

Providing Intensive Intervention using Data-Based Individualization (DBI) in Academics

Q&A

Question: How does Data-Based Individualization (DBI) differ from Response to Intervention (RTI)?

Answer: RTI is a process that includes school level screening, core instructional programs, multiple levels of intervention, progress monitoring, and data-based decision making. In DBI, we are talking about students who emerge with the most intensive needs within a tiered system and are often thought of as being at the “top of the triangle”. Rather than continuing to deliver an evidence-based program that is shown to work for some students who are at-risk, this approach helps educators to think about how to target their instruction when evidence-based interventions have not been effective. Overall, RTI is a broader system while DBI is a specialized approach intended for a very small percentage of students.

Questions: What is the typical duration for intensive interventions?

Answer: Overall, the duration for an intervention will largely depend on student progress, measured by progress monitoring data. Typically, one should gather 6-9 data points before one can be confident of the rate of improvement or trend line that is emerging. We would recommend collecting data at least weekly so that these instructional decisions can be made every 6 weeks or so. However, once the instruction has been established, the four most recent data points or the extent to which the goal line and trend line hang together can be used to make more frequent and quick instructional decisions.

In behavior, the same principles do not always translate. It is important to ensure that the intervention has been established, is understood by both teachers and the student, and is fully in place before making intervention decisions. We will go into more detail about the typical duration of behavioral interventions in the next webinar.

Question: At what point in the DBI process should a team consider referring a student for special education services?

Answer: Students with disabilities are often very good candidates for the intensive intervention process. The basis for this has grown out of experimental teaching research from the Department of Special Education at the University of Minnesota. Rather than thinking about this as a stop along the way to a special education referral, it is beneficial to think of this as the process a team will use to provide



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individually and specially designed instruction for students once they have an IEP in place. At the same time, the data collected as part of this process may be the kind of data that can inform a decision to refer students for special education services. This data may show that despite receiving high quality, evidence-based instruction, a student did not respond. From this point the team may find that the student needs a more intensive level of intervention in order to progress, or that they need to continually ramp up the level of intensity for the student to be responsive. If it is determined that a student will not continue to progress without a certain level of instructional intensity, this may be an argument for a referral for special education identification or placement.

Question: In the first graphed example, was Kelsey monitored using 2nd grade probes or 4th grade probes? Is the student's performance level versus grade level considered during the DBI process?

Answer: For the purposes of progress monitoring, it is important to monitor students using measures or probes that are likely to detect change. Monitoring students on skills that reflect where they are on an instructional level allows teachers to gather data that more accurately reflects a student's progress.

For screening purposes, it is important to give students assessments at their grade level to tell you at a system level, how many students are performing at or near the grade level benchmark.

Question: In general, when should I jump from using "nonsense word" fluency and/or phoneme segmenting probes to oral reading fluency probes?

Answer: While research in this area may vary slightly, the general recommendation is that if you are going to use nonsense word fluency for screening or progress monitoring purposes, it should be used from late Kindergarten, at the earliest, through the middle of first grade. At the middle or end of first grade, you also want to begin collecting some sort of oral reading fluency. For the purposes of using the same measure across the entire year, word identification fluency is a good measure. This is the single measure that seems to do the best job for screening and also progress monitoring purposes. While nonsense word fluency and oral reading fluency probes can also be used, there is the challenge of needing to transition probes mid-year.



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Question: Where can I locate the Interventions Tools Chart that is mentioned in this presentation?

Answer: The Academic Interventions Tools Chart is located on the NCII website at this link:
<http://www.intensiveintervention.org/chart/instructional-intervention-tools>.

Question: When can we expect a researched based intervention tool chart?

Answer: The Behavior Intervention Tools Chart will be published on the website in the spring. The Academic Interventions Tools Chart is on the website now and is updated annually. It's next update will be in December 2012.

