

Developing a Multi-Level Prevention System Secondary Level

This tool is designed to help district and school teams clarify the dimensions of their implementation. The team determines the level of detail included in the tool. District teams may want to be more general to allow for variations in models implemented at individual school sites. For example, a district may indicate that progress monitoring tools used in secondary and tertiary interventions are valid and reliable for the population without naming specific tools, whereas the individual school may consider identifying the actual tool. School teams may want to include more specific dimensions of each level of prevention to ensure integrity of the implementation school-wide, whereas the district may include key components to ensure integrity across schools. In the left column, the traits of a multi-level prevention system are in bold. Each trait includes several questions to consider; however, feel free to add additional questions.

| Traits | Secondary |
|--|-----------|
| <p>Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the target students? • Are there cut scores or targets for identification of students in need of more support? • What supports are provided for students who are below the cut score? | |
| <p>Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are evidence-based interventions being used? Describe these practices. • What is the level of evidence? • How do you know that these practices are being implemented with fidelity? • What is the content? • What is the frequency? • What is the duration? • What are your schoolwide non-negotiables/expectations for Tier II interventions? | |
| <p>Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the setting? • What types of grouping are being used? • What is the schedule? • Are students in a different setting when Tier II interventions are taking place? | |

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Secondary Level**

| Traits | Secondary |
|--|-----------|
| <p>Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What types of probes are being used? • What are the progress monitoring tools? • How frequently are the probes to be administered? • Who administers the probes? | |
| <p>Data-Based Decision Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the goals? • What is the composition of the team? • What is the frequency of data reviews? • What are the criteria for response or non-response? • What is the movement between tiers? | |
| <p>Alignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the alignment with other initiatives, activities and policies? | |
| <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What PL and coaching opportunities are being offered? • What type of follow-up do you have in place to support and monitor the effectiveness of your PL? • What does the induction process look like at the school/district level? • Who actively participates in collaborative planning? Are there clearly defined roles for all participants? | |



The *Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity** was developed based on existing research to support educators in evaluating and building intervention intensity.



| Dimensions* | Description |
|------------------------------|--|
| Strength | How well the program works for students with intensive intervention needs, expressed in terms of effect sizes. Effect sizes of above .25 indicate an intervention has value in improving outcomes. Effect sizes of 0.35 to 0.40 are moderate; effect sizes of 0.50 or larger are strong (preferred). |
| Dosage | The number of opportunities a student has to respond and receive corrective feedback. It refers to the size of the instructional group, the number of minutes each session lasts, and the number of sessions provided per week. |
| Alignment | How well the program (a) addresses the target student's full set of academic skill deficits, (b) does <i>not</i> address skills the target student has already mastered (extraneous skills for that student), and (c) incorporates a meaningful focus on grade-appropriate curricular standards. |
| Attention to transfer | The extent to which an intervention is designed to help students (a) transfer the skills they learn to other formats and contexts and (b) realize connections between mastered and related skills. |
| Comprehensiveness | The number of explicit instruction principles the intervention incorporates (e.g., providing explanations in simple, direct language; modeling efficient solution strategies instead of expecting students to discover strategies on their own; providing practice so students use the strategies to generate many correct responses; and incorporating systematic cumulative review). |
| Behavioral support | The extent to which the program incorporates (a) self-regulation and executive function components and (b) behavioral principles to minimize nonproductive behavior. |
| Individualization | A validated, data-based process for individualizing intervention, in which the educator systematically adjusts the intervention over time, in response to ongoing progress monitoring data, to address the student's complex learning needs. |



*Fuchs, L.S, Fuchs, D. & Malone, A.S. (2017). The Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 50(1), 35–43.

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The *Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity** was developed based on existing research to support educators in evaluating and building intervention intensity.



| Dimensions* | Description |
|------------------------------|--|
| Strength | How well the program works for students with intensive intervention needs, sometimes expressed as a promising or effective program by a reliable source (e.g., NCII Tools Charts, WWC). |
| Dosage | The number of opportunities a student has to (a) respond (i.e., practice/demonstrate skill), (b) receive positive feedback (e.g., praise, tokens, points), (c) exchange for backup reinforcers, and (d) receive corrective feedback. |
| Alignment | How well the program (a) addresses school-wide expectations, (b) addresses classroom/teacher expectations, (c) addresses student's skill deficits, (d) matches rewards to student's preferences and/or function of problem behavior, and (e) does not address extraneous skills. |
| Attention to transfer | The extent to which an intervention emphasizes how and when a student uses skills across contexts/situations and includes opportunities to practice using skills across context/situations. The program reinforces the use of skills across contexts/situations. |
| Comprehensiveness | The extent to which the intervention includes a plan for (a) teaching appropriate behavior, (b) adjusting antecedent conditions to prevent problem behavior, (c) reinforcing appropriate behavior, (d) minimizing reinforcement for problem behavior, (e) fading supports (and supports can be easily faded), (f) monitoring fidelity, (g) working in conjunction with related services, and (h) communicating with parents. |
| Academic support | The extent to which the program (a) can be easily integrated within context of academic instruction, (b) complements rather than supplants academic focus, and (c) includes procedures for reinforcing responses related to academic achievement (e.g., engagement, work completion). |
| Individualization | A validated, data-based process for individualizing intervention, in which the educator systematically adjusts the intervention over time, in response to ongoing progress monitoring, to address the student's complex learning needs. |



*Adapted from Fuchs, L.S, Fuchs, D. & Malone, A.S. (2017). The Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 50(1), 35–43.

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Data-based individualization (DBI) is a research-based process for individualizing and intensifying interventions for students with severe and persistent learning and behavioral needs. The process integrates evidence-based intervention, assessment, and strategies using 5 interactive steps:



STEP 1 | Validated Intervention Program: The Foundation

The DBI process builds on an evidence-based and standardized intervention delivered with fidelity.

At this step, teachers consider:

- Does the intervention target the student's academic and behavioral needs?
- Is the intervention based on the best available evidence?
- Does the intervention align with core instruction?
- Has the intervention been shown to work with most students?
- Are procedures in place to ensure the intervention is delivered as planned?



STEP 2 | Progress Monitor: Did the Intervention Work?

At this step, staff regularly collect and analyze progress monitoring data to determine *if* the student is responding to the validated intervention. Teachers consider:

- Does the tool meet technical standards for progress monitoring and match the desired academic or behavioral outcome?
- Were data collected regularly and with a consistent approach?
- Were progress data graphed?
- Was the goal set using a validated approach?
- Was the intervention effective for most students?



ANALYZING DATA

Do data indicate that the intervention is working?



If no, **move to Step 3.**



If yes, **move back to Step 1** and continue to provide the validated intervention and monitor progress.



STEP 3 | Diagnostic Data: Why Didn't the Intervention Work?

At this step, staff use diagnostic data to develop a hypothesis about *why* the student is struggling. Teachers consider:

- Do multiple data sources confirm slow progress?
- Have both academic and behavioral explanations been considered?
- What do these data suggest about what needs to be changed?



STEP 4 | Intervention Adaptation: What Change Is Needed?

The hypothesis, along with educator expertise, is used to develop an individual student plan for modifying or adapting the intervention to better meet the student's individual needs. Teachers consider:

- Does the adaptation address the hypothesis?
- Does the plan address both academic and behavioral concerns when needed?
- Are procedures in place for implementing and monitoring the adapted intervention?
- Are only a few adaptations made at one time?



STEP 5 | Progress Monitor: Did the Change Work?

Continue to collect, graph, and analyze progress monitoring data to determine if the student is responding to the adapted intervention. Teachers consider:

- Are data collected according to the plan?
- Does the graph indicate when adaptations were made?



ANALYZING DATA

Do data indicate that the intervention is working?



If no, **return to Step 3.**



If yes, **return to Step 5** and continue to provide the adapted intervention and progress monitor.

This document was produced under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Grant No. HH326Q160001. Celia Rosenquist is the OSEP project officer. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred. This product is public domain. Authorization to reproduce it in whole or in part is granted. Although permission to reprint this publication is not necessary, the citation should be: National Center on Intensive Intervention. (2018). *Breaking down the DBI process: Questions & considerations*. Washington, DC: Author, Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.

Intervention Intensification Strategy Checklist

Use these ideas, as well as your own, to intensify interventions. For more information about intensifying interventions, check out our website, www.intensiveintervention.org. *Before adapting or intensifying an intervention, always consider whether the current intervention program has been implemented with fidelity and for a sufficient amount of time.*

Strength: Teams can increase the strength of an intervention by focusing on strategies and attention given to other dimensions of the [Taxonomy of Intervention Intensity](#).

Dosage

Increase opportunities for practice and corrective feedback.

- Increase the length of intervention sessions.
- Increase the number of intervention sessions per week.
- Decrease the group size.
- Increase the total number of sessions.
- Decrease the heterogeneity of the groups (group students with similar performance levels).
- Consider an intervention setting with fewer distractions.
- Embed additional practice and feedback sessions throughout the day.
- _____

Alignment

- Increase instructional time for the target skill.*
- Supplement intervention with National Center on Intensive Intervention materials in [reading](#), [math](#), or [behavior](#).
- Focus on discrete skill instruction within the target skill.
- _____

Attention to Transfer

- Align instructional routines and language with core instruction and the environment.
- Preteach content.
- Embed guided practice on target skills within core instruction and other environments.
- Embed explicit opportunities in other settings to maintain skills acquired in the intervention.
- Explicitly teach connections.
- _____

Comprehensiveness or Elements of Explicit Instruction

- Use precise, simple language to teach key concepts or procedures.
- When introducing a concept, provide worked examples and show the steps in writing.
- Present a completed work example. Explain why a specific step is important and have the student complete that step and explain its significance.

- Model new concepts with examples and “think aloud” as you work through steps.
- Use explicit instruction and modeling with repetition to teach a concept or demonstrate the steps in a process.
- Fade steps from examples, so that students gradually assume responsibility for completing more and more steps.
- Once students can complete entire examples and explain their work, incorporate fluency-building activities to develop automaticity of skills.*
- Once students can fluently produce correct work, move to a new concept. Provide ongoing practice opportunities to facilitate skill maintenance.*
- Increase opportunities for student response and practice through unison choral responding, peer activities, and opportunities for the student to perform with adult feedback.*
- Break academic or behavior tasks into smaller chunks or steps.
- Provide concrete learning opportunities (including role play and use of manipulatives).
- Have students explain new concepts, in their own words, incorporating the important terms you have taught.
- Provide sufficient opportunities for independent practice with feedback.
- Provide immediate and explicit error correction when mistakes are made, and have the student repeat the correct response before moving on. Offer repeated opportunities to correctly practice the step.*
- Increase the frequency of error correction and corrective feedback across learning environments.*
- _____

Behavior, Engagement, and Motivation Support

- Use a timer for intermittent reinforcement of on-task, appropriate behavior.
- Provide differential reinforcement or change the schedule of reinforcement.
- Create a motivation plan based on what you know about the student that provides frequent behavior feedback.
- Use a report card for home communication.
- Add a social skills group.
- Combine or align academic and behavioral supports.
- Convene a functional behavior assessment team to determine the function of the behavior.
- Use group contingencies to promote on-task, appropriate behavior.
- Use peer support to model and encourage desired behavior.
- _____

Other

- Change to an interventionist with more expertise, such as a reading specialist, behavior specialist, social worker, or special education teacher, depending on the student’s needs.
- Change the intervention to better meet the individual needs.
- _____

*These areas also are important to consider for dosage.