



Tier 3 Overview

Adapted from Missouri Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support: Tier 3 Team Workbook

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Typically, 80% or more students will positively respond to Tier 1, or universal, practices that are implemented proactively with all students. After receiving Tier 1 support, approximately 10-15% of students will meet data decision rules for Tier 2, sometimes also called targeted or secondary, intervention. Yet a smaller group of students, approximately 1-5%, will be provided ongoing Tier 1 support, will most likely have been involved in Tier 2 support, and will still be experiencing difficulty. In many cases these students have extended school histories of academic and behavioral difficulties over a lengthy period of time.

Because their needs may be both more significant and more chronic, the types of support systems employed at Tier 3, sometimes also called intensive or tertiary supports, will be individualized and specific. Just as with the Tier 2 level of support, schools build on the established schoolwide system to accurately identify these students, and data-based decision making is essential.

Students exhibiting more chronic and/or intense behavior problems require specially designed and individualized interventions that match need, or function, of the problem behaviors. This is where functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention planning (BIP) are utilized. Expertise in the science of behavioral assessment is necessary for the development and implementation of individualized support plans.

There are many studies demonstrating the positive effects of FBA-based intervention and a growing body of research signifying that school personnel, with proper training, can develop effective behavior intervention plans. In a review of the school-based literature on FBA, the overwhelming majority (98.7%) of studies using FBA to derive interventions produced behavior change in the desired direction.

The school's Tier 3 intensive system must include (1) personnel who are trained in the basic principles of behavior, functional assessment, and behavior support planning; (2) a system for early identification and referral; and (3) an organizational structure that allows for flexible teaming and planning. As with Tier 1 and Tier 2 systems of support, the development of Tier 3 systems, data, and practices are led by a team. In addition, school teams are formed to design and implement individual student plans.

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