Research Digest:

Service Delivery for Response to Intervention: Core Components and Directions for Future Research


The special series on service delivery systems for response to intervention aims to identify boundaries of current knowledge, highlight the implications of this knowledge for school-based implementation, and establish a coherent agenda pertaining to future investigations. This article is the first in a special series designed to advance both the science and practice of Response to Intervention (RTI).

This article focuses on the structural components of service delivery for RTI. Components discussed include multi-tier service delivery, evidence-based intervention provision, student assessment and decision making, maintenance of procedural integrity, and building and sustaining systems-level capacity. A synopsis of existing research and implications for future research are included within each discussion.

Research on multi-tier service delivery and evidence-based intervention has shown positive outcomes and growth in student performance. Directions for future research in these areas include systematic variation of intervention composition, intensity at each tier, and a comparison of outcomes between standard protocol and individualized intervention approaches. The current research on student assessment and decision making shows strong support for curriculum based measurement (CBM) for assessing risk status, monitoring student progress, and evaluating intervention effectiveness. However, further research on psychometric integrity and the use of assessment approaches across diverse populations is necessary to ensure accuracy of measurement and decision making. Additionally, there is a need for further investigation on outcomes and implementation integrity associated with different system-level capacity building models as well as strategies to improve procedural integrity.

This Research Digest is a product of the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools. The research presented is a sample of novel research conducted in the area of academic interventions by faculty at UNL. For more information on the Center, please contact Holly Sexton at hsexton1@unl.edu.