Moving an Early Education Program into an MTSS Framework

Part 3: Tier 1--Building the Foundation

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Tier 1 is the core or universal level.

Layered Continuum of Supports

Tier 1:
- Core or universal outcomes and teaching/caregiving strategies
- Decreased individualization, intensity, and frequency of instruction

Tier 2:
- Targeted outcomes and teaching/caregiving strategies

Tier 3:
- Highly individualized outcomes and teaching/caregiving strategies
- Increased individualization, intensity, and frequency of instruction
Think about the curriculum that forms the basis of TIER 1 in your program.

- How was the curriculum selected? What factors were considered?
- Did you and your instructional team have input on the selection of the curriculum?

In this part of the workshop, we’ll describe some important considerations for selecting and reviewing Tier 1 so it will be as effective as possible in promoting children’s outcomes.
There's Nothing Like Home-Made Spaghetti Sauce!
Here’s Mama Carta’s reaction after tasting store-bought spaghetti sauce!
IMPLEMENTING A STRONG TIER 1 IS LIKE MAKING HOME-MADE SPAGHETTI SAUCE

TIPS ON MAKING GOOD SPAGHETTI SAUCE

1. Start out with a great recipe.
2. Use the best ingredients.
3. Don’t skimp on ingredients.
4. Make sure you taste regularly and adjust seasonings.
Formula for a Tier 1 that Promotes Success

1. Start out with a good recipe: a strong curriculum
By choosing the right curriculum for your program, you build the **strongest foundation** possible and may reduce the number of children who need Tier 2 and Tier 3 support.
Formula for a Tier 1 that Promotes Success

1. Start with a great recipe for learning: a strong curriculum.
#1: Start out with a good recipe: Curriculum

The foundation of Tier 1 should be a research-based curriculum implemented with fidelity.
Think about curriculum that guides language/literacy in your program.

• Did you and/or your instructional team have input on the selection of the curriculum?
• What were the factors that guided the selection of the curriculum?
A source for reviewing curriculum in early education: Preschool Curriculum Consumer Report

Rates several early education curricula across numerous indicators

Guiding Questions in Selecting Tier 1 in Early Literacy and Language

• Does it cover the important domains and domain elements (skills known to predict later school success)?
  ✓ Oral language
  ✓ Comprehension
  ✓ Phonemic Awareness
  ✓ Alphabet Knowledge

• Is there depth of coverage (organized scope and sequence?)

• Is it evidence-based? Does it improve child outcomes?
Guiding Questions (continued)

• Are there supports for individualizing instruction? (supports and adaptations)
• Is it culturally and linguistically responsive?
• Does it include an ongoing assessment component?
• Does it include PD support (for initial and ongoing training? Evidence for effectiveness?)
• Are there family involvement materials?
Guiding Questions (continued)

- Are there clearly defined learning goals?
- Are there well-designed engaging activities?
- Does it follow a model of responsive teaching?
Almost all curricula have some limitations.

- Seldom does one curriculum cover all the bases
  - Broad multi-domain curricula often need to be supplemented with a domain specific program for promoting early literacy/language or social-emotional development
  - Goal should be that children get strong curricular content to meet goals across all domain

- We have few examples of MTSS being delivered across domains.
  - Programs typically implement tiered models in social-emotional or literacy but not both. Few MTSS approaches have addressed math or science.
Formula for a Tier 1 that Promotes Success

1. Start out with a good recipe.
2. Use the best ingredients in the recipe.
#2: Use The Best Ingredients: Instructional Strategies

Evidence-Based Instructional Strategies (Intentional Teaching) should set the stage for

FREQUENT OPPORTUNITIES TO RESPOND and

HIGH LEVELS OF ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT
Quality of instructional support on CLASS is often much lower than emotional support or classroom organization.

Average CLASS Scores in Preschool Programs in CRTIEC Study of 67 Classrooms

Carta et al., 2014
Percent of classroom day that children were actively engaged in 4 Types of Programs

Average % of Day Spent Engaged (either in academic or non-academic activities) in CRTIEC Study of 67 Classrooms
Examples of evidence-based instructional strategies

- To teach new skills: I do, We do, You do
- Embedded instruction: including learning opportunities across all activities (e.g., during transitions, snack time)
- Choral responding: Promoting active engagement in groups by teaching children how to respond as a group with words, gestures (minimize waiting to respond)
- Arranging classroom environments that promote active engagement (children can engage toys/materials independently)
Formula for a Tier 1 that Promotes Success

1. Start out with a good recipe.
2. Use the right ingredients in the recipe.
3. Don’t skimp on the most important ingredients.
#3: Use the Right Amount of Those Good Ingredients

Make sure to plan a schedule that allows children to get the right amount or “dose” of instruction.
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**PREPARE FOR THOSE UNEXPECTED OCCURRENCES!**

**CHILD MELTDOWN!!!**

**DECK THE HALLS**

**HOLIDAY ART ACTIVITY**

**SNAKES AND LADDERS**

**HOLIDAY PARTY**

**IEP'S**

**SCREENINGS**
#4: Taste and Adjust Seasonings
Make sure you monitor progress and make instructional adjustments when needed.
1. Start out with a good recipe.
2. Use the right ingredients in the recipe.
3. Don’t skimp on the most important ingredients.
4. Make sure you taste regularly and add more seasoning as needed.
Universal Screening

• **PURPOSE**: determines how well core curriculum is working for the majority of students

• **TOOLS**: very brief assessments on key elements of the curriculum; these are NOT the same as developmental screening tools

• **FOCUS**: all students

• **TIMEFRAME**: students are usually assessed three times a year
Two Different Tiered Models
(How Would MTSS look different in these two models?)

Tier 1
(most children are making progress)

Tier 2

Tier 3

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3
Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring

Universal Screening

Does Child Need Greater Instructional Support?

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

Progress Monitoring

NO

YES

YES

Progress Monitoring
Progress Monitoring

• **PURPOSE**: monitor students’ response to instruction to find students who are not demonstrating adequate progress

• **TOOLS**: brief assessments that are valid, reliable, and evidence based

• **TIMEFRAME**: students are assessed at regular intervals (e.g., weekly, biweekly, or monthly)
Layered Continuum of Supports

Tier 1:
- Core or universal outcomes and teaching/caregiving strategies

Tier 2:
- Targeted outcomes and teaching/caregiving strategies

Tier 3:
- Highly individualized outcomes and teaching/caregiving strategies

Increased individualization, intensity, and frequency of instruction

Decreased individualization, intensity, and frequency of instruction

Progress Monitoring should result in children’s movement across tiers.
Formula for Tier 1 in Early Childhood that Promotes Success

• Start out with a good recipe: curriculum.
• Use research-based curricula with fidelity
• Use the right ingredients in the recipe.
• Use effective instructional practices and make sure they are implemented with fidelity.
Formula for Tier 1 in Early Childhood that Promotes Success

• Don’t skimp on the most important ingredients.
• Make sure obstacles don’t interfere with children’s opportunities for instruction.
• Make sure you taste regularly and add more seasoning as needed.
• Monitor progress—add more instructional supports when necessary.