Section 3.6 RTI and Behavior

It is important to begin this section on RTI and behavior by noting the relationship between academic performance and behavior. While most of the discussion here focuses on behavior in isolation, rarely does behavior occur without a relationship to the academic environment. The problematic behavior of many students is directly related to academic deficits and their desire to escape difficult tasks. Therefore it is essential that academic performance be reviewed and any deficits be addressed in conjunction with providing behavioral interventions. The following information is provided with the assumption that academic performance has been assessed and any identified deficits are being addressed through the RTI process.

- The basis for RTI and behavior is the development and implementation of universal school-wide expectations, rules, and procedures which serve as the *standards* for behavior (Tier 1).
  - In this preventative approach, the expectations (*standards*) are then systematically taught to all students through lessons and demonstration similarly to the way reading or mathematics skills are taught.
  - Students achieving the behavior standards are recognized in the same way that grades and honor roll acknowledge students for academic success.
- The degree to which behavior reflects the school-wide standards is measured through data collection and analysis.
  - If the school-wide discipline plan is consistently and effectively being implemented, 80-90% of the students should respond positively.
  - If that is not the case, a problem solving approach would be utilized to identify possible barriers such as poor instruction, inconsistent implementation of the school-wide plan, or lack of fidelity of implementation.
  - If none of those barriers are identified, a universal intervention such as modifying the plan would be appropriate.
- When 80-90% of students are responding positively to the school-wide plan, schools can begin to identify those students who may need more support.
  - By collecting and analyzing behavior data, school teams can identify the students needing intervention and the specific behavior skills which must be targeted.
  - The most common data used for decision making at this level is office discipline referrals (ODRs).
  - The data may also indicate specific classrooms or locations where most discipline referrals are most frequent, indicating a need for more support in those areas.
  - This data will enable schools to identify students with externalizing behavior but does not always identify students with internalizing behavior or less severe behavior.
  - Schools may develop a screening measure to identify at-risk students in these categories, and at this time the most common screener used is teacher identification.
- Once students have been identified through data analysis or screening, Tier 2 evidence-based interventions are provided.
  - Targeting skills, providing interventions, and monitoring progress for small groups of students may include re-teaching and practice of specific behaviors (i.e. waiting for a turn, walking quietly in the halls, riding the bus), development of appropriate social skills (i.e. asking for help, responding to negative comments from others, making friends), or following school procedures (i.e. getting to class on time, following cafeteria rules, using the media center).
  - Examples of more interventions may be found at the Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS) website at www.pbis.org.
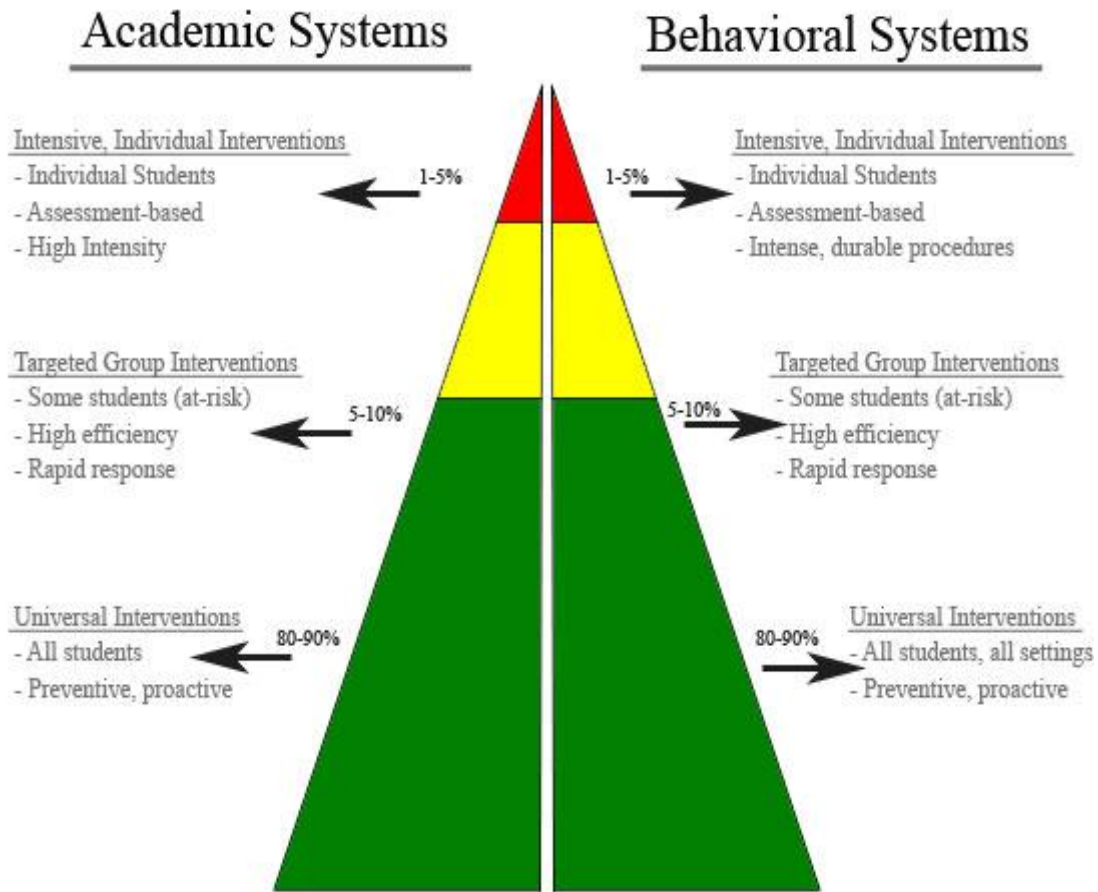
- o The progress of students involved in these Tier 2 interventions should be closely monitored and may involve teacher checklists, ODRs, or rating scales.
- Tier 3 interventions should include a more in depth analysis of a student's behavioral problems which would include a thorough review of all previous interventions and may include a functional behavioral assessment.
  - o The SST team may also conclude that additional information is necessary and further assessment may be required (behavior checklists, behavior rating scales, etc.).
  - o Academic assessments may also be completed as the link between academic deficits and behavior problems cannot be ignored.
- The approach to behavioral interventions at Tier 3 mirrors academics and should provide individualized interventions and progress monitoring.
  - o While a student may continue with Tier 2 interventions, a Behavior Intervention Plan may be developed based on the information gathered through a functional behavior assessment.
  - o More frequent progress monitoring would occur to enable the SST team to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

How is a universal screening process connected to behavior? Universal screenings are an important part of any school wide discipline plan. Analysis of disciplinary infraction data will yield broad based areas of focus for any school. While a paper and pencil assessment is not appropriate in this type of screening, the use of existing documentation, including student and teacher interviews, will support the development of behavioral expectations and identify targeted areas of improvement.

In this widely recognized model of Response to Intervention by Dr. George Sugai, the right side is dedicated to student behavior. While Georgia utilizes a four tiered pyramid, the implications of this example are appropriate for schools engaged in the work addressing behavior and its impact on learning.

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support and Response to Intervention
by George Sugai, Ph.D. University of Connecticut, Storrs
OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
Center for Behavioral Education and Research

Academic Systems

Intensive, Individual Interventions
- Individual Students
- Assessment-based
- High Intensity

Targeted Group Interventions
- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response

Universal Interventions
- All students
- Preventive, proactive

Behavioral Systems

Intensive, Individual Interventions
- Individual Students
- Assessment-based
- Intense, durable procedures

Targeted Group Interventions
- Some students (at-risk)
- High efficiency
- Rapid response

Universal Interventions
- All students, all settings
- Preventive, proactive

1-5%   1-5%

5-10%   5-10%

80-90%   80-90%

Response to Intervention: The Georgia Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions
Georgia Department of Education
Kathy Cox, State Superintendent of Schools
October 22, 2008 ● All Rights Reserved

More detailed information and examples of behavioral interventions may be found in the following resources:

Georgia's Positive Behavior Support web page:
http://www.gadoe.org/ci_exceptional.aspx?PageReq=CIEXCPBS

National Technical Assistance Center on
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)   **www.pbis.org**

What Works Cearinghouse **http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/**

Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary Classroom:
http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides/index.asp#be_pg

Response to Intervention and Positive Behavior Support: Brothers from Different Mothers or Sisters from Different Misters?
http://pbis.org/news/New/Newsletters/Newsletter4-2.aspx

The IRIS Center for Training Enhancements (IRIS-II) Vanderbilt University (VU) and its new partner, Claremont Graduate University (CGU). **http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/**