Understanding Problem-Solving and Response to Intervention: An Overview
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Today’s Agenda
• Review of a Problem-Solving Model to enhance student progress
• Response to Intervention (RtI) within a Problem-Solving Model
• Counselor skills & needs
• Resources

Problem-Solving
A process that uses the skills of professionals from different disciplines to develop and evaluate intervention plans that significantly improve the performance of students
Problem-Solving Process

Define the Problem
What is the problem and why is it happening?

Evaluate
Did our plan work?

Develop a Plan
What are we going to do?

Implement Plan
Carry out the intervention.

What is a “Problem?”

A problem is the difference between what is expected and what is observed.

\[ P = E - O \]

Problem-Solving

• Can be applied to the student, classroom, building and district levels
  – Student-academic and/or behavior problem
  – Classroom- discipline, returning homework
  – Building- bullying, attendance
  – District- over-/under-representation
### Problem-Solving: What It Is

- What it is…
  - A process designed to maximize student performance
  - A method focused on outcomes
  - A method to ensure accountability and intervention evaluation
  - It is all about student progress, regardless of where or who that student is

### Data-Based Decision Making

A process in which school personnel engage in ongoing analysis of data from multilevel sources to provide a comprehensive picture of strengths and challenges and develop a plan to prioritize and address those challenges.

_Tung & Feldman, 2001_

### Response to Intervention (RtI)

- A systematic and data-based method for determining the degree to which a student has responded to intervention.
- Determined solely through analyzing data
- Services should intensify for a student as the student response to intervention is below expectations.
Why RtI? BIG IDEAS

- Accurate “placements” do not guarantee that students will be exposed to interventions that maximize their rate of progress
- RtI is the best measure of problem “severity”
- Program eligibility (initial and continued) decisions are best made based on RtI
- “Tiered” implementation improves service efficiency

Three Tiered Model of School Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 1: Universal Interventions</th>
<th>Tier 2: Targeted Group Interventions</th>
<th>Tier 3: Intensive, Individual Interventions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All settings, all students</td>
<td>High efficiency, rapid response</td>
<td>Individual Students, assessment-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventive, proactive</td>
<td>Rapid response</td>
<td>High intensity of longer duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-90%</td>
<td>5-10%</td>
<td>1-5%</td>
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Response to Intervention (RtI)

- Based on a 3-Tiered Model of Service Delivery
  - Universal (Core Curriculum)
  - Supplemental (Increase intensity/focus of curriculum)
  - Intensive (Individually developed intensive interventions)
- A student’s “response to intervention” is the best indicator of the severity of the problem
Response to Intervention

- The "response" is measured by the rate of learning or the slope of the line on a graph
- We cannot ascertain whether a student has a "severe" problem unless evidence-based interventions are implemented and we monitor the students response to those interventions

RtI Considerations

- Poor/lack of instruction must be ruled out
- Curricular access blocked by any of the following must be addressed
  - Attendance
  - Health
  - Mobility
- Sufficient exposure to and focus on the curriculum must occur
- Frequent, repeated assessment must be conducted

Case Studies

- Two male students, Steven & Bart
- Identical problems
  - Poor sight vocabulary
  - Word attack skills are lacking
  - Reading comprehension poor
- Attendance & mobility are not an issue; both boys appear healthy; parents report no medical issues
Aimline = 1.50 words/week
Trendline = 0.23 words/week

Aimline = 1.50 words/week
Trendline = 0.95 words/week

Tiers of Problem-Solving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier 2</th>
<th>Tier 3</th>
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<td>Intervention</td>
<td>- 1 or 1 instruction, evidence, Problem-solving Model to Target Key Decoding Strategies, Comprehension Strategies</td>
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Problem Identification
Problem Analysis
Intervention Design
Response to Intervention
Why is it occurring?
What are we going to do about it?
Intervention Design
**Underpinning ideas**

- We can teach children.
- Whether an intervention or teaching strategy is the “right one” can only be determined by implementing it, then monitoring student progress.

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**We Need A New Logic**

- Begin with the idea that the purpose of the system is student achievement
- Acknowledge that student needs exist on a continuum rather than in typological groupings
- Organize resources to make educational resources available in direct proportion to student need

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**Change Model**

- Consensus
- Infrastructure
- Implementation

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Traditional vs. RtI

- Traditional
- Intervention
- Consider ESE

Response

Monitor Progress

Implications for School Counselors

- Identification of “evidence-based” interventions for high rate student concerns
- Identification of Tier 1 interventions
- Identification of Tier 2 interventions
- Identification of Tier 3 interventions
- Methods to assess “response to intervention” in school counseling programs
- We must relate student outcomes to service delivery

Take Home Messages

- Problem-Solving/RtI is a paradigm shift
- It will take time & training to reach proficiency
- Whether an intervention is the “right one” can only be determined by implementing it, then monitoring student progress.
School administrators, parents with special interests, teachers or others may feel their agenda ought to be the school counseling program’s priority. The results often lead to confusion and criticisms when they are disappointed.

(Carolyn Maddy Bernstein, 1995)

The mission of school counseling...

is to provide a developmental and systematic comprehensive program that ensures academic, personal, social and career development and achievement for all students. The program is proactive and preventative in its focus and enhances the learning process by assisting students in acquiring critical skills for life-long learning and success.

By aligning a counseling program with the school’s mission and school improvement plan, professional school counselors:

• partner as leaders in systemic change
• ensure equity and access
• promote academic, career and personal/social development for every student
Leadership means:

• advocating for every student
• promoting student achievement
• demonstrating accountability for the contributions of educators to student success

ASCA National Model

Resources

• Response to Intervention: Research for Practice, NASDSE, 2007.
• FL Problem-Solving Project, FloridaRtI.usf.edu
• www.umass.edu/schoolcounseling/ Center for School Counseling Outcome Research
• www.cescal.org/ Center for Excellence in School Counseling and Leadership
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