RTI for Academics and Behavior Can and Should be Done Together

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Emerging research suggests that there is an interactive relationship between academics and behavior. Integrating academic and behavior supports (particularly in the area of reading) can lead to improved student outcomes. This presentation will provide the rationale for a combined approach and key features of an integrated model.
The Model
Moving Upstream: A Story of Prevention and Intervention
In a small town, a group of fishermen gathered down at the river. Not long after they got there, a child came floating down the rapids calling for help. One of the group on the shore quickly dived in and pulled the child out.
Minutes later another child came, then another, and then many more children were coming down the river. Soon everyone was diving in and dragging children to the shore, then jumping back in to save as many as they could.
In the midst of all this frenzy, one of the group was seen walking away. Her colleagues were irate. How could she leave when there were so many children to save? After long hours, to everyone’s relief, the flow of children stopped, and the group could finally catch their breath.

At that moment, their colleague came back. They turned on her and angrily shouted:

“How could you walk off when we needed everyone here to save the children?”
She replied, “It occurred to me that someone ought to go upstream and find out why so many kids were falling into the river. What I found is that the old wooden bridge had several planks missing, and when some children tried to jump over the gap, they couldn’t make it and fell through into the river. So I got someone to fix the bridge”.

Continuum of Behavior Supports

Universal Prevention
For all students

Targeted Intervention
For some students

Intensive Intervention
For few students

All students in school
Parallel vs. Integrated Systems of Behavior and Reading Support
Behavior and Reading 3-Tier Model

**Intensive, Individual Interventions**
- Individual Students
- Assessment-based
- High Intensity
- Of longer duration

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

**Universal Interventions**
- All students
- Preventive, proactive

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

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

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

Academic Systems

Behavioral Systems

*Cir. 2003*
Behavior and Reading 3-Tier Model

Universal Intervention
Core Instruction, all students
Preventive

7-15%

80%

1-5%

Intensive Intervention
Individualized, functional assessment, highly specific

Targeted Intervention
Supplemental, some students, reduce risk

Behavior Reading

Cir. 2006
Parallel Systems to Integrated Systems of Academic and Behavior Supports
Possibilities of Behavior/Academic Concerns around function of problem

Behavior Problems

Interrelated Behavior and Academic Problems

Academic Problems

Nonrelated Behavior and Academic Problems
Practices of Behavior and Reading Supports
Interaction of behavior and academics

Student Profile Example: Eddie

Universal
Targeted
Intensive

Science
Art
Math
Phys. Ed.

Reading
Social Behavior
Social Studies
Examples of Behavior and Reading Practices

Universal Prevention

**Behavior**
- Identify expectations
- Teach
- Monitor
- Acknowledge
- Correct

**Reading**
- Evidence based curriculum focused on:
  - Phonemic Awareness
  - Alphabetic Principal
  - Fluency
  - Vocabulary
  - Comprehension
- Adequate teaching time
- Trained instructors
- Progress monitoring
- Active participation with frequent feedback

Targeted Intervention

**Behavior**
- Check-in, Checkout
- Social skills training
- Mentoring
- Organizational skills
- Self-monitoring

**Reading**
- Teacher-Directed PALS
- K PALS
- First Grade PALS
- Road to the Code
- REWARDS
- Peer Assisted Learning Strategies
- Read Naturally

Intensive Intervention

**Behavior**
- Individualized, functional assessment based behavior support plan

**Reading**
- Scott Foresman Early Reading Intervention
- Reading Mastery
- Corrective Reading

Continuum of Supports
Why look at an integrated Behavior and Academic support model?
“Schoolwide Behavior Support” and “Schoolwide Reading Support”

- Both are critical for school success
- Share critical feature of data-based decision making
- Both utilize three tiered prevention model
- Both incorporate a team approach at school level, grade level, and individual level
- Models of integrated behavior and reading supports produce larger gains in literacy skills than the reading-only model
  - (Stewart, Benner, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2007)
Shared Instructional Features of an Academic and Behavior Model of Supports
Critical Features of both “Schoolwide Behavior Support” and “Schoolwide Reading Support”

• Establish Commitment
• Establish and Maintain Team
• Self-Assessment (Fidelity and Outcomes)
• Continuum of Supports
• Establish Information Systems
  – For developing treatments
  – For progress monitoring
  – For evaluation
• Build Capacity for Function-Based Support
• Clear goals and expected outcomes
• Instructional delivery
  – Clear examples (and non examples)
• Instructional grouping
• Opportunities to practice skills
• Feedback on student responding
• Encouragement for appropriate responding
• Error correction
• Adequate instructional time
Integrated Functions Across All Tiers of Support

Behavior Support

Team approach

Universal Screening

Evidence-based practices

Progress monitoring

Data-based decisions

Reading Support

Evidence-based practices

Data-based decisions

Progress monitoring

Universal Screening

Team approach
Interaction of Behavior and Academics
High quality academic instruction (e.g., content matched to student success level, frequent opportunity to respond, frequent feedback) by itself can reduce problem behavior

(Filter & Horner, 2009; Preciado, Horner, Scott, & Baker, 2009, Sanford, 2006)
Quality instruction can reduce student engagement in problem behavior

- Sanford (2006)
  - Explicit instruction
  - Frequent opportunities to respond
  - Appropriate placement (95% correct in text)
- Preciado, Horner, Baker (2009)
  - Teaching decoding skills
  - Review/Preview of grade level story
  - Review 2-3 key vocabulary words in the story
  - Review directions and help student complete the next day’s reading independent task
  - Teach student how to ask for a break from task
  - Teach student how to ask for peer or adult assistance to complete a reading task
Implementation of schoolwide positive behavior support leads to increased academic engaged time and enhanced academic outcomes

(Algozzine & Algozzine, 2007; Horner et al., 2009; Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006)
Reducing Problem Behavior Resulting in More academic Time: Portage North Middle School

“We have more time to discuss academic concerns and we are getting a lot more accomplished.”
Johanna Toth,
6th grade teacher

“I see a definite difference! … I am able to spend more time visiting classrooms.”
Celeste Shelton-Harris,
Principal
Proficiency on 4th Grade and Percent of Major Discipline Referrals from Classroom: 132 Elementary Schools
Children who fall behind academically will be more likely to find academic work aversive and also find escape-maintained problem behaviors reinforcing.

(McIntosh, 2008; McIntosh, Sadler, & Brown, 2010)
Relationship between behavior and reading

Children of the Code: A Social Education Project
http://www.childrenofthecode.org/
Classroom management to address problem behavior related to academic problems

You may have the best classroom management but if student problem behavior is related to academic skill deficit, then classroom management may not be adequate.
Cycle of Academic and Behavioral Failure: Aggressive Response
(McIntosh, 2008)

Teacher presents student with grade level academic task

Student engages in problem behavior

Teacher removes academic task or removes student

Student escapes academic task

Student’s academic skills do not improve

So, which is it…

Academic problems lead to behavior problems?
or

Behavior problems lead to academic problems?

Not sure…

Probably a combination of both
Steps for Successful Readers
(Schools in Kalamazoo County 2004-2006)

Probability of “Staying on Track”

Probability of “Catching-Up”

**Phonemic Awareness (Spr, Kdg)**
- Probability: 0.16 (n=114)

**Alphabetic Principle (Win, 1st)**
- Probability: 0.62 (n=1178)
- Probability: 0.14 (n=336)

**Fluency (Spr, 1st)**
- Probability: 0.83 (n=910)

**Fluency (Spr 2nd)**
- Probability: 0.82 (n=849)
- Probability: 0.05 (n=238)

**Fluency (Spr 3rd)**
- Probability: 0.85 (n=770)
- Probability: 0.03 (n=401)

**Fluency (Spr, 4rd)**
- Probability: 0.92 (n=561)

**Fluency (Spr, 5rd)**
- Probability: 0.97 (n=372)

**Probability of “Staying on Track”**
- Probability: 0.09 (n=185)

**Probability of “Catching-Up”**
- Probability: 0.62 (n=1178)
- Probability: 0.83 (n=910)
- Probability: 0.85 (n=770)
- Probability: 0.92 (n=561)
- Probability: 0.97 (n=372)
Looking at Julia’s data

Problem solving from an individual student level to systems level
End of Year goal is to demonstrate this skill at 35 phonemes per minute (grey area)

What does this information tell you about Julia’s needs?
End of Year goal is to demonstrate this skill at 35 phonemes per minute (grey area)

What does this information tell you about Julia’s needs and the needs of her classmates?
Same building, same grade, different teacher

Does this information change how you might support Julia? Her classmates?
Major discipline referrals per student per class

Does this information change how you might support Julia? Her classmates?

What does this information tell you about Julia’s needs and the needs of her classmates?
How might you explain the value of integrating behavior supports with academic supports to your colleague back at school?
Sample Academic and Behavior MiBLSi Project Outcomes
Percent of Students meeting DIBELS Spring Benchmark for Cohorts 1 - 5 (combined grades)
Percent of Students at DIBELS Intensive Level across year by Cohort

Cohort 1
Cohort 2
Cohort 3
Cohort 4
Cohort 5

Percent of Students at DIBELS Intensive Intervention Level 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010
Special Education Referral and Eligibility Rates for Cohorts 1 - 4 Schools (2007-08 and 2008-09)

- **Percent K-8 Referred**
  - 2007-08: 3.8%
  - 2008-09: 3.0%

- **Percent K-8 Eligible**
  - 2007-08: 2.7%
  - 2008-09: 2.0%

*n = 84 schools*
Average Major Discipline Referrals per 100 Students per Day
(Elementary Schools with complete data sets)
Cohort 4 Middle School MEAP Reading Data (averaged across all grades)

Begin MiBLSi

Cohort 4 MS Average  State Average
First Reader
By Billy Collins

I can see them standing politely on the wide pages that I was still learning to turn, Jane in a blue jumper, Dick with his crayon-brown hair, playing with a ball or exploring the cosmos of the backyard, unaware they are the first characters, the boy and girl who begin fiction.

Beyond the simple illustrations of their neighborhood, the other protagonists were waiting in a huddle: frightening Heathcliff, frightened Pip, Nick Adams carrying a fishing rod, Emma Bovary riding into Rouen.

But I would read about the perfect boy and his sister even before I would read about Adam and Eve, garden and gate, and before I heard the name Gutenberg, the type of their simple talk was moving into my focusing eyes.
It was always Saturday and he and she were always pointing at something and shouting, “Look!” pointing at the dog, the bicycle, or at their father as he pushed a hand mower over the lawn, waving at aproned mother framed in the kitchen doorway, pointing toward the sky, pointing at each other.

They wanted us to look but we had looked already and seen the shaded lawn, the wagon, the postman. We had seen the dog, walked, watered and fed the animal, and now it was time to discover the infinite, clicking permutations of the alphabet’s small and capital letters. Alphabetical ourselves in the rows of classroom desks, we were forgetting how to look, learning how to read.
What’s Different Today?

• When Dick and Jane were learning to read, there were no “visible” tiers.
• Everyone learned to read from the same book, were on the same page, and were above average…
  – Those who could not learn to read with this approach and those who misbehaved were excluded because it was the “student’s fault”

adopted from Deb Simmons
Fidelity of Implementation

• Are we implementing the practices correctly and consistently over time?

• Students cannot benefit from interventions they do not experience!

from Dean Fixsen, Karen Blase, Robert Horner, George Sugai, 2008
Focus on Implementing with Fidelity using Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ)/ODR ’06-’07 and ’07-’08

Average Change in Major Discipline Referrals: One District Example (13 elementary schools)

- Increase 8%
- Decrease 14.6%

Not Met Criteria (< 70) n=5, range: 41-65
Met Criteria (≥ 70) n=8, range: 72-94
Average MEAP Reading Scores and fidelity in PBIS implementation based on Benchmarks of Quality (Sample data from MiBLSi)

- 0 - .69 (Not Met BoQ - 9 Schools): 77%
- .70+ (Met BoQ - 18 Schools): 84%

State Average: 80%
When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find that it is hitched to everything else in the universe

- John Muir
Summary

• Academic and Behavior supports are symbiotic.
• Academic and Behavior supports can be implemented together
• The common functions provide the framework for implementing Academic and Behavior supports at all three tiers.