

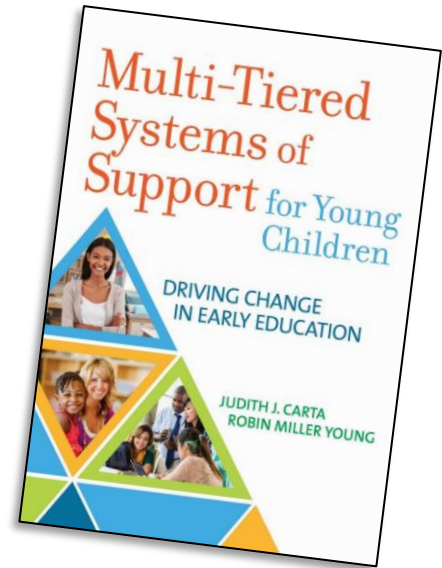
# Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Young Children: Driving Change in Early Education

Presented by:

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University of Kansas

Northern Illinois University



What is your current role?

What is your current  
knowledge and/or  
past experience with MTSS?



# What is MTSS?

A whole-school data-driven framework for improving learning outcomes for ALL students delivered through a continuum of evidence-based practices and systems.



# What is MTSS?



- Goal: to **identify** children who may be struggling to learn and **intervene early** so they can catch up to their peers.
- It can be designed to identify children who are struggling in **academic or behavioral** areas.

# MTSS Service Delivery System is designed to . .

- PROMOTE development of essential skills known to correlate with success in later school and community settings.
- PREVENT delayed growth and performance challenges by targeting critical foundation skills.
- PROVIDE timely evidence-based interventions of the proper dosage to ameliorate delays or challenges.



# MTSS is not...

- Just added support for academics
- The responsibility of just a few specialists—  
general educators are key!
- An excuse for delaying a special education

# How is MTSS different from typical practice in early education?

In typical practice in early education...

- We don't usually systematically address the range of individual differences that exist across children.
- We **often wait** for significant delays before we provide additional support (and then it is a referral to special education).

# How is MTSS different from typical practice in early education?

- MTSS identifies who needs the additional support and provides a **continuum of evidence-based practices** within the general education settings.
- The focus of MTSS is **prevention**—providing additional support as soon as it's needed for success.
- The aim of MTSS is to use **proven** instructional strategies.



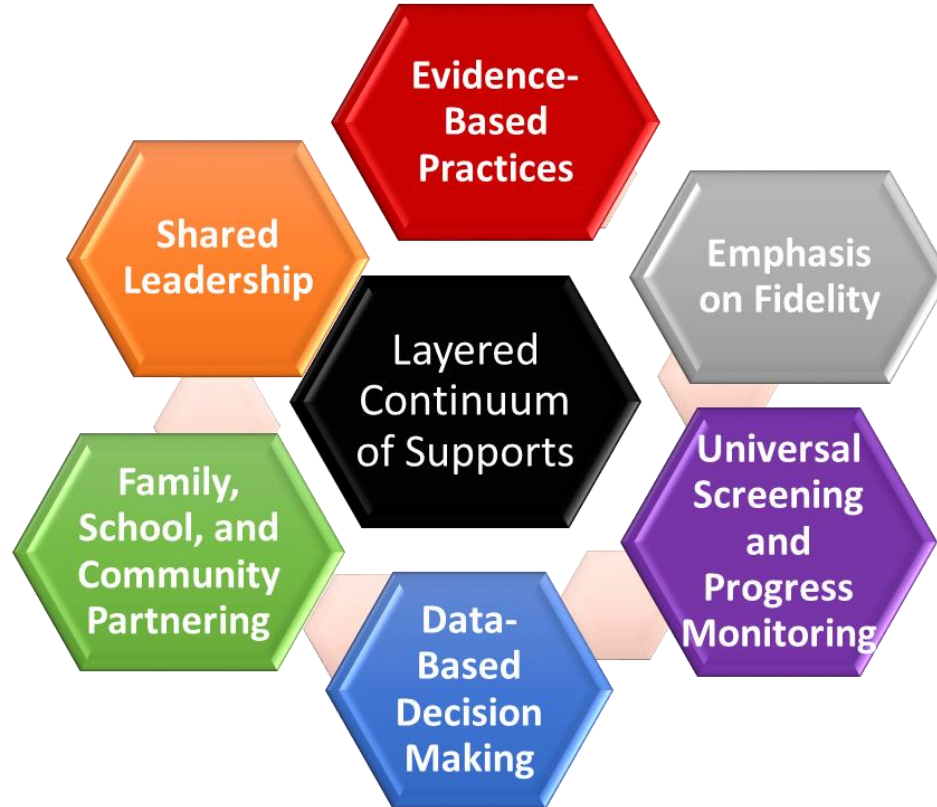
# Core Principles of MTSS

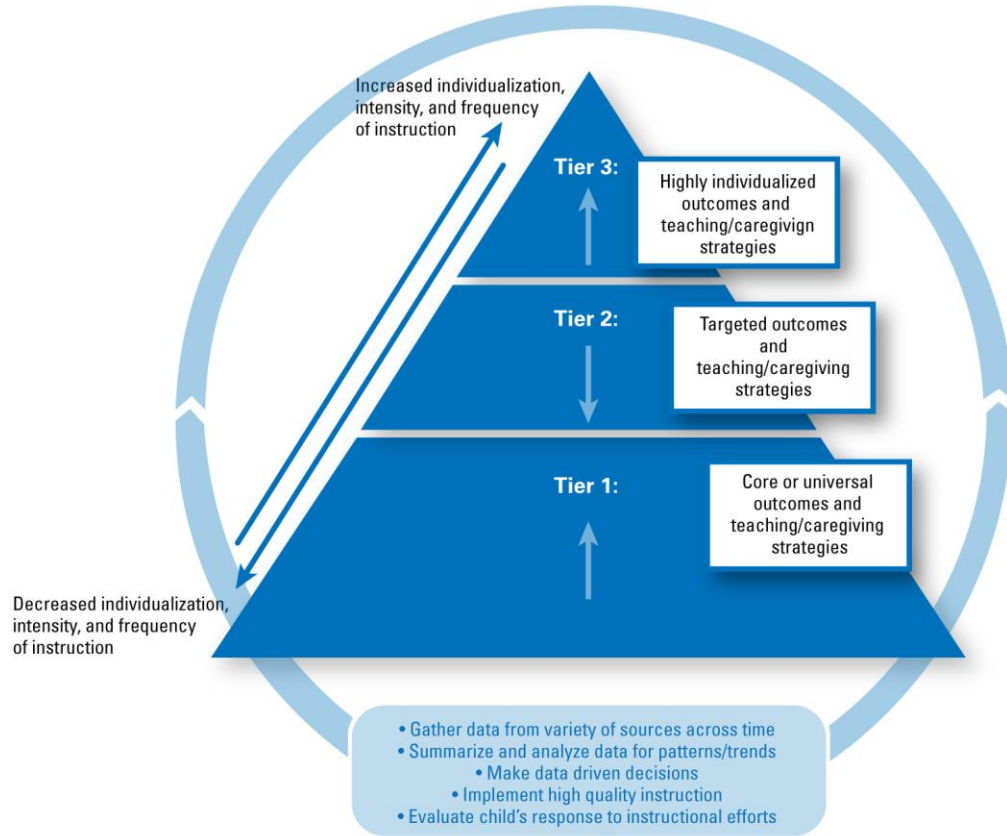
1. All children can learn and achieve....when they are provided with high quality supports to match their needs.
2. Instruction should focus on both academic and behavioral goals.
3. Children showing signs of delay should be identified as early as possible and should be provided with a level of instructional intensity to match their needs.

# Core Principles of MTSS

4. Interventions to address children's needs should be designed by collaborative teams.
5. All intervention should be based on evidence-based practices and implemented with fidelity.
6. Children's responses to intervention should be continuously monitored.
7. Interventions should be informed by student data.

# Core Components of MTSS

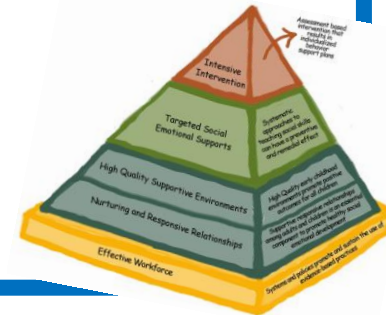
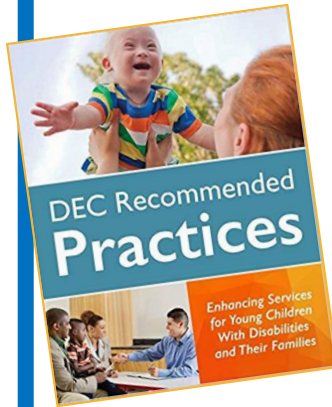




## Layered Continuum of Supports

# Evidence-Based Practices

What are they and why are they the best starting point?



# Evidence-based practices are the foundation

- “Proven techniques”
- Few practices in EC meet the strict definition of EBP but there are some
- Even practices with strong evidence may not work for all children.
- Practitioners can provide their own evidence through progress monitoring data: Practice-based evidence



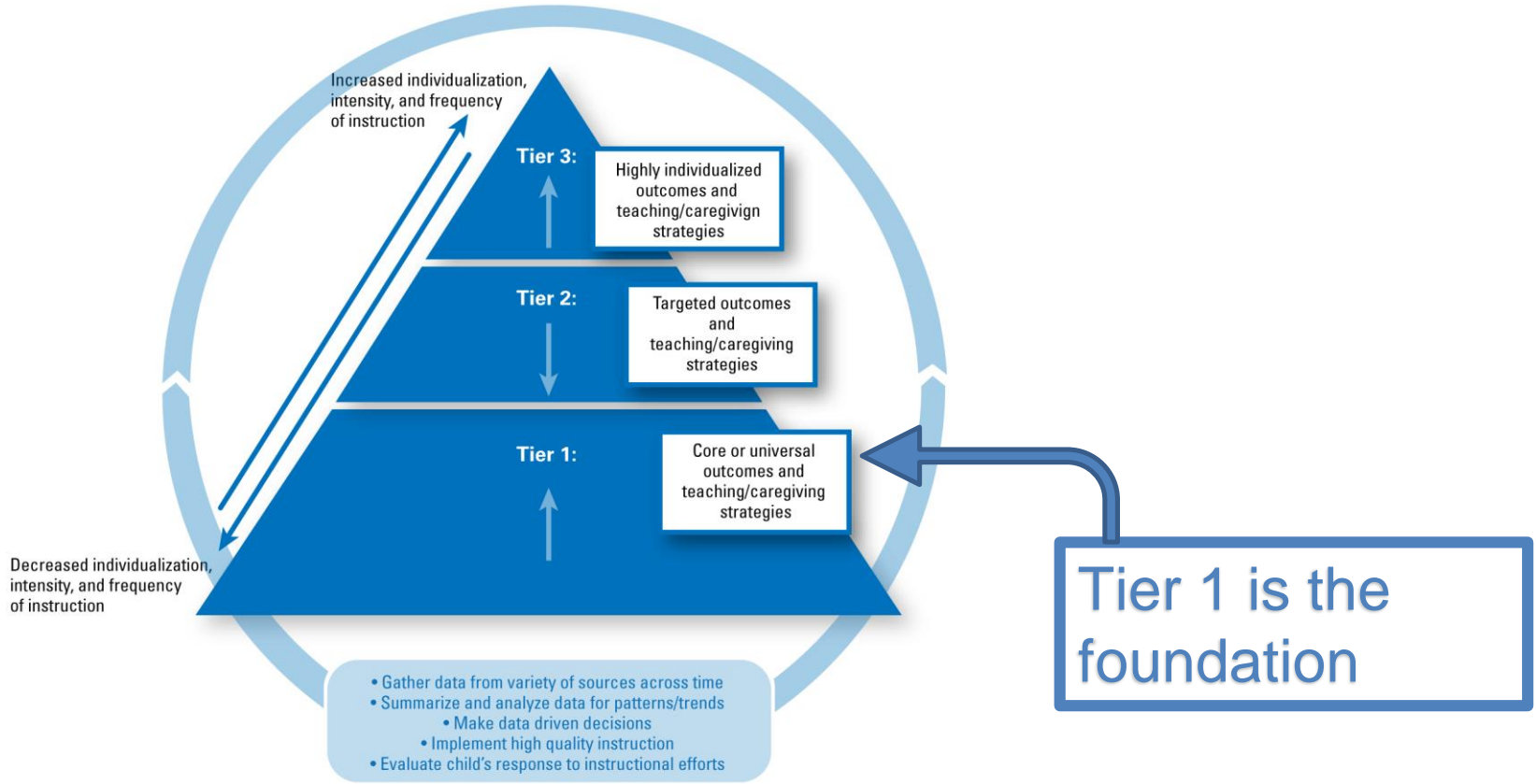
# Fidelity of Interventions

- Interventions implemented with low or inconsistent fidelity are less likely to work—children won't show change.
- Without measurement of fidelity, you don't know if the child needs a different intervention, a more intensive intervention, or the same intervention with better implementation.



## LESSON:

Make sure an intervention is being implemented correctly before recommending changes to it.





# What is High Quality Tier 1?

- How does a program know when they have/don't have a strong Tier 1?
- Factors to consider when evaluating Tier 1: curriculum, instruction, and child data
- What happens when Tier 1 is not strong?
- Using professional development and ongoing coaching to ensure continuous quality of Tier 1 implementation.

# Essential Ingredients in Tier 1 Early Literacy

## 4 Key Content Areas

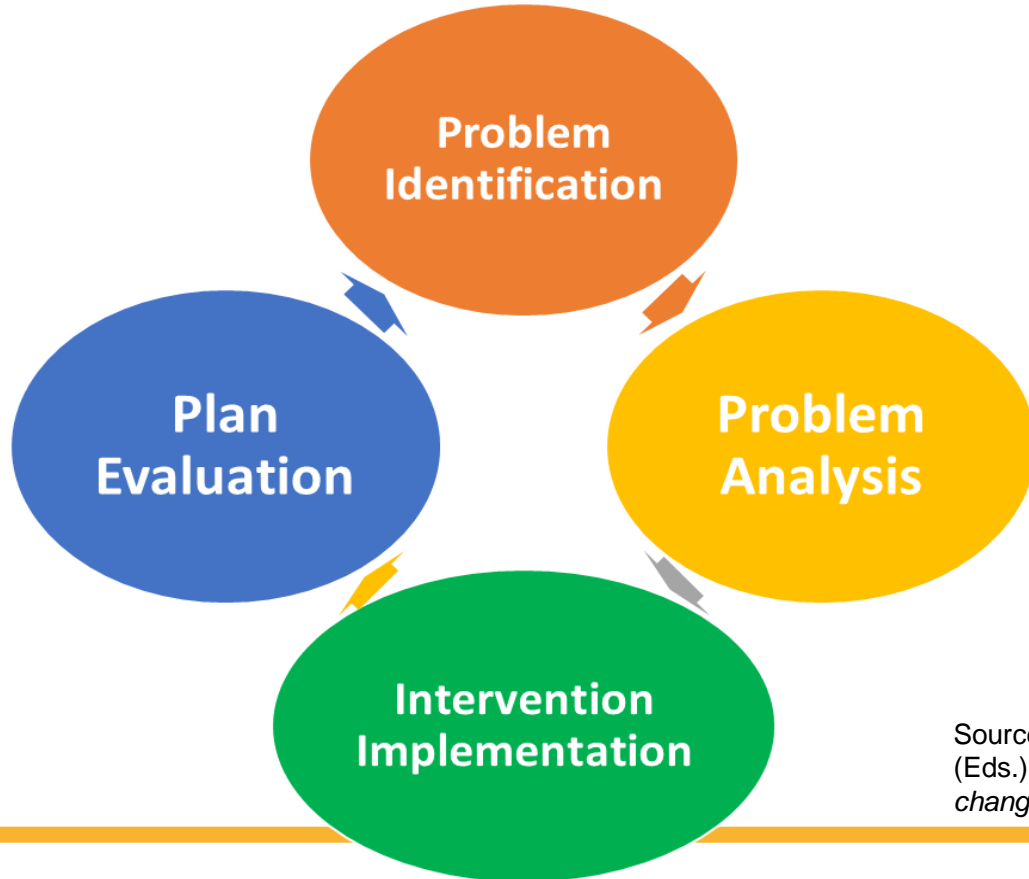
- Oral language/Vocabulary
- Comprehension
- Phonemic Awareness
- Alphabet Knowledge



## Examples of Evidence-Based Practices

- Dialogic Reading (Whitehurst)
- Explicit Instruction (Archer)
- I do, We do, You do
- World of Words (Neuman)

# Data-Based Problem-Solving and Decision-Making



**Figure 4.1. Steps of the problem-solving model.**

Source: Batsche, G. et al., 2005. Cited in J.J. Carta & R.M. Young (Eds.), *Multi-tiered systems of support for young children: Driving change in early education* (p. 75). Baltimore, MD. Paul H. Brookes

# Steps of the Problem-Solving Model

## Problem Identification

- Is there a difference between current performance and expected or desired performance?
- What is the goal relative to the expected/desired performance?

## Problem Analysis

- Why does the problem exist?
- What factors could be contributing to the problem that we can address?
- What resources are required to address the problem?

## Intervention Implementation

- What can be done to reduce the difference between current and expected/desired performance?
- What supports are needed to ensure strong intervention implementation?

## Plan Evaluation

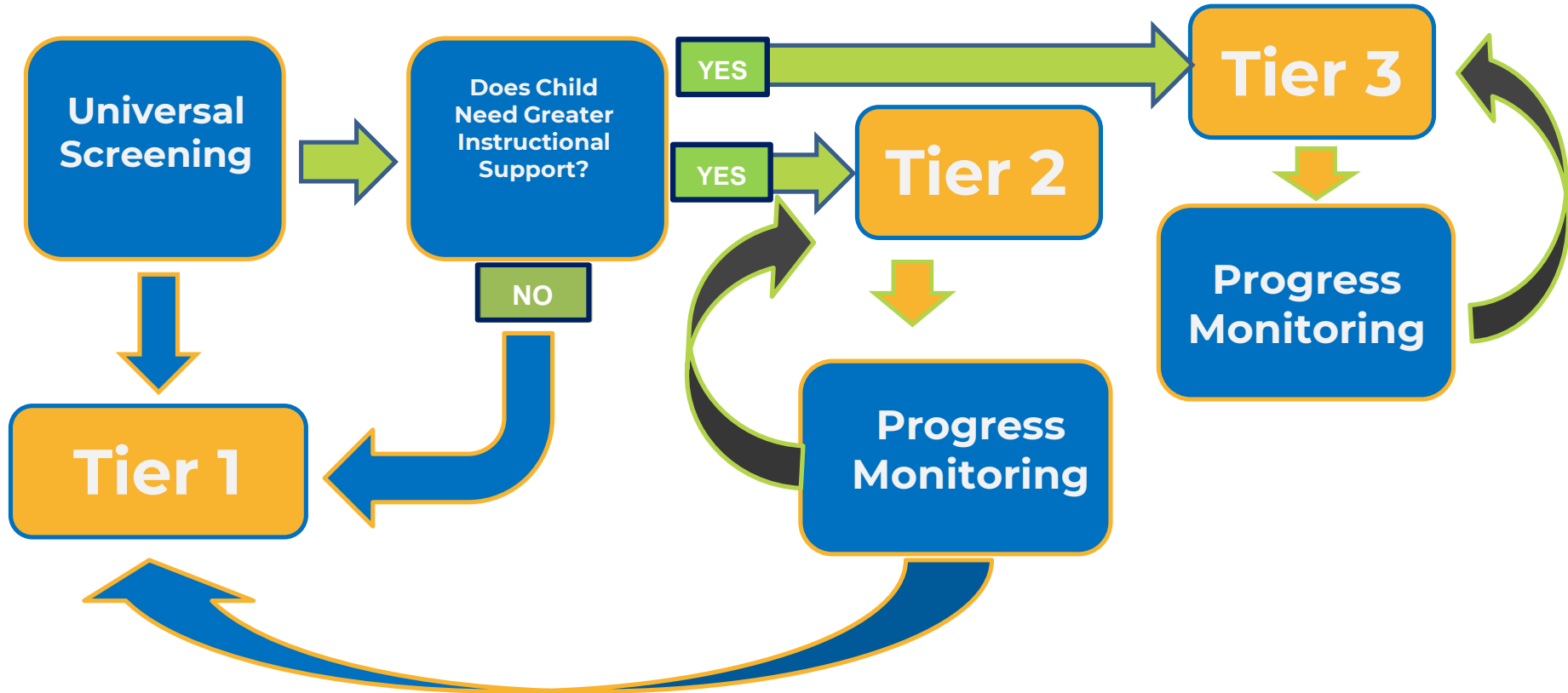
- How is/are the student(s) responding?
- How is the plan working?
- Has the difference between current and expected/desired performance been reduced to a satisfactory level?
- What are the next steps?

# Universal Screening

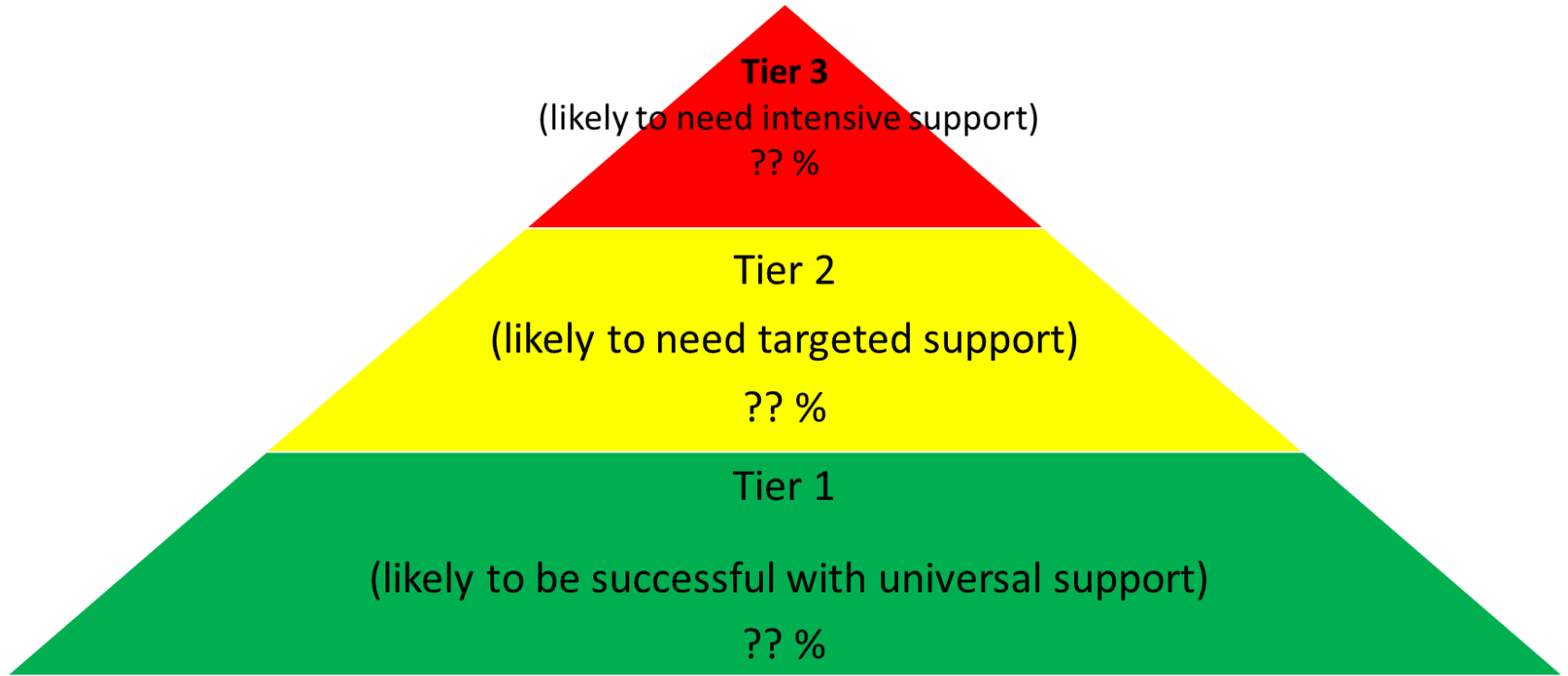
- **PURPOSE:** determines how well core curriculum is working for the majority of students
- **TOOLS:** very brief assessments on key elements of the curriculum; these are NOT the same as developmental screening tools
- **FOCUS:** all students
- **TIMEFRAME:** students are usually assessed three times a year



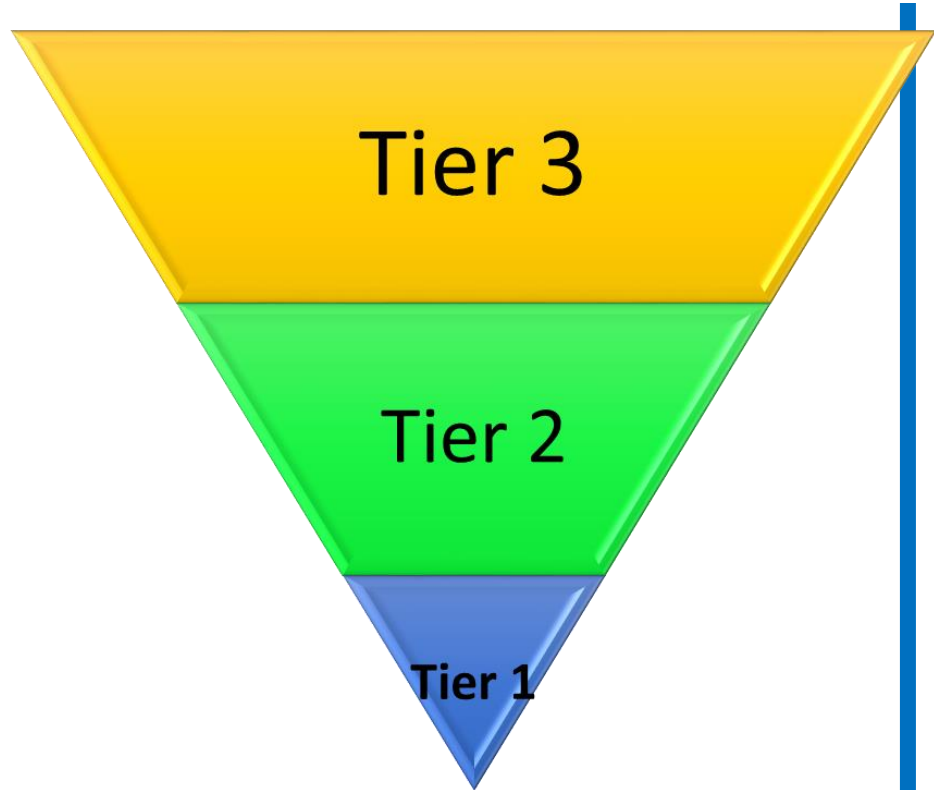
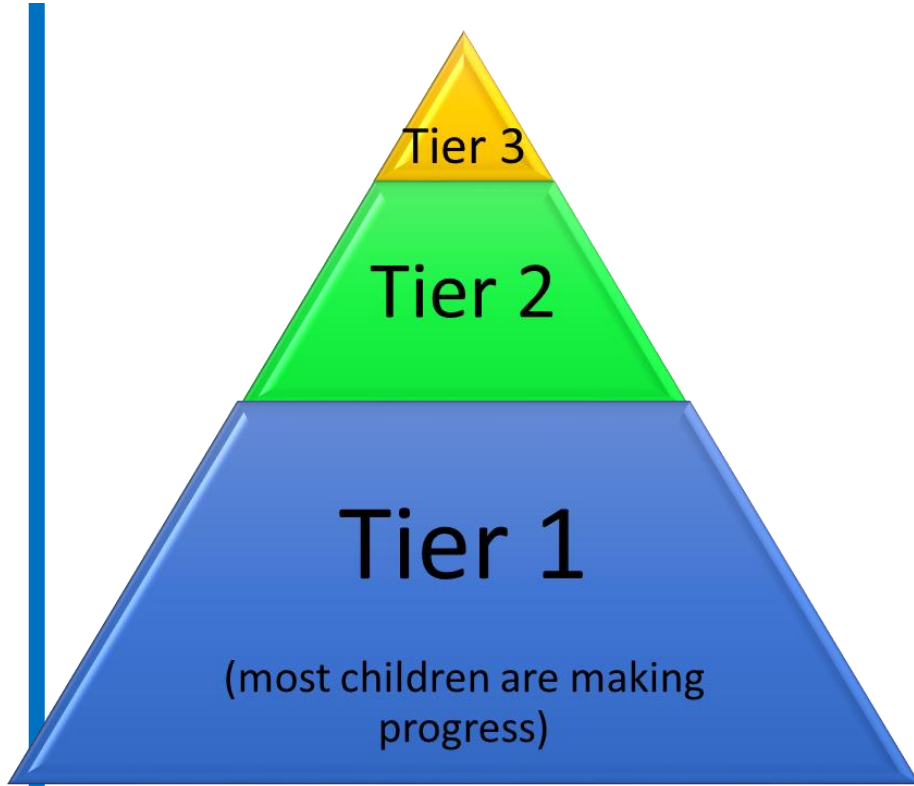
# Universal Screening and Progress Monitoring



# PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION: What level of support is needed across the entire classroom group?



# Two Different Tiered Models

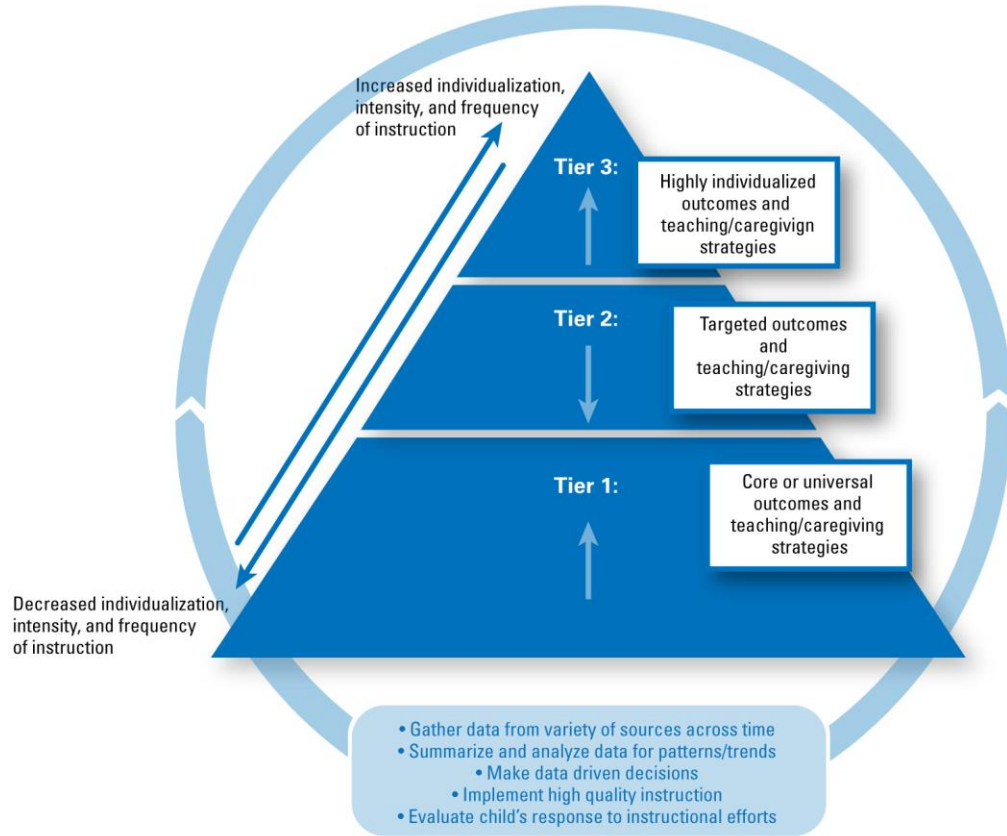




# Progress Monitoring

- **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 2—how to provide additional support

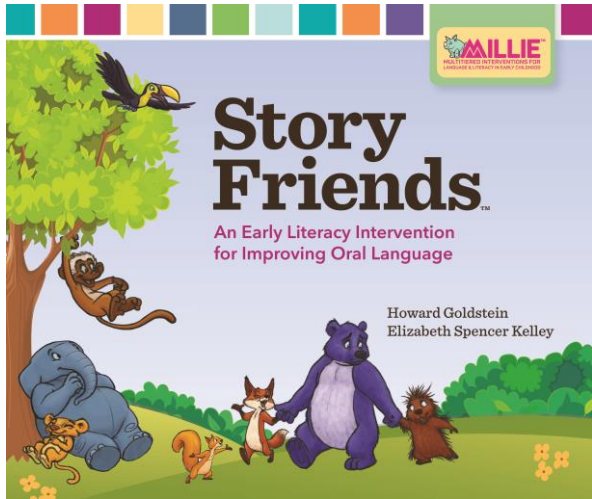
- Determine % of children needing extra instructional support
- Determine model for providing Tier 2 support from these two approaches:
  1. Problem solving approach: Individualized approach; team and family identify ways to meet child's instructional needs (more explicit instruction, more opportunities)

## Tier 2—how to provide additional support

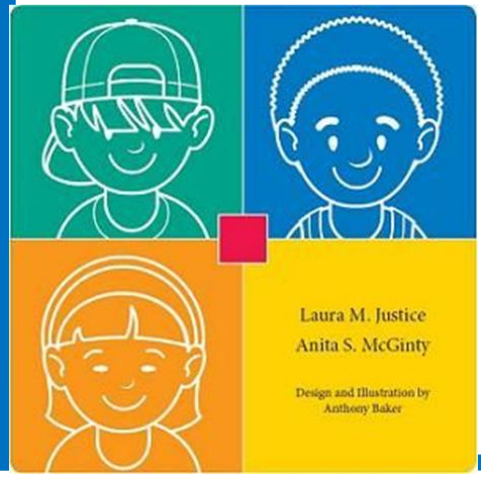
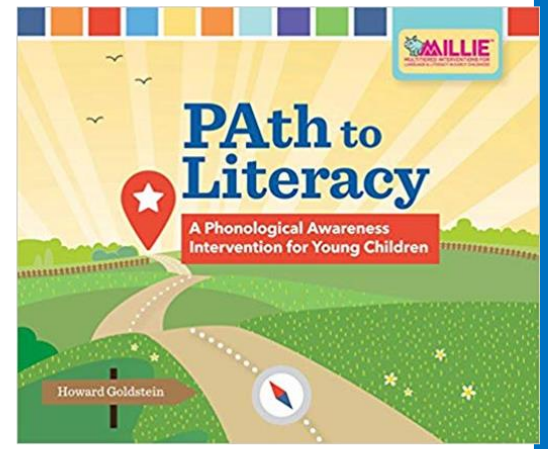
2. Standard protocol: Standard evidence-based approaches that target a specific area of need for groups of students

Examples in early literacy/language:

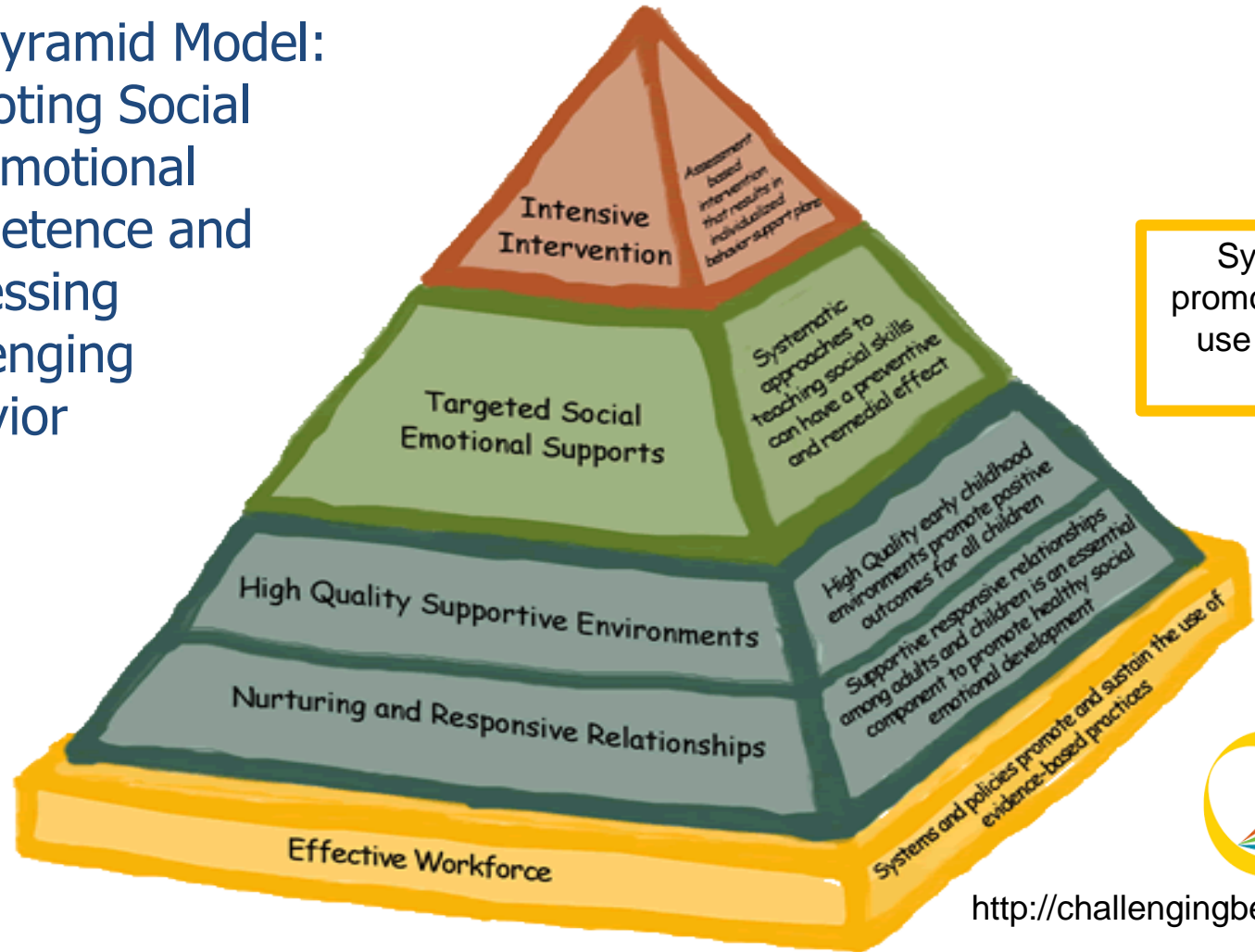
*Story Friends; Read it Again-Prek, Story Champs, PPaths to Literacy*



## Examples of Tier 2 Interventions in Early Literacy/Language



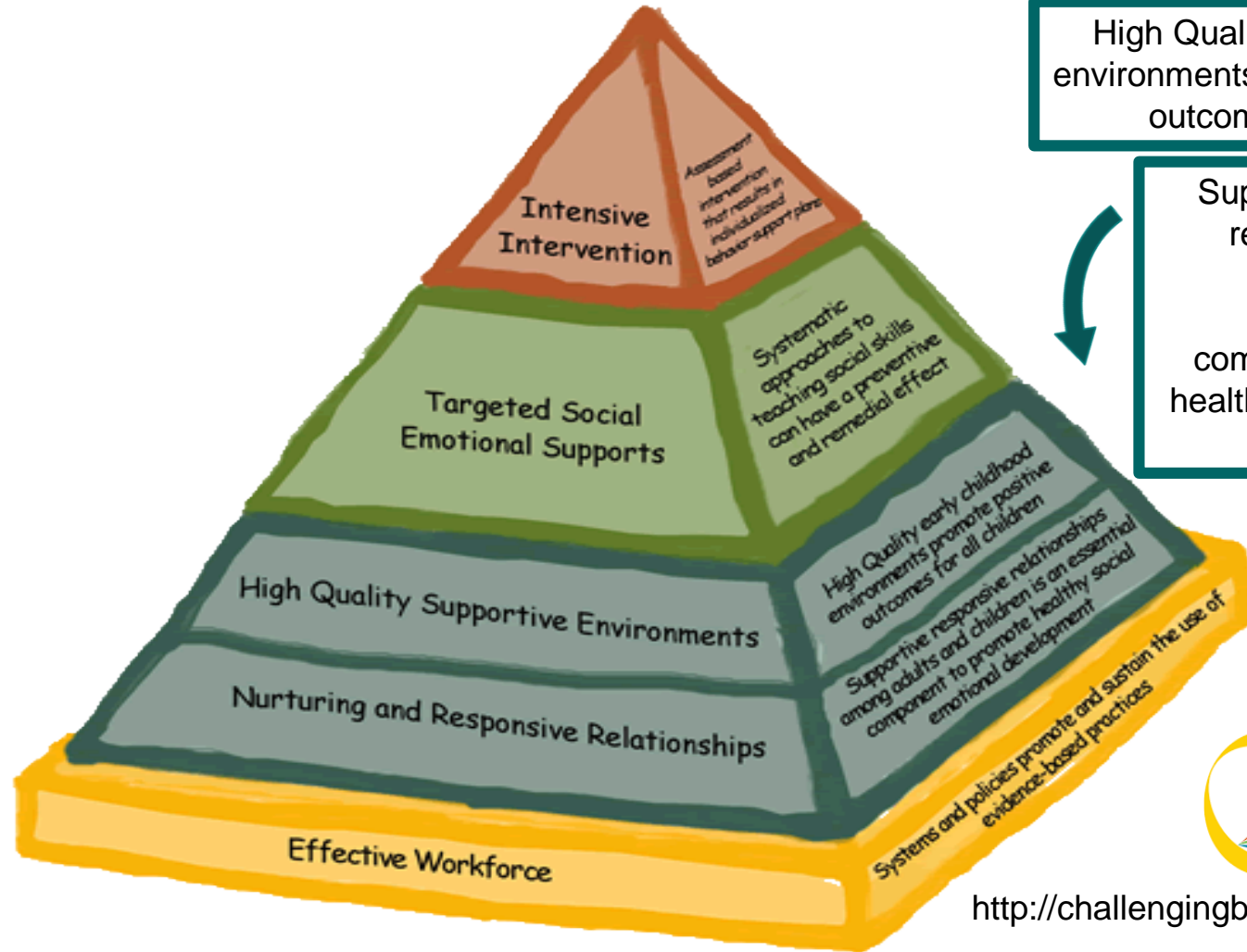
# The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social and Emotional Competence and Addressing Challenging Behavior



Systems and policies promote and sustain the use of evidence-based practices



The Pyramid Model for Promoting and Encouraging Comprehensive Addressing of Challenging Behaviors

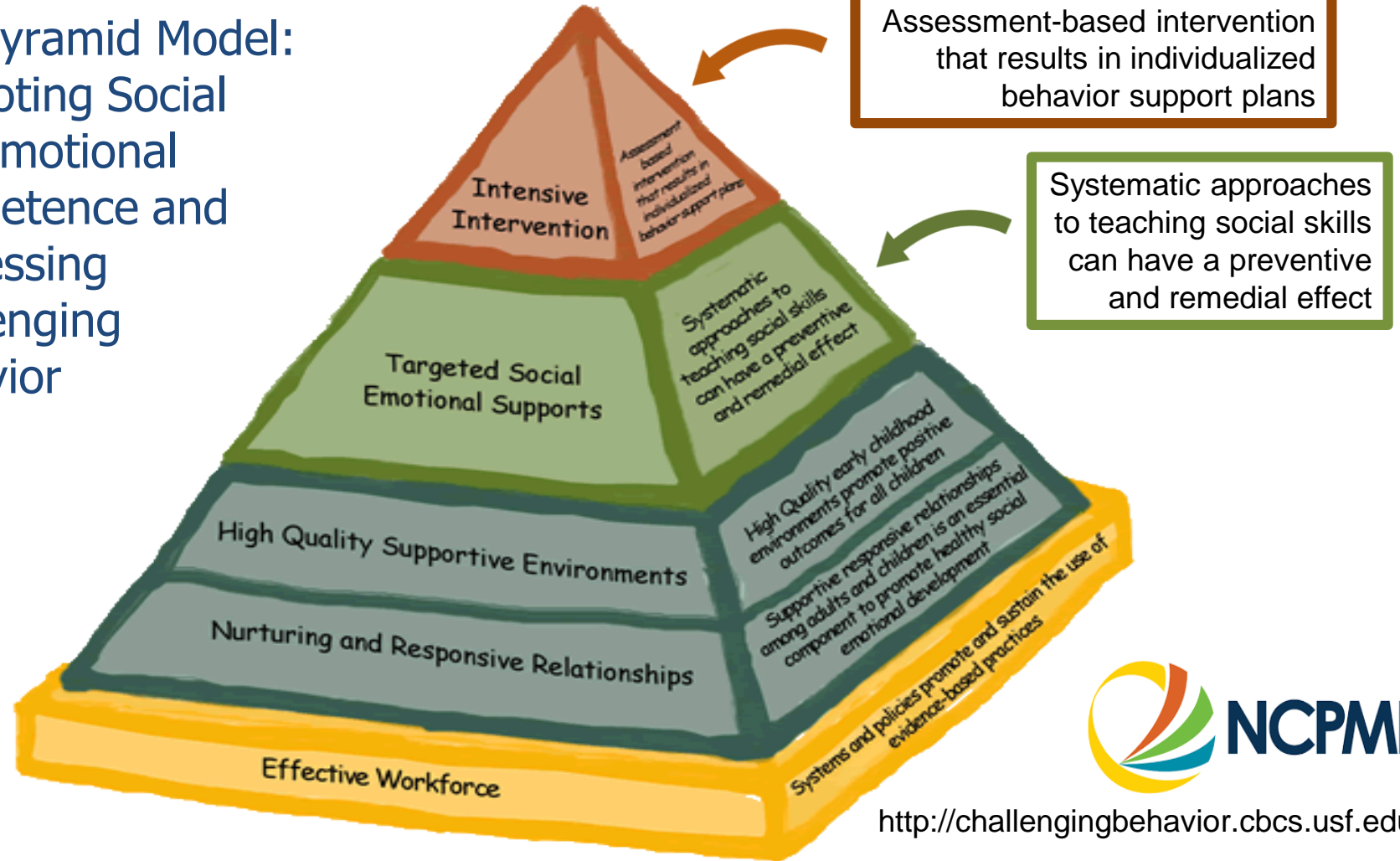


High Quality early childhood environments promote positive outcomes for all children

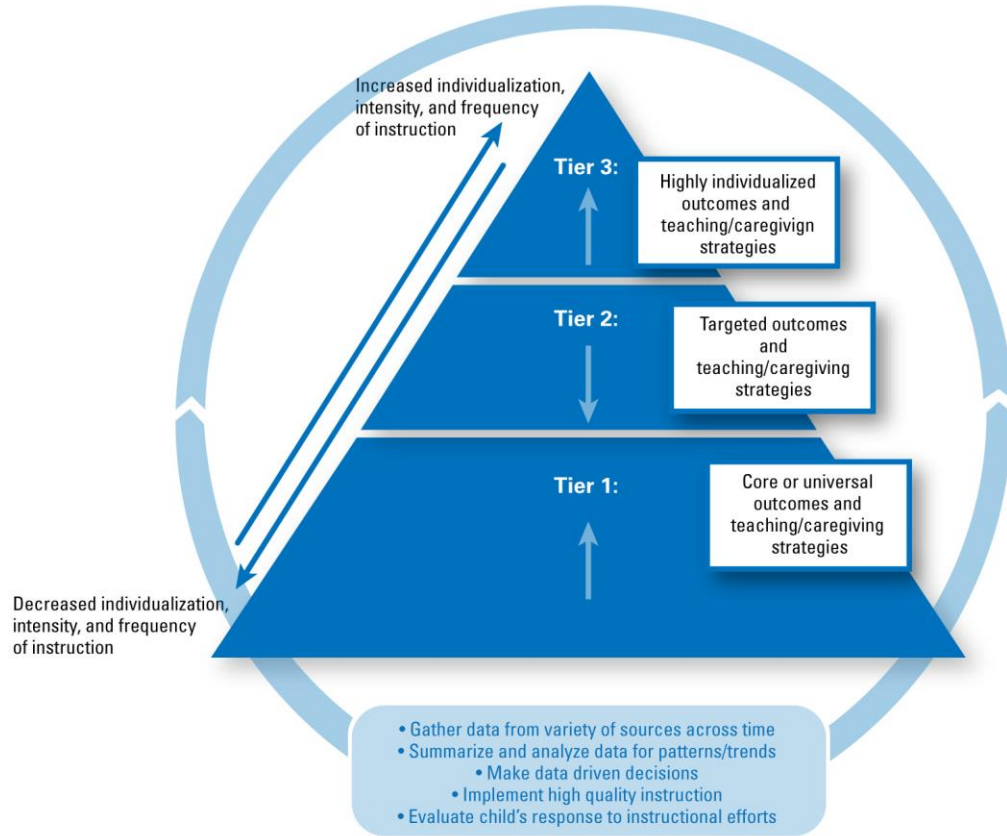
Supportive responsive relationships among adults and children is an essential component to promote healthy social emotional development



# The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social and Emotional Competence and Addressing Challenging Behavior







# Layered Continuum of Supports

# Tier 3

- Is for children not making adequate progress in response to Tier 2
- Is supplemental instruction that is more intensive than Tier 2
- Can be offered in different instructional domains (e.g., language/literacy, social-emotional)

# Tier 3

Features include:

- Focus on prioritized content
- Systematic instruction with carefully designed scope and sequence
- Explicit instruction
- Increased opportunities to respond
- Individualized instruction
- More frequent progress monitoring

# Some Key Decisions about IMPLEMENTING A TIERED APPROACH

	WHAT will be the goals of instruction?	What evidence-based strategies are available?	Who will teach? (what PD will they need?)	What materials are necessary?	When/where will it be taught?
Tier 1 (for all children)					
Tier 2 (for children below benchmark)					
Tier 3 (for children well below benchmark)					

# Meeting the needs of special learners in an MTSS service delivery system

## Children with disabilities

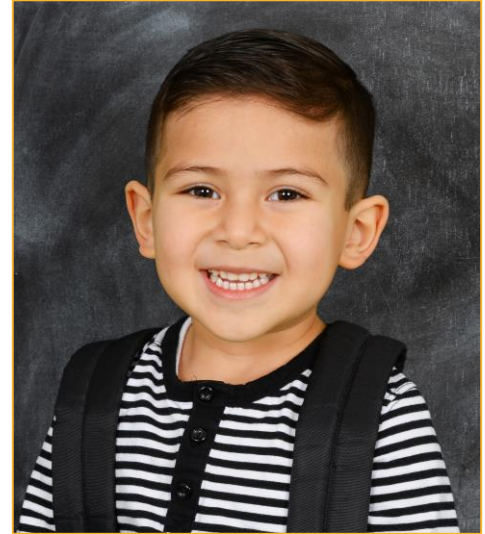
- might receive instruction at any tier in a blended inclusive classroom.
- Children do NOT need to go through the MTSS process order to be referred for special education.



# Meeting the needs of Dual Language Learners (DLLs) in an MTSS service delivery system

## Dual language learners

- Assessments (universal screening and progress monitoring) need to be conducted in home language with valid instruments
- Can be at any level of MTSS
- Strengthening Core/Tier 1 with use of home language, language bridging techniques can help dual language learners be successful



# Engaging Families in MTSS

As programs build MTSS programs, they need to focus on systematic planning for ways to engage families



# Engaging Families in MTSS

Staff members must be competence in these areas to engage successfully with families:

- Communication skills
- Understanding of family values and practices
- Focusing on cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Learning how to help the family feel welcome in the school, and with the team





# Key Takeaways

- All children get the level of instruction that meets their needs
- Prevention of delays and disabilities—better than “wait to fail”
- Early intervention is more effective and less costly than later remediation.
- Continuous progress monitoring ensures that children don’t get “stuck” receiving ineffective instruction.
- Data-based decision-making fosters team members moving in the same direction.

# POLL

What are some of the biggest challenges to implementing MTSS in an EC program?

1. Figuring out where to start—how to develop an MTSS plan
2. Lack of Tier 1 curricula that are evidence-based
3. Difficult to do universal screening
4. Finding Tier 2 AND 3 interventions in early literacy, language, social-emotional, other academic areas
5. Implementing Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions—figuring out what staff will implement these
6. Trying to develop instructional teams that can make it all work

# Small Group Activity

## Identifying Solutions to MTSS Challenges

- Figure out which challenge you have solutions for
- Work with a group to list the solutions you've generated
- Report out—share with the group and list any resources in a Word document.
- Send to [carta@ku.edu](mailto:carta@ku.edu)
- I will share resources with the group.


# Leadership: Shifting into an MTSS Framework

## Focus: PROGRAMS and SCHOOLS:

- Rationale: Services are delivered to programs and schools, as outcomes are measured at this level.
- Leaders: Held accountable for results, have legitimate authority to make changes, must shift culture, and support staff through change process
- Resource: Leader's Role in MTSS



# Leadership: Shifting into an MTSS Framework

- 
1. Accountable
  2. Authority
  3. Shift Culture
  4. Change process

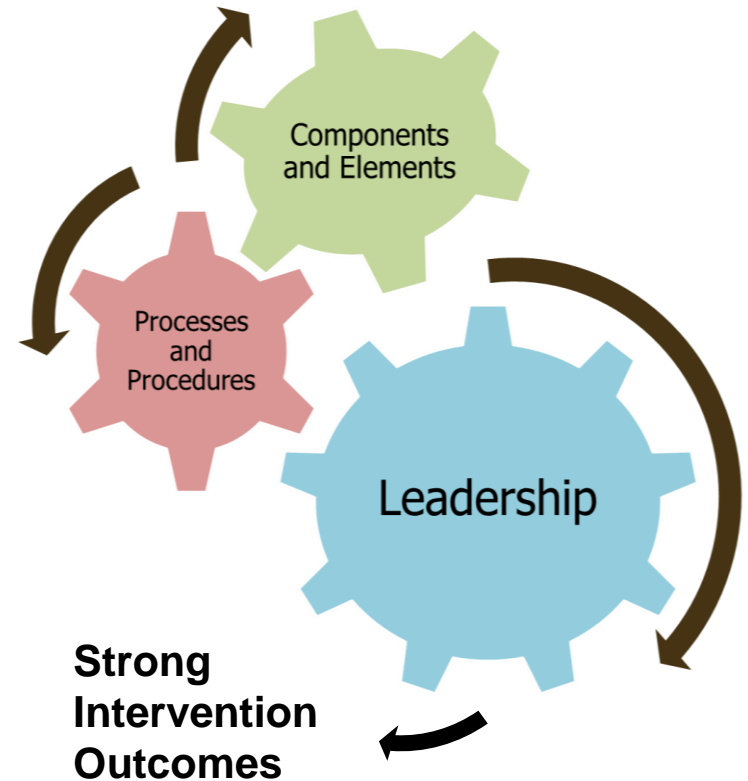
**FOCUS:** Program and school leaders since “delivery of the services that will have an impact on student outcomes ultimately occurs at the school level, necessitating a focus on changing the practices of teachers, principals, instructional support personnel, and other school-level leaders” (Castillo & Curtis, 2014, p. 13).

**PRINCIPAL**

# Leadership: Shifting into an MTSS Framework

## Focus: Service delivery SYSTEM

- Purpose: Internal parts are organized and arranged to interact so young children achieve early learning outcomes.
- Infrastructure (Components): Who will be served, what will they learn, what teaching methods will be used, where will teaching occur.
- Processes (Procedures): How culture and teams will be created, how rules will be made, etc.



# Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)



**Sole Purpose: Ensure the instructional and intervention delivery system results in verifiable gains for young children and their families.**



# Implementation Science (IS) Exploration Stage: Is MTSS the right initiative for your program or school?

## Exploration Stage:

- Tasks: Assess needs, examine intervention components, consider implementation drivers, and assess “goodness-of-fit” of proposed new practice.
- Resource: Appendix 3B: Multi-tiered Systems of Support in Early Childhood: Stage of Implementation Analysis. Videos 1 and 2, Brookes Publishing website.



Vision: What kind of organization do we want to be?

Resource:  
Example vision, mission, core values, guiding practices and standard operating procedures.



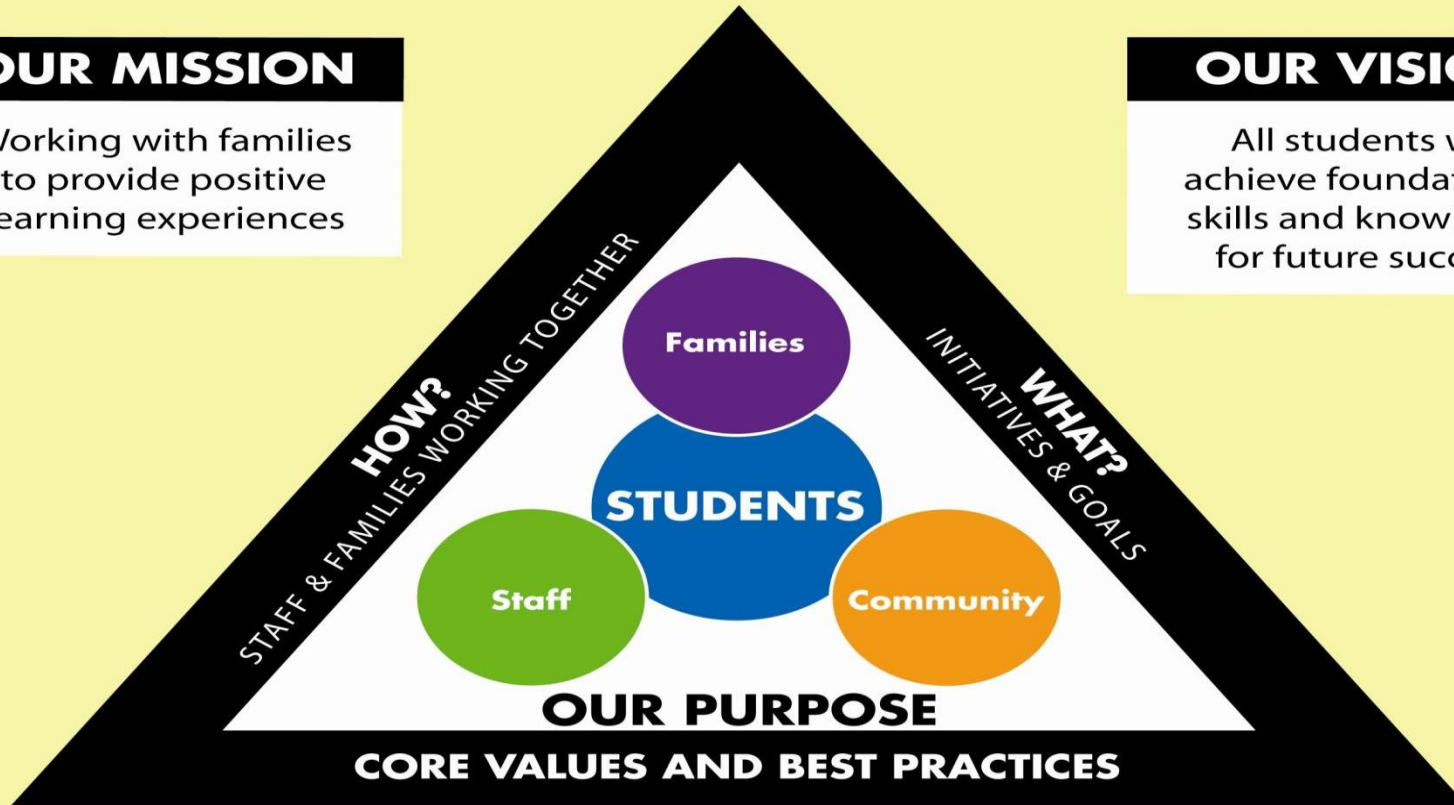
# INCREASED LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT

## OUR MISSION

Working with families to provide positive learning experiences

## OUR VISION

All students will achieve foundational skills and knowledge for future success



# Organizational Culture: Trustworthy



***“It is a greater compliment to  
be trusted than to be loved.”***

**--George MacDonald**



**ESSENTIAL:  
Initial High Quality Training and  
On-going Practice-Based Coaching**

# Strengths-based Problem-Solving Process

## SCHOOL/PROGRAM Level:

- How are all children performing in core? Compare current indicators with expected or desired goals.
- Identify needed improvements. Make program changes, implement with fidelity, and monitor progress.
- Compare students' performance and growth to goals. Determine next steps.



# Strengths-based Problem-Solving Process

## CLASSROOM Level:

- Core curriculum should be meeting most students' needs.  
So, which children need supports?
- Arrange small groups to provide targeted interventions (standard protocol if possible). Implement with fidelity; monitor progress.
- Compare student performance and growth to goals; decide next steps.



# Strengths-based Problem-Solving Process

## INDIVIDUAL-CHILD Level:

- Core curriculum plus strategic interventions should be meeting almost all children's needs.
- So, which few children require intensive interventions that are more individually-designed supports?
- Follow steps 2 and 3 on previous slide.





# Steps of the Problem-Solving Model

## Problem Identification

- Is there a difference between current performance and expected or desired performance?
- What is the goal relative to the expected/desired performance?

## Problem Analysis

- Why does the problem exist?
- What factors could be contributing to the problem that we can address?
- What resources are required to address the problem?

## Intervention Implementation

- What can be done to reduce the difference between current and expected/desired performance?
- What supports are needed to ensure strong intervention implementation?

## Plan Evaluation

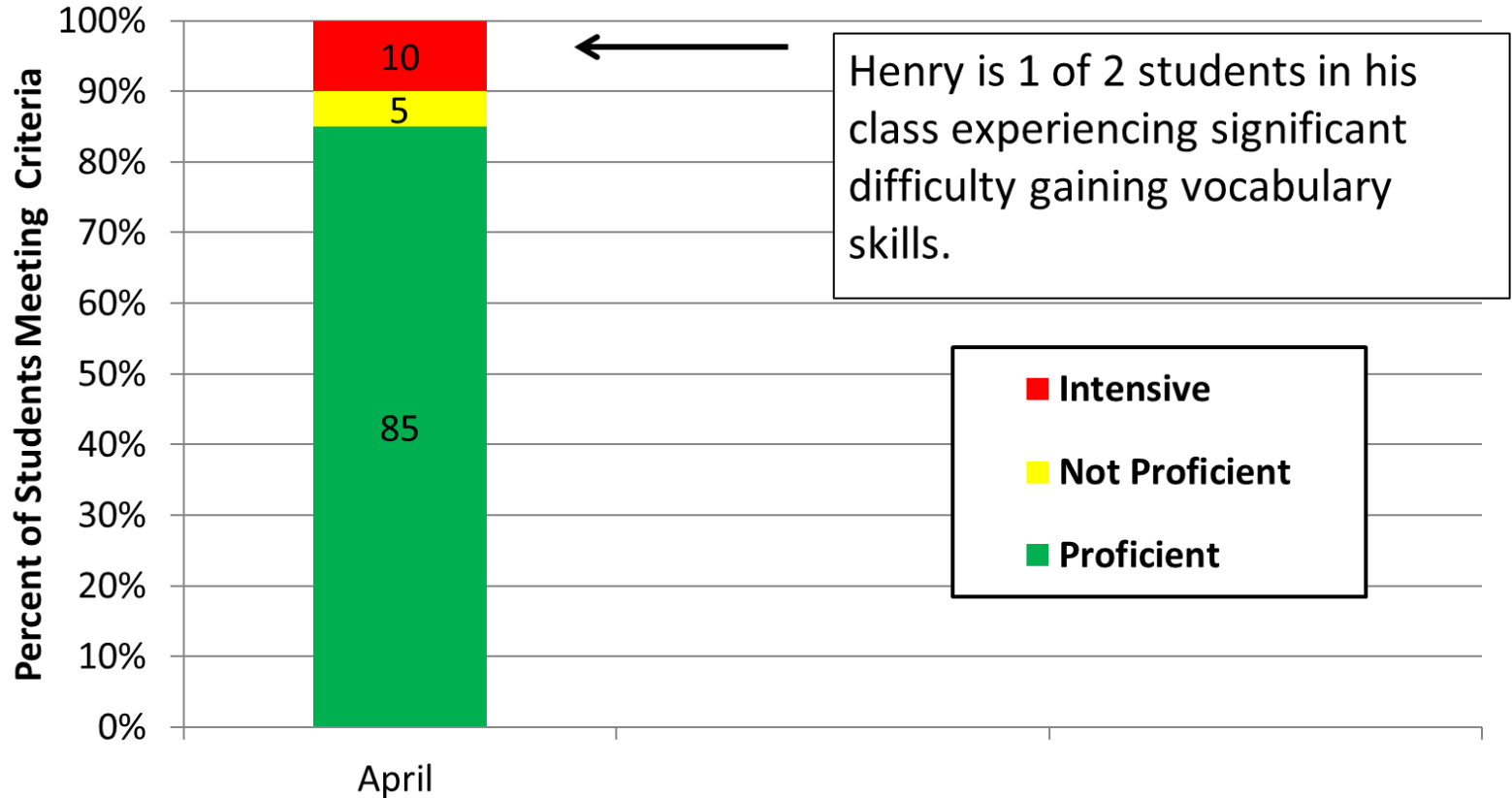
- How is/are the student(s) responding?
- How is the plan working?
- Has the difference between current and expected/desired performance been reduced to a satisfactory level?
- What are the next steps?

Figure 4.1. Steps of the problem-solving model.  
Source: Batsche, G. et al., 2005.

# Case Example of Henry



# Universal Screening Data-Vocabulary



# Problem Solving Example for One Child

## Problem Identification

### PI meeting: What was learned . . .

- After Core vocabulary instruction, some children were not “Proficient”.
- Teacher provided a supplemental, evidence-based, packaged, Tier 2 vocabulary intervention; now, most students are proficient.
- Henry is one of two students will need more intensive, individually-designed vocabulary intervention (see graph on previous slide).

# Problem Solving Example for One Child

## Problem Identification

PI decision: Plan PA meeting w/ Henry's parents & grandmother

- Check results of screening: overall developmental, and vision & hearing.
- Review performance on words targeted in last unit of study.
- Review knowledge of commonly known preschool words.

# Problem Solving Example for One Child

## Problem Analysis

### PA meeting: What was learned . . .

- Henry passed hearing screening but has history of ear infections.
- He is developing well in all areas except vocabulary.
- He responded well to IDEAS strategy (Tier 2) but may need more time in the intervention.

# Problem Solving Example for One Child

## Problem Analysis

### PA Decision: An Intervention Plan was developed:

- Provide IDEAS strategy for 5 minutes/day in one-to-one format (Identify word, Define word, Explain it, Ask comprehension question, Say it again).
- Share target words for at-home practice.
- Use pictures in storybooks to build word knowledge and usage.

# Problem Solving Example for One Child

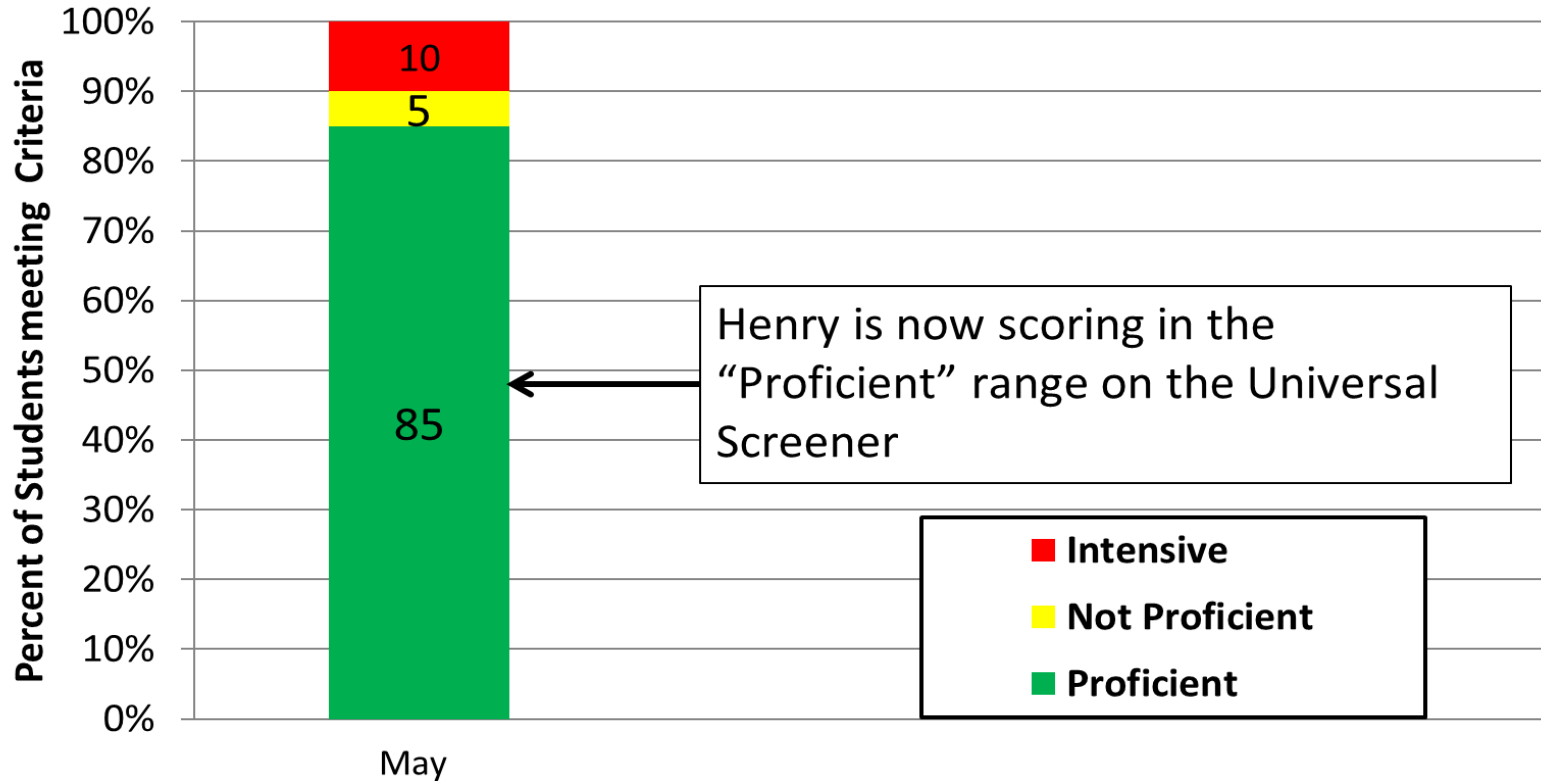
## Plan Evaluation: First Meeting

### Review Intervention Plan results:

- Grandmother and Henry read stories at home with target words.
- Embedding words into home routines at home is working well.
- Still receiving only 2/5 minutes of scheduled time in IDEAS strategies with paraprofessional; team needs to ensure he receives all 5 minutes.
- Communicate plan revision to parents.



# Universal Screening Data-Vocabulary One Classroom



# Problem Solving Example for One Child

## Plan Evaluation: Second Time

### Review Intervention Plan impact:

- Parents and grandparent say home language use is much improved.
- Staff reports Henry uses many new words across classroom routines.
- Henry now scoring in Proficient Range on the Universal Screener
- Conference arranged with Henry's kindergarten teacher; progress will be monitored.

# Strengths-based Problem-Solving Process

## SUMMARY:

- Ensure that families are team members.
- Examine data for Core / Tier 1 to ensure it is implemented with fidelity and is effective.
- For a some children, arrange targeted intervention, with a standard protocol if possible, with proper dosage and fidelity.
- Follow steps 2 and 3 on previous slide.



Henry becomes a successful reader, and achieves essential outcomes in his school career.

# Strengths-based Problem-Solving Process

## SUMMARY:

- Ensure that families are team members.
- Examine data for Core / Tier 1 to ensure it is implemented with fidelity and is effective; make changes as necessary.
- For some children who demonstrate a delay, arrange targeted intervention, with a standard protocol if possible, with proper dosage and fidelity. Monitor progress.
- For few children, provide intensive, more individually designed interventions, supports and services. Determine next steps.



Henry becomes a successful reader and achieves essential outcomes in his school career.

# Our Vision for MTSS in Early Education



Wouldn't it be great if. . .

Every child could participate in an early education program with evidence-based instruction,

and receive appropriate levels of instructional interventions

to achieve the best possible early academic and behavioral outcomes?

# References

- Hojnoski, R.L., & Polignano, J.C. (2019). Figure 4.1 Steps of the problem-solving model. Source: Batsche, G. et al., 2005. Cited in J.J. Carta & R.M. Young (Eds.), *Multi-tiered systems of support for young children: Driving change in early education* (p. 75). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.
- Shields, L. (2011). *The leader's role: RTI in early childhood settings* [Web log post]. Retrieved from [http://www.crtiec.dept.ku.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/MTSS\\_Rtl-in-EC-Leadership-Consensus-PD-Blog-Entries-9-21-17.pdf](http://www.crtiec.dept.ku.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/MTSS_Rtl-in-EC-Leadership-Consensus-PD-Blog-Entries-9-21-17.pdf).

# Measures and Interventions Cited

- *CIRCLE Progress Monitoring*: <https://cliengage.org/public/training/support/how-to-guides/circle-progress-monitoring-user-guide/>.
- *Developing Talkers*: <https://developingtalkers.org/>.
- *Dialogic Reading—Reading Rockets*: <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/dialogic-reading-effective-way-read-aloud-young-children>.
- *Explicit Instruction—Archer & Hughes*: <https://explicitinstruction.org/>.
- *IGDIs*--<http://igdi.ku.edu/>.
- *myIGDIs*-- <https://www.myigdis.com/>.
- *Path to Literacy*: <https://products.brookespublishing.com/PAtH-to-Literacy-P965.aspx>.
- *Pyramid Model—National Center for Pyramid Model Innovation*: <http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>.
- *Read It Again Pre-K*: <https://earlychildhood.ehe.osu.edu/research/practice/read-it-again-prek/>
- *Story Champs*: <https://www.languagedynamicsgroup.com/products/story-champs/>.
- *Story Friends*: <https://brookespublishing.com/product/story-friends/>.
- *World of Words*: <http://www.nyuwow.org/>

Thank you!





# BROOKES

Thank you to our presenters!



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