

The longer a child struggles with math or reading, the more he/she can fall behind. Response to Intervention (or RtI) is an approach to helping students who are having problems with math, reading, or behavior. It gives them extra help (the “intervention”) where they need it. The goal is to give them the help as soon as possible, so they don’t fall too far behind. Once the student is given the help teachers keep track of whether the extra help is working (the “response”). It is a school-wide program and is research-based, which means that the curriculum and interventions (what the school does to help the child) are based on research and have been proven to be effective for most students.

What does it look like?

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

Supports are offered in three tiers or levels. As a child moves up through the tiers, he gets more help. For example, if a student does not respond to the help given to him in Tier 1, he would be moved to Tier 2, where he would receive more help on top of what the students receive in Tier 1. If a student doesn’t make sufficient progress with Tier 2 supports, then even more help would be provided in Tier 3.

After the last tier, if the child is still struggling and not making adequate progress, he would then be considered for Special Education Services. There is no rule as to how long a child must remain in each tier. That decision should be based on the individual child’s needs. Also, there is no rule stating that a child needs to go through each tier before being considered for Special Education services.

When a child is receiving RtI, the school collects data (or information about how the student is doing) regularly to determine what kind of progress the student is making. This data helps the teachers decide whether the extra help is working and if the child needs more, or a different kind of help.

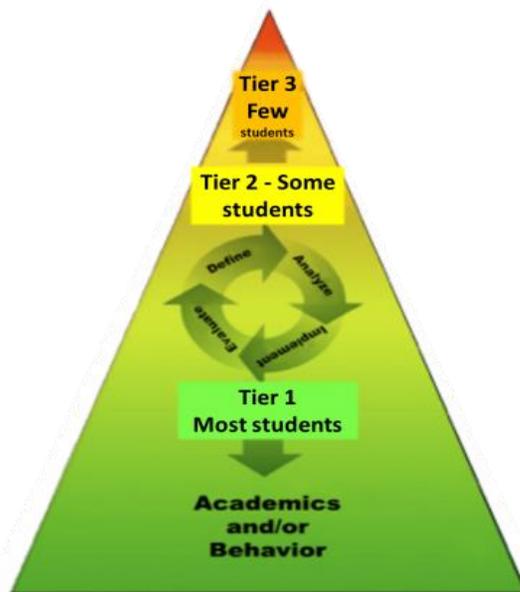


Image courtesy of Illinois RtI Network

How does a student move from tier to tier?

The decision to move a student to a different tier is based on how he has responded to interventions. Data is collected regularly which is used to determine a student’s progress. A child moves to a tier with more interventions if progress is not adequate. On the other hand, a student can also move to a tier with fewer interventions if enough progress has been made.

Key Terms

Response to Intervention (RTI) is an approach to help students who are having trouble in reading, math, or behavior. The point is to catch students before they fail or fall too far behind and give them the help they need as soon as possible. It gives them extra help (or intervention) where and when they need it.

Universal Screening is testing that schools give all students to determine who is at risk of failing or falling behind. Students whose results fall below a particular level are identified as those who need further help or intervention.

Student Progress Monitoring means that the school frequently checks students to see whether the extra help is actually helping the student or if something needs to change.

Scientific, Research-Based Instruction means that the curriculum and interventions have been researched and proven to be effective with most students. This also means that the research has been reported in scientific, peer-reviewed journals.

What is the purpose of RtI?

- RtI can prevent students from flunking or falling behind in school, because the approach identifies students who are struggling at an early stage.
- RtI can help staff identify students who may need Special Education services.
- RtI helps reduce the amount of time students have to wait before receiving additional help.
- RtI can reduce the number of students who are receiving Special Education services and can ensure that students receive appropriate instruction and help before Special Education eligibility is determined.
- RtI can help students be more successful in their learning while being educated in the general education classroom.
- RtI provides staff with more information about how a student learns and in what areas he struggles. It provides important information about the learning needs of a student.

What subjects does it cover?

RtI is implemented for math and reading, and is also used for behavior.

Who is it for?

RtI should be a school-wide system of support, implemented across all grades.



Family Matters is one of the Illinois Parent Training and Information Centers. Our mission is to build upon families' strengths, to empower parents and professionals to achieve the strongest possible outcomes for students with disabilities, and to enhance the quality of life for children and young adults with disabilities. For more information, contact Family Matters at 866-436-7842 or on our website: <http://www.fmptc.org>. Stop in and visit us at 1901 S . 4th Street, Suite 209, Effingham, Illinois.

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