

Providing guidance for leaders dedicated to children's literacy development, birth to age 9

EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION PRACTICES

The Issue: Given that early literacy difficulties fuel future literacy problems, we need to do our best to prevent difficulties from the start. Fortunately, prevention has been estimated at a mere fraction of the costs of remediation, for budgets and children. For best literacy outcomes at-scale, we need to be much more focused on our children as readers before they are in grade 3.

What Are Some Common Pitfalls That Impede Impact?

Common Pitfalls	What We're Learning
1. Across many districts and states, third grade scores on high-stakes tests make up the first pieces of information on literacy rates that are collected and available at	1. Differences in young children's language and literacy skills can be captured early through age-appropriate assessments (Memo 5).
2. Rather than funding early prevention efforts, many grants are tied to state test scores at grade 3 and above.	2. Programs aimed at prevention are more effective than later remediation efforts; plus, they are less expensive.
3. Struggling readers' difficulties are exposed and exacerbated with increased years of schooling.	3. Preventive approaches used with the youngest children are easily embedded into daily instruction and can prevent the need for remediation later.

For More on This...

Learn about the multi-level prevention system, *Response to Intervention*, at www.rti4success.org

Find more information on using literacy data in the service of prevention in the book:

Making Assessment Matter: Using Test Results to Differentiate Reading Instruction
by N. Lesaux and S. Marietta

What Are Key Decisions and Strategies for Impact?

We need to uncover children's literacy weaknesses well before they are expected to read and write for academic success. To do so, sites should focus on early identification practices and prevention efforts. And remember, enrichment and remediation are the same for many young children!

Assess Early

- ⇒ Starting in early childhood, use developmentally appropriate assessments to identify future literacy risks (Memos 5, 6, & 7)
- ⇒ Gather the data needed to focus on early identification and supports

Fund Prevention Programs

- ⇒ Focus resources on preventing literacy problems (you will be more likely to improve outcomes — and for less money!)

Build Strong Early Literacy

- ⇒ Use curricula that embed enrichment into daily instruction, benefiting at-risk young students and boosting literacy skills for all (Memo 15)
- ⇒ Focus efforts on the youngest students who are most likely to see the support as enjoyable

Self-study for Impact: Lead the Conversation!

- *Is on-going assessment data available to inform understanding of children's literacy development, starting in early childhood?*
- *Are resources prioritized to support prevention programs from the earliest ages?*
- *Are support programs in place to embed enrichment into daily instruction in early education and care settings, and in the primary grades?*

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