

Recognition & Response

Background and Origins

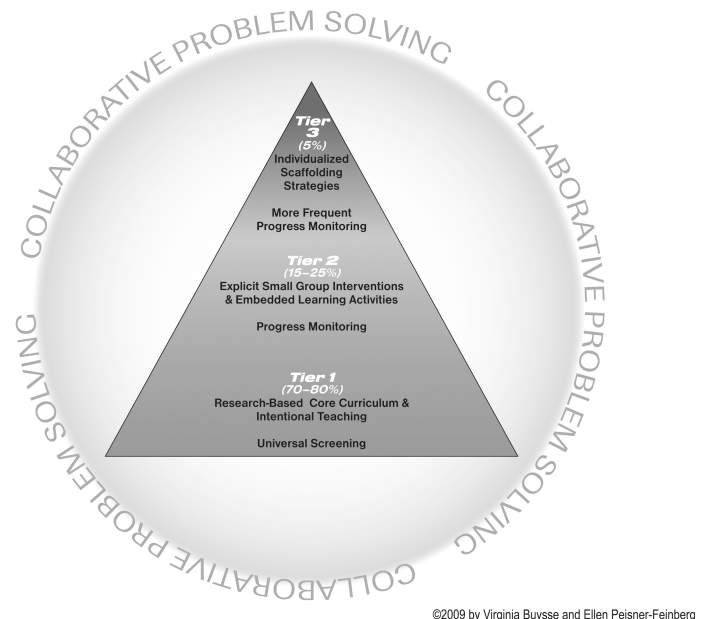
Recognition & Response (R&R) is a model of RTI (Response to Intervention) for pre-k developed by researchers at the FPG Child Development Institute. It is designed to enhance teaching practices of language, literacy, and math with three- to five-year-olds enrolled in center-based early childhood programs. The instructional principles that serve as the foundation for R&R are consistent with those widely acknowledged in early childhood, namely, the emphasis on high quality curriculum and instruction and the importance of intervening early using research-based practices. There is now a body of evidence for the effectiveness of using RTI to improve reading and math skills with school-age children and emerging evidence for its effectiveness in language and literacy with pre-k children.

A Framework for Linking Assessment and Instruction

R&R is a tiered model of instruction comprised of three components congruent with RTI:

- Universal screening and progress monitoring (Recognition)
- Effective core curriculum, intentional teaching, and targeted interventions (Response)
- Collaborative problem-solving to support data-based decision-making

The figure shows the conceptual framework for R&R.



Recognition: Universal screening and Progress monitoring. The recognition component consists of the systematic use of assessment data gathered through universal screening and progress monitoring. Universal screening involves teachers periodically gathering assessment information on all children in their pre-k classroom to determine which children might benefit from targeted interventions to master certain skills. Progress monitoring is a systematic process used to further assess the progress of those children receiving targeted interventions. Teachers monitor children's progress by assessing their skills during the intervention

period to see how well they are responding to interventions over time. Teachers use the assessment results from both universal screening and progress monitoring to help them determine whether individual children require additional instructional supports at various points.

Response: Curriculum, Intentional teaching, and Targeted interventions. The response component refers to the core instruction offered to all children as well as the targeted interventions that are provided for some children who require additional help to learn. In R&R, classroom instruction and interventions are implemented through a tiered approach. They are organized hierarchically from least to most intensive to show how directive and involved teachers should be in their instruction for children who need various levels of support. Tier 1 involves providing a high-quality, effective core curriculum along with intentional teaching of key school readiness skills for all children in the classroom. Intentional teaching occurs through the purposeful organization of the classroom environment and the provision of planned, developmentally appropriate activities to help children learn key skills. At Tier 2, teachers make adjustments to their instruction for children who require additional supports on the basis of universal screening results. To enhance learning, teachers implement targeted interventions with small groups of children (generally three to six children) who have similar learning goals. The Tier 2 interventions involve small-group lessons that take place for approximately 15 minutes a day over a two-month period, complemented by embedded learning opportunities designed to complement and extend learning outside of small-group time. Tier 3 consists of more intensive scaffolding strategies such as response prompting, modeling, and peer supports to further promote children’s learning within the Tier 2 interventions.

Collaborative problem-solving to support data-based decision-making. Collaborative problem-solving offers a process by which teachers, parents, specialists, and others can work together to plan various levels of instructional supports and assess how well children respond to them. A core problem-solving team is established to interpret assessment results, develop an intervention plan, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional supports that teachers implement for children. The problem-solving team also determines the methods for documenting and sharing information with others, including parents, administrators, and other professionals.

Considerations for Implementation

Because R&R (and RTI approaches more broadly) represents a set of related practices (assessment, instructional, and problem-solving) in early childhood, a number of decisions must be made to support its implementation in pre-k classrooms. Key decisions such as selecting a universal screening and progress monitoring tool and identifying standardized tiered interventions are best made at the program level. Furthermore, to use R&R effectively, teachers generally will need administrative oversight to establish core problem-solving teams. In the meantime, programs can get started by determining which assessment approaches, instructional strategies, and methods for collaborating with families and professionals are already being used in pre-k classrooms and how these could be re-organized in accordance with the R&R framework. ■

— Virginia Buysse and Ellen Peisner-Feinberg,
Project Directors

For more information on R&R, see:
<http://randr.fpg.unc.edu>



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