support possible.

When should a program of Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports be implemented?

Mandates provided by educational and human services agencies define conditions in which individual systems should be used to address concerns related to behavior. For example, IDEA requires that a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) be completed and a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) be implemented when disciplinary sanctions result in extended periods (i.e., the first removal beyond 10 cumulative days and every change in placement) in which a student is removed from an environment or suspended (34 C.F.R. 300.520 (b) (c)). Individual systems of support are warranted in other circumstances as well (e.g., when problem behavior is interfering with educational progress, when students have chronic, durable problem behaviors that have not responded to previous Tier 1 and 2 interventions).

How do we identify students in need of Tier 3 supports?

Students are identified for Tier 3 supports when a poor response to intervention has been established at Tier 2. As part of this process, school teams need to ensure that students have had adequate exposure to Tier 1 and 2 interventions, and that those interventions have been carried out with fidelity. Crisis situations and the severity of the problem behavior for a student may require that they receive the more intensive assessment and support resources at Tier 3 even if they have not had adequate exposure to Tier 1 and 2 supports.

When a student receives Tier 3 supports, he or she will continue to utilize supports that are offered as part of Tiers 1 and 2. However, schools may have to amend how those supports are utilized based on the Tier 3 problem-solving process and ongoing progress monitoring information.

Why is it important to consider "peer comparisons" at Tier 3?

In order to ensure that a behavior problem is not a result of a maladaptive classroom environment, schools have to consider how a student's behavior compares to that of his or her peers. While this is readily accomplished with academic assessments, the process becomes much more challenging when applied to behavioral performance.

At a minimum, schools need to investigate whether a student's behavior is noticeably different from other students in their class. In doing so, it may be discovered that a classroom-level intervention is called for, as opposed to an individualized behavior plan. It is unlikely that more than 1-2 students in a general education classroom should require Tier 3 supports (should be less than 5% of students if Tiers 1 and 2 are in place and effective). If many students are struggling academically and behaviorally in a classroom, there are likely to be systems or classroom issues that need to be addressed before more intensive interventions are considered.

Who should be involved in functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention planning?

Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports are most effective when approached as a collaborative (rather than expert-driven) process. Support teams including the student and his/her family, educators, and/or other direct service providers should be involved in assessment and intervention. It is critical that personnel charged with implementing the plan be involved in the team process. It is also helpful to include people who have specific expertise in applied behavior analysis and intervention design. In general, support teams should include people who know the student best, have a vested interest in positive outcomes, represent the range of environments in which the student participates, and have access to resources needed for support.

How should goals for Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports be determined?

Individualized positive behavior support focuses not only on decreasing specific behaviors of concern, but also building adaptive (and replacement) skills, and improving the individual's overall quality of life. Goals should be based on a positive, long-term vision for the student developed with input from the student, the student's family, and the support team. An excellent mechanism for determining broad goals for behavioral intervention is person-centered planning. Person-centered planning (PCP) is a process for learning about an student's preferred lifestyle. It involves creating goals that will assist students in achieving their preferred lifestyle within a collaborative team context. Most PCP plans are created with the goal of:

1) increasing participation and presence in the school and community;
2) gaining and maintaining significant relationships;
3) expressing and making choices;
4) experiencing respect and living a dignified life; and
5) developing personal skills and areas of expertise.

How are Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Interventions implemented?

Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Interventions are implemented through a flexible, but systematic, process of functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention planning. The following problem-solving process illustrates the general steps of the process.

Step 1: Problem Identification (What's the problem?)

Based on the available information, the team identifies the specific concerns and goals:

1) What is the student doing that is problematic (observable behaviors)?
2) To what extent (e.g., frequency) are these behaviors occurring?
3) What broad goals (academic/social behaviors to be decreased AND increased) does the team hope to achieve through intervention.

Members of the behavioral support team gather information through a variety of sources including review of existing records, interviews of support providers, and direct observation of patterns, antecedents, contexts, and consequences.

Step 2: Problem Analysis (Why is it occurring?)

The team uses the information to create summary statements or hypotheses that describe relationships between the student's behaviors of concern and aspects of the environments. These statements include:

1) When, where, and with whom the behavior is most/least likely to occur,
2) What happens following the behavior (what they get or avoid), and
3) Other variables that appear to be affecting the person's behavior.

Step 3: Intervention Design (What are we going to do about it?)

A plan is developed, based on the summary statements, to address the behavioral concerns and fit within the environments in which it will be used. The behavioral support plan [for students who have IEPs this may also serve as the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)] includes:

1) A measure of the student's strengths,
2) Clear goals for the intervention(s),
3) Adjustments to the environment that reduce the likelihood of problem,
4) Teaching replacement skills and building general competencies,
5) Contingent consequences to promote positive behaviors and deter problems, and
6) A crisis management plan (if needed).

Step 4: Response to Intervention (Is it working?)

The team works together to ensure that the plan is implemented with consistency and is effective in achieving the identified goals. The team identifies the training and resources needed, determines how to evaluate outcomes (consistent data collection), determines who is responsible for monitoring implementation, and determines how often to review data-making adjustments in the plan, as needed.

How do we know when an individual plan is effective?

At Tier 3, fidelity of intervention implementation continues to be an important consideration for the school team. The school team will need to assess whether interventions are being done as often as necessary and as completely as necessary. Without clear measures of fidelity at Tier 3, it is impossible to assess a student's response to intervention.

Also, at Tier 3, progress monitoring must be done with greater frequency (at least weekly, sometimes daily, or throughout the day) and with more detailed information gathered. Effective Tier 3 interventions produce measurable changes in behavior and improvements in a student's quality of life (e.g., participation in integrated activities, improved social relationships, independence and self-sufficiency). Individual BIPs include objective methods for evaluating these outcomes, and determining adjustments that might be warranted when progress does not occur within a reasonable time frame.

However, the complexity of the progress monitoring cannot surpass the ability of the classroom teacher to measure behavior of one student while attending to the academic and behavioral needs of the entire calls. For this reason, the Behavior Rating Scale and other tools that can collect data on a student's progress both quickly and accurately are available from the FLPBS Project.

Can we ever fade supports at Tier 3?

Many students can be successful in a general education setting when provided appropriate function-based support. Once a student demonstrates a consistent pattern of success, teams should consider whether elements of the BIP can be reduced or gradually eliminated, without affecting the student's performance. Perhaps students can be successfully supported on Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions with a few additional supports. However, some students will need to continue to have a BIP in place to support them; schools should continue progress monitoring these students to ensure their supports are appropriate.

What should be done when there is a crisis situation?

Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports is a process that takes time to be effective. When severe episodes of problem behavior occur, it is important to provide a rapid response to ensure the safety of all involved and produce a rapid de-escalation of the behavior. To support Tier 3: Intensive/Individual Supports, therefore, safe crisis management procedures are needed and should be planned thoroughly in advance. It is important to remember that the goals of crisis management procedures are to ensure the safety of the student and all others, and to de-escalate the problem as rapidly as possible.

Summary/Conclusion

Positive Behavior Support is a response to intervention approach that effectively and efficiently provides a three-tiered level of behavioral support for all students. The core principles of RtI and PBS include:

- Applying a problem-solving process,
- Using data for decision making,
- Applying evidence-based interventions that match the student's level of need, and that rely on prevention, teaching, and reinforcement-based strategies,
- Monitoring the progress of students, and
- Measuring the fidelity of applied interventions.

While these core principles are not likely to change in the future, the tools and resources available to schools and districts will continue to evolve from research and practice.

A further discussion of Response to Intervention for Behavior can be seen in a DVD available from Florida's PBS Project. The Florida PBS Project's website offers additional resources that can help schools that wish to implement an RtI approach to student behavior, and will be updated frequently with new tools and resources from Florida and across the nation. See our website for more details at: http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/.

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