

## **Response to Intervention and FIT**

One of the most significant shifts in education policy of the past several decades has been the implementation of RTI or Response to Intervention. The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA; P.L. 108-446) allows educators to use responsiveness-to-intervention (RTI) as a substitute for, or supplement to, IQ achievement discrepancy to identify students with learning disabilities (LD) (Fuchs and Fuchs, 2005). "An RTI model uses a student's lack of response to an evidence-based intervention that is implemented with integrity as the basis for intensifying, modifying, or changing an intervention. RTI is based on the notion of discrepancy between pre and post intervention levels of performance. RTI is also consistent with a problem-solving model of intervention in which problems are defined as a discrepancy between current and expected levels of performance." (Gresham, 2004).

### **Hallmarks of RTI**

The hallmarks of RTI include the use of a tiered approach in which the intensity and specificity of interventions increase as one moves up the pyramid through the tiers, systematic problem solving, progress monitoring, and the utilization of a collaborative approach. A variety of intervention models have evolved using a tiered approach (Gresham, 2004; Fox et al., 2003). The tiers vary by name and purpose; however, all of the approaches employ a pyramid of hierarchical support. Consistently, universal or best practices are presented at the base, and the specificity as well as the individuality and intensity of the subsequent intervention approaches increase in subsequent tiers. The most widely accepted is the three tiered approach to overall intervention. The first tier is the universal level, the second is targeted and the third is individualized or intensive.

### **Models of RTI**

There are three different applications of RTI; a problem solving approach, a standard treatment protocol approach, and a combined problem solving and treatment approach. The two approaches are aptly named as the problem solving model may employ a variety of strategies based on the child's individual performance while the standard protocol uses a single model or approach to instruction for those children who move into the second tier, and the combined approach utilizes both approaches.

### **Recognition and Response**

As RTI was originally designed for use with school age children Coleman, Buysse, & Neitzel (2006) proposed an early childhood interpretation; Recognition and Response (R&R). Recognition and Response includes four essential components; an intervention hierarchy, screening assessment and progress monitoring, the use of researched based curricula, instructional practices and focused interventions and a collaborative problem-solving process for decision making. Recognition and Response also utilizes a three tiered approach. Within this model tier 1 is characterized as High Quality Environment and Intentional Teaching. Tier 2 is Group Interventions while tier 3 is Individualized Interventions (Coleman et al., 2006).

Recognition and Response is consistent with early intervention philosophy in its assertion that both parents and teachers can learn to recognize developmental concerns. Recognition and Response was not designed as a replacement for RTI. According to Coleman and colleagues, (2006) "The goal of Recognition & Response is to create high quality early childhood classrooms in which teachers administer periodic, universal screening for all children

and research-based interventions and progress monitoring for individual children who show signs of learning difficulties.” Additionally both teachers and parents can respond in ways that positively affect a child's early success. Consistent with RTI, there is limited use of formal diagnosis and labeling within R&R (Coleman et al., 2006). Recognition and Response (R&R) takes the RTI tiered model of assessment and intervention and applies a holistic early childhood overlay thus expanding its utility to a specific population.

#### **FIT Application**

FIT will provide services to children at Fisher using a modified RTI approach. They will provide services at the Universal level, which involves creating a classroom environment that meets the needs of children with special needs as well as their typical peers. They will also provide targeted approaches to groups of children within the classroom setting, which will again allow the children to function optimally within the classroom setting. FIT will not provide tier 3 interventions, so if a child requires one-on-one individualized intervention this will remain the responsibility of the parents via outside providers. The visual below illustrates the model. FIT will provide services the at Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels (the mauve levels).

(Explanation of RTI from Riley, 2011)

