
Preface

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In the years since its national debut in IDEA 2004, response to intervention (RTI) has undergone significant growth and change. In its infancy, RTI was a somewhat controversial means for identifying young students with reading disabilities, and significant debate occurred for several years regarding whether RTI on its own could be a valid and reliable tool for identification of students with specific learning disabilities. As individual states adopted the process, RTI took on numerous forms, including three-, four-, and five-tiered models that would or would not include special education. The process received new monikers, including pyramid of interventions (POI), multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), and response to instruction and intervention (RTII), to name just a few. These name changes were indicative of more significant alterations in process and implementation; RTI is now used for a variety of purposes throughout the United States and is gaining strength in areas of Canada.

In essence, RTI has reached adolescence. The process is no longer limited to its original narrow scope for identifying students with reading difficulties. Instead, it is widely used to provide targeted interventions for students in the areas of math and behavior, and it has proven effective for students in preschool through high school. It has been meshed with professional learning communities, differentiated instruction, and enrichment for high achievers. Implementation models are as varied as the schools in which they are implemented and the students served through those processes, and we now have a wider assortment of intervention and assessment tools from which to choose. We know more about using appropriate tools, monitoring instruction, and making adjustments based on student outcomes. In most cases, RTI is now implemented as a school improvement model designed to address the needs of all learners. In many schools, RTI is proving a highly effective umbrella under which all school improvement initiatives are aligned, and schools with good RTI models in place are making significant gains in student achievement.

However, three basic factors have remained constant in effective RTI models. First, instruction and intervention must be supported by valid and reliable research. Second, instruction and intervention must be data driven and responsive to individual student needs. Finally, instruction and intervention must be implemented with fidelity. If any of these factors is weak or missing, the process becomes ineffective for improving student outcomes.

Corwin has created this *Best of Corwin: Response to Intervention* resource to guide practitioners through this challenging and rewarding process. As editor, it is my goal to provide you with the best and most relevant information available relating to quality RTI implementation. The chapters included in this book were carefully chosen to address the essential factors listed above. They offer a variety of perspectives for all educational practitioners and leaders and focus on elementary through high school grade levels, reading, math, behavior, and English learners. In addition, they provide information on assessment, data-based decision making, and fidelity of implementation. Each chapter was carefully selected to provide a comprehensive view of an effective RTI process. It is my hope that this resource will enable you to develop and implement RTI to have a powerful impact on your students.