Response to Intervention

Welcome to this webcast. My name is Dr. Lakshmi Hema Mahadevan. I am the program coordinator for the Career and Technical Special Populations Training and Resource Education Center at Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service. This webcast addresses Response to Intervention or RTI. The 2004 reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA gave the local education agencies and school districts options on how to evaluate public school students for specific learning disabilities. One sure approach that has gained increasing interest is responsiveness to intervention or RTI. In the RTI model, students with academic difficulties participate in research validated interventions. The student’s academic progress is monitored frequently to see if the interventions are sufficient, to help the student to catch up with his or her peers. If the student fails to show significantly improved academic skills despite several well designed implemented interventions, this failure to respond to intervention can be viewed as evidence of an underline learning disability. With RTI, schools identify students at the risk for poor learning outcomes; they monitor student progress, provide evidence based interventions, and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student’s responsiveness. Finally, they identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities.

One advantage of RTI in the diagnoses of education disabilities is that it allows schools to intervene early to meet the needs of struggling learners. Another is that RTI maps show specific structural strategies that are found to benefit a particular student. Now this information can be very helpful to both parents and teachers. So how do schools put RTI into practice? To implement RTI effectively, schools must develop a specialized set of components. For example, first they must monitor student’s progress in the curriculum with technically adequate assessments.

Second, they must choose and implement scientifically proven interventions to address students’ deficits.

Third they must follow explicit rules to decide which students are not making sufficient progress or responding to the intervention.
Fourth they must monitor the student’s outcomes in the intervention with at least weekly or biweekly assessments.

Five, the must ensure that the intervention is delivered with accuracy and consistency.

Sixth they must determine the intensity of the support that a student needs in order to be successful.

And finally seven the must provide parents notices of referrals and request for a comprehensive evaluation if a disabilities is suspected. Please note that the question of when this evaluation should be initiated is some what controversial. Parents should ask the school to explain its specific procedures. For more information about RTI and to access RTI related resources please visit our website ctsp.tamu.edu