



CENTER ON  
INSTRUCTION

# **Response to Intervention**

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April 2006



## CENTER ON INSTRUCTION

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**2006**

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# Response to Intervention

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**NOTE:** Findings are based on a research study funded by OSEP. Description of Tiers is based on our study. Co-researchers in the study include: Sylvia Linan-Thompson, Jeanne Wanzek, Christy Murray, Thea Woodruff, Batya Elbaum, Greg Roberts, Nancy Scammacca

# History of RtI: LD Identification

- Based on Teacher Referral
- Wait to Fail approach
- Overuse of IQ-Achievement Discrepancy
- Variation in Prevalence State to State
- Disproportionate Representation of Minorities

# President's Commission

- Focus Should Be on Outcomes Not Monitoring
- Focus on Sensible Paperwork
- Integrate General and Special Education
- Focus on Prevention and Early Identification

“In short, the system must be judged by the opportunities it provides and the outcomes achieved by each child”

# LD Summit

- The concept of LD is a valid construct.
- Students with LD require a special education.
- LD is a Lifespan Disorder
- Prevalence Unknown – Could be 6%

## LD Summit (cont)

- Processing disabilities difficult to measure and link to treatment.
- Response to intervention is the most promising method of identifying individuals with learning disabilities.
- Despite knowledge ineffective interventions are continuing to be used.
- IQ/achievement discrepancy is not an adequate practice for identifying students with learning disabilities.

# RTI: IDEA 2004

- In December, 2004, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 provided response to intervention as a practice for identifying students with learning disabilities.
- Recommends but does not require abandoning use of the IQ-discrepancy
- Urges early screening and intervention
- Recommends a multi-tiered intervention strategy,
- Review monitoring and Instructional Practices, and
- Integrate services between general and special education



# Multi-Tiered Intervention Approaches

- Incorporate prevention and intervention
- Include ongoing screening and progress monitoring to identify student needs for designing instruction
- Effective practices implemented class-wide in general education (primary intervention)
- Successive levels of support increasing in intensity and specificity provided to students as needed (secondary/tertiary intervention)

(Dickson & Bursuck, 1999; McMaster, Fuchs, Fuchs, & Compton, 2005; O'Connor, 2000; O'Connor, Fulmer, Harty, & Bell, 2005; O'Connor, Harty, Fulmer, 2005; Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, & Hickman, 2003)

# Tier I: Core Class Instruction

<b>Focus</b>	For all students
<b>Program</b>	Professional development, progress monitoring, in-class Support
<b>Grouping</b>	Flexible grouping
<b>Time</b>	90 minutes or more per day
<b>Assessment</b>	Screening assessment at beginning, middle, and end of the academic year
<b>Interventionist</b>	General education teacher
<b>Setting</b>	General education classroom

# Tier II: Intervention

**Focus**

For students identified as at-risk for reading difficulties, and who have not responded to Tier I efforts

**Program**

Specialized, research-based interventions

**Grouping**

Homogeneous small group

**Time**

20-30 minutes per day in small group in addition to 90 minutes of core reading instruction (50-100 sessions)

**Assessment**

Progress monitoring twice a month on target skill(s) to ensure adequate progress and learning

**Interventionist**

Treatment group – trained researcher  
Comparison group – school personnel

**Setting**

Appropriate setting designated by the school

## Tier III: Instruction for Intensive Intervention

**Focus**

For students with marked difficulties in reading or reading disabilities and who have not responded adequately to Tier I and Tier II efforts

**Program**

Sustained, intensive, research-based reading programs

**Grouping**

Homogeneous – very small group

**Time**

50-minutes per day

**Assessment**

Progress monitoring twice a month on target skill to ensure adequate progress and learning

**Interventionist**

Treatment – trained by research team  
Comparison – provided by school

**Setting**

Appropriate setting designated by the school

# Participants

## General Information:

- Six Title I elementary schools in one near-urban district
- All first and second grade classroom teachers participated in Tier I
- First grade students met criteria for being at-risk for reading difficulties in fall of first grade and were randomly assigned to treatment and comparison groups
- Followed the at-risk students who remained in the district throughout the two-year period (first and second grade)

# Tier I

- Students at risk
- Students who did were randomly assigned to the comparison group for Tier II rather than researcher implemented Tier II
- Findings reported here for students in comparison condition who received Tier I intervention only

# What was Tier I?

- On-going professional development for teachers (25 hours per year)
- Progress monitoring
- In-class support as requested

# Implications of Tier I findings

- Guskey & Sparks (2000, 2002) advocate for connecting professional development to student outcomes.
- Effective Tier I instruction allows for effective implementation of RtI
- Tier II and Tier III interventions should not be used as alternatives to ineffective Tier I instruction – boost Tier I.



# Participants (cont'd)

## ■ High Responders

- 10-20 weeks of intervention was sufficient to meet exit criteria
- 20 treatment (11 females; 9 males)  
23 comparison (8 females; 15 males)

## ■ Low Responders

- 10-20 weeks of intervention was not sufficient to meet exit criteria
- Students received additional 20 weeks of intervention in second grade
- 7 treatment (2 females; 5 males)  
15 comparison (5 females; 10 males)

# Criteria for Identifying Students At-Risk

<b>Tier II Intervention Screening Period</b>	<b>Risk Criteria</b>
<i>Fall First Grade</i>	NWF<13 <b>OR</b> PSF<10 and NWF<24
<i>Winter First Grade</i>	NWF<30 and ORF<20 <b>OR</b> ORF<8
<b>Tier III Intervention Screening Period</b>	<b>Continued Risk Criteria</b>
<i>Fall Second Grade</i>	ORF<27
<i>Winter Second Grade</i>	ORF<70

# Tier II Research Intervention

- Conducted in first grade
- Daily, 30-minute sessions in addition to Tier I instruction
- Small groups (4-6 students)
- Tutors hired and trained by research staff

# Tier II Research Intervention (cont'd)

- Instruction provided:
  - Phonics and word recognition (15 minutes)
  - Fluency (5 minutes)
  - Passage reading and comprehension (10 minutes)

# Tier III Research Intervention

- Participated in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2nd grade
- Daily, 50-minute sessions in addition to Tier I instruction
- Very small groups (2-4 students)
- Tutors hired and trained by research staff

# Tier III Research Intervention

## (cont'd)

- Instruction provided:
  - Sound review (1-2 minutes)
  - Phonics and word recognition and vocabulary (17-25 minutes)
  - Fluency (5 minutes)
  - Passage reading and comprehension (12-20 minutes)

# Prevailing Questions

- Tier I is enhanced classroom instruction?
- Tier II is 25-50 hours of small group instruction?
- Tier III is  $> 125$  hours of small group instruction?

# Questions (cont'd)

## 1. When do we refer students for special education?

- a. After enhanced Tier I if they are different from peers?
- b. After 25 hours of Tier II (10 weeks at 30 min daily)?
- c. After 50 hours of Tier II (20 weeks)?
- d. After Tier III (>125 hours of intervention)?



## Questions (cont'd)

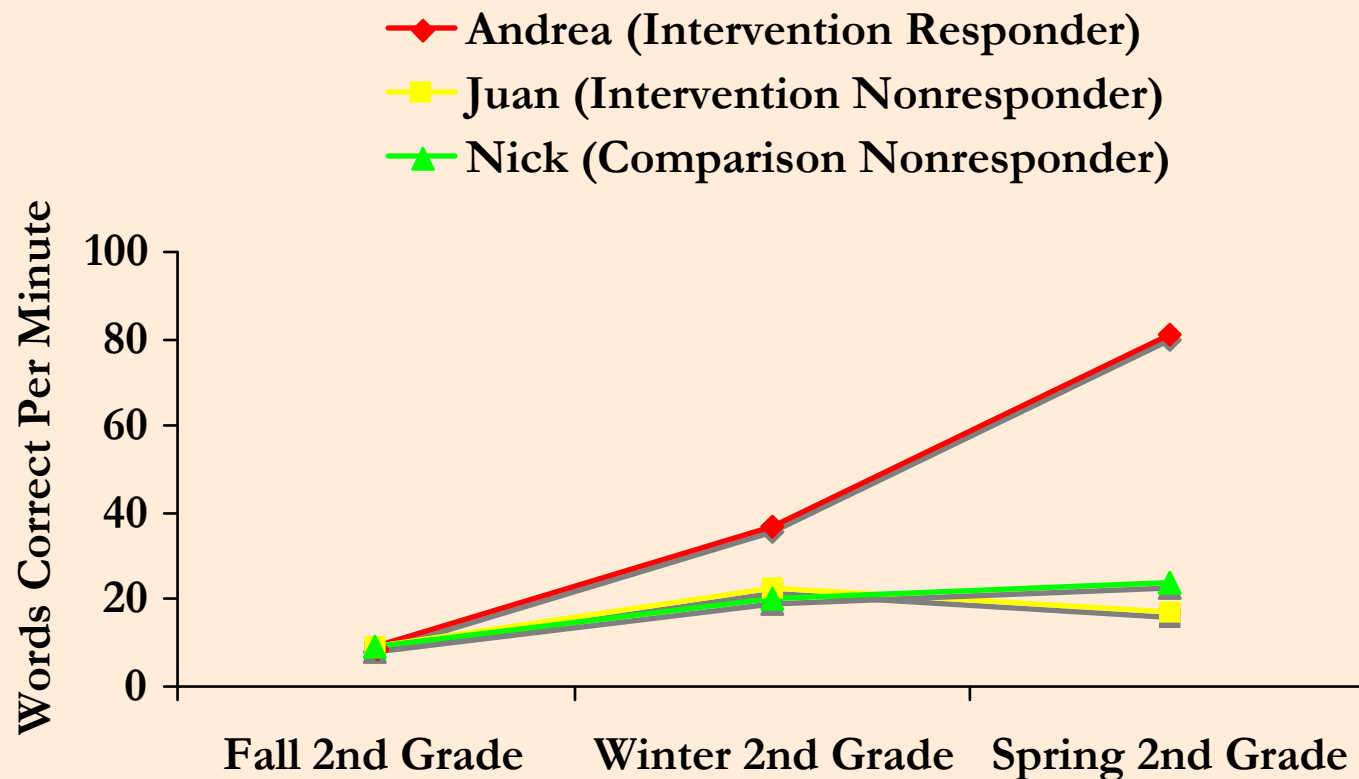
2. When do we consider students as “not responding”?
3. If students are in the average range on standardized tests (e.g. >90 standard score on WA, WI, PC) but still very low ORF – do we consider them “nonresponders”?

In other words, is referral to special education based on extensive student need rather than norm-based performance?

## Questions (cont'd)

4. Assuming very low responders are placed in special education. What should the special education teacher's intervention be?
  - a. More of what we know works for most students even though it has not had much impact on them?
  - b. Something different like.....?

# Individual Cases



# Case Study Information

## ■ Disabilities

- Nick (comparison) is identified as speech impaired and OHI

## ■ Mobility

- Andrea (responder) moved out of the district in the middle of first grade but was in the district for all of 2nd grade
- Juan (nonresponder) was present for the majority of first grade and all of second grade
- Nick (comparison) has been in the district since kindergarten

# Case Study Information (cont'd)

## ■ PPVT

■ Andrea - not in district at time of testing

■ Juan = 77

■ Nick = 80

## ■ Tutor Notes

■ Andrea (responder) was motivated, enjoyed being challenged, somewhat shy

■ Juan (nonresponder) processed information slowly and had difficulty reading words automatically.

■ Nick (comparison) did not receive research intervention

# Closing Comment

- Learning to read for most students is a relatively easy process that occurs so readily that as adults they often can not even remember how they learned to read. For other students the process is significantly more intensive requiring on-going interventions that may be in place well past the third grade. We believe that the data suggests that the needs of many of these students can not be met solely by general education and that they will require a special education.