

CHAPTER 1

Teacher-Level Strategies to Manage Behavior and Support Instruction

An Overview

The shift to a knowledge-based economy and the use of digital and electronic technologies has resulted in significant changes in education since the 1990s; in addition, schools have looked to new models that address much more than academic competence. Being an educator is an increasingly complex task, often conducted in less than optimal conditions (Lane, Oakes, & Menzies, 2014). Teachers' responsibilities have become broader in scope with a very high level of accountability (Ravitch, 2010; Richards, 2012), while at the same time school districts have experienced decreased financial support (Lambert & McCarthy, 2006).

Historically, educators were responsible for teaching core content areas, with very little attention to developing social skills, providing instruction in social and emotional learning, or taking an instructional approach to behavior. Furthermore, formative assessment and the concept of benchmarking student performance to inform instructional programs did not yet exist. The focus was predominately on input—the type of training teachers received or that districts provided—rather than student outcomes. Techniques for managing challenging behaviors were largely reactive and punitive in nature: waiting for students to have a problem and then responding with negative consequences (Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004). And not until the passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1974 (what we now know as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act [IDEA], 2004) were all students with disabilities assured of the right to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.

More than 40 years later, the breadth of instructional responsibilities has expanded dramatically. In fact, in a recent keynote address at the 2014 National

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) Leadership Forum: PBIS Building Capacity and Partnerships to Enhance Educational Reform, held in Rosemont, Illinois, Michael Yudin, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation of the U.S. Department of Education, issued a call for educators and educational systems to “pay as much attention to students’ social and behavioral needs as we do academics.” He indicated it is imperative for students to get the academic, behavioral, and social supports they need, as the students with greatest need are often missing the most instruction.

Fortunately, contemporary society has a better understanding of the importance of social and emotional development for academic skills, and schools are now addressing these issues. Educators teach social skills and character development programs that emphasize nonviolence, antibullying, and cooperation. They also work in conjunction with other professionals (e.g., behavior specialists, school psychologists, social workers, and counselors) to be responsive to students’ mental health needs. Another important area of change is the view that students with special needs are the responsibility of both the general and special education communities (Lane, Menzies, Ennis, & Bezdek, 2013). The role of collaboration between general and special education teachers has taken center stage, as the larger educational communities (including school personnel such as psychologists, social workers, reading specialists, instructional coaches, and behavior specialists) work together at a systems level to detect and support students at the first sign of concerns. Rather than taking a wait-to-fail stance, many schools use reliable, valid academic and behavior screening tools to determine which students may need support beyond what is typically offered to all students (Gresham & Elliott, 2008a).

Since the passage of IDEA (2004) and the No Child Left Behind Act (2002), an empirical approach to figuring out “What Works?” to meet students’ academic, behavioral, and social needs in a reliable, effective manner (Institute of Education Sciences and What Works Clearinghouse) drives educational practice. The focus on “evidence-based practices” has moved to the forefront of teaching as a guiding principle for determining whether or not a given practice, strategy, or program should be introduced or maintained (Cook & Tankersley, 2013; Gast & Ledford, 2014). Time is at a premium, and other resources (financial and otherwise) are too scarce to use strategies, practices, and programs that lack sufficient evidence. As such, it is important that we carefully consider how to leverage our current resources to make certain all students get what they need (Yudin, 2014). Schools and districts are also more attentive to issues regarding treatment integrity (Cook & Tankersley, 2013), meaning they implement evidence-based practices in the manner the research indicates will yield the desired changes in student performance.

This is especially true given the wide range of students who attend public schools today, many of whom experience a vast range of risk factors that contribute to behavioral challenges such as noncompliance, off-task behavior, and aggression (referred to as *externalizing behaviors*), as well as anxiety, depression, social

withdrawal, and even self-injurious behaviors (referred to as *internalizing behaviors*; Walker & Gresham, 2013). Although teachers are less likely to notice internalizing behaviors, as they usually do not interfere with instructional activities in the way externalizing behaviors do, internalizing issues are no less serious, as both types of disorders contribute to negative outcomes within and beyond the school setting (Bradshaw, Buckley, & Ialongo, 2008; Crick, Grotpeter, & Bigbee, 2002).

In the past, many educators often assumed students with these emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) would be supported by special education teachers. Yet the problem extends far beyond the 1% of school-age children and youth who receive special education services under the category of emotional disturbance. In fact, recent point prevalence estimates indicate that 12% of school-age students have moderate to severe and 20% have mild to severe EBD (Forness, Freeman, Paparella, Kauffman, & Walker, 2012). This finding suggests the vast majority of students with behavioral challenges will be served by the general education community in general education classrooms.

The good news is that many states, districts, and schools across the country are embracing a systems-level approach to serving *all* students, including those with special needs, English language learners, and other at-risk populations. A wonderful partnership is developing between the general and special education communities as they share ownership of all students' education. This is a great step forward, helping many teachers combat the isolation and stress educators have experienced historically. Teaching has traditionally been a job in which educators enjoyed very little time with their colleagues and were seen as the sole individuals responsible for student learning in a given school year (Brunsting, Sreckovic, & Lane, 2014; Drago-Severson & Pinto, 2006). The move toward systematic and collaborative responsibility for meeting students' academic, behavioral, and social needs holds benefit for students and teachers alike.

Working Collaboratively to Support Learning for All Students

Across the country, teaching and research communities are focused on developing multi-tiered systems of supports designed to offer students a continuum of assistance according to their individual needs. This model originated in the mental health field and was adapted for application in the field of education. When these models were initially introduced, you might recall seeing a graphic with a right triangle to describe the continuum of positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) available to meet students' behavioral needs and another right triangle (facing the opposite direction) that described the continuum of response to intervention (RTI) to address students' academic needs—particularly in the area of reading. Then, as time passed, you might have seen these two triangles appear on the same graphic but with a space in between the sets of continua. Although

perhaps unintended, the message that occurred during the early years of innovation suggested that students' academic, behavioral, and social needs should be addressed separately. Many schools developed multiple decision-making teams to support students, such as (1) grade-level teams committed to examining data from academic screenings to determine students' academic needs, (2) behavior-support teams that reviewed office discipline referral (ODR) data and behavior screening data to determine students' behavioral needs, and (3) still another team that considered students' social and emotional needs. The challenge here: ensuring that students who have more than one risk factor are supported in all areas of need and in an integrated fashion. This is especially important as these problems are inter-related. For example, challenging behavior is sometimes a result of low academic skills, so these issues should be addressed together. Some multi-tiered systems, such as RTI in reading, would have provided academic support but may not have had the capacity to identify the need for behavioral support.

In the last several years, the use of comprehensive, integrated, three-tiered (CI3T) models of prevention to meet students' academic, behavioral, and social needs is moving to the forefront of multi-tiered systems (Lane, Carter, Jenkins, Magill, & Germer, 2014; Sugai, 2013). George Sugai (2013) gave a compelling keynote address at the Northeast PBIS Network Leadership Forum in which he traced the history of PBIS. As he painted a picture of the future of PBIS, he emphasized the importance of integrating academic and behavioral domains at each level of prevention: Tier 1 (for all, primary prevention), Tier 2 (for some, secondary prevention), and Tier 3 (for a few, tertiary prevention).

Sugai (2013) offered a vision that a well-designed, integrated model would include (among other things) explicit instruction in social skills or character education, with the use of validated curricula, strategies, and practices selected by district leadership teams according to district- and site-level needs. Sugai described a model in which social skills would be explicitly taught as part of Tier 1 practices to level the playing field for all students—providing a common language and expectations, as well as specific skills for success. For example, all teachers would provide instruction on the skill of active listening, with some of the lessons cotaught by school counselors as part of regularly scheduled schoolwide lessons. During social skills time, this specific skill might be taught using a *tell, show, do* structure (Elliott & Gresham, 2007). Then, later in the day, one teacher might remind students about the skill as they move into a cooperative learning activity during social studies: “Before you start working in your learning groups, I want to remind you to use your active learning skills. Who can tell me what that might look like?” In essence, the skills are taught and revisited across the instructional day, demonstrating for students how they can be applied to support instructional activities.

Intentional teaching of self-determined behaviors, social skills, or conflict resolution skills in a blended model offers students multiple opportunities to practice and receive reinforcement for demonstrating these skills. As students acquire and build fluency in social and behavioral skill sets, they will become more successful in

negotiating relationships with their teachers, other adults, and peers in the school. This Tier 1 effort also supports positive learning experiences for students who require additional instruction to master these skills. By ensuring that all students have exposure to key skills such as listening to and following instructions, making their needs known in a respectful way, and resolving conflicts in a peaceful manner, students requiring additional instruction will have multiple peer models and multiple methods of accessing reinforcement as they continue to master these skills. In addition, they acquire skills that support positive interpersonal relationships in employment, in their daily lives, and in the community overall (Lane, Oakes, & Menzies, 2014; Sugai, 2013; Walker et al., 2004).

These models are grounded in data-informed decision making, relying on multiple sources of information (e.g., academic and behavior screening data, attendance data) made accessible and efficient using technology-based systems. Sugai (2013) discussed the importance of analyzing multiple sources of data in conjunction rather than in isolation, with careful attention to treatment integrity data at each level of prevention (Bruhn, Lane, & Hirsch, 2014). For example, to accurately connect students to relevant research-based strategies at Tiers 2 and 3, it is important to ensure that the students had access to the Tier 1 efforts. Moreover, if a student was in a class in which the Tier 1 reading intervention was not being implemented as planned (with integrity) or the weekly social skills were not being implemented as planned (with integrity) or the weekly social skills were not taught regularly or in which the PBIS tickets were not being distributed paired with behavior-specific praise (BSP; see Chapter 3), then it is not possible to conclude that the student requires Tier 2 or 3 supports (Coddling & Lane, 2014). Instead, the teacher needs support in fully implementing all Tier 1 components with integrity. However, if Tier 1 practices were in place, if attendance data indicated the student was at school regularly, and if systematic screening data suggested additional supports were needed, then supplemental assistance would need to be delivered in an effective, efficient manner (Lane, Oakes, & Menzies, 2014).

It is encouraging to us that there are many talented researchers, technical assistance providers, and district leaders, such as Steve Goodman, Kevin Harrell, Amy Henry, Rob Horner, Terry McEwen, Kent McIntosh, James Palmiero, Lisa Powers, George Sugai, and Leah Wisdom, all working on various approaches to designing, implementing, and evaluating integrated, multi-tiered system of supports. This integration of academic, behavioral, and social domains makes sense. In a recent special issue of *Preventing School Failure* (Lane, Oakes, & Menzies, 2014), we offered a series of articles describing a step-by-step approach for how to design, implement, and evaluate a blended, multi-tiered model that our research team refers to as a CI3T model of prevention. It explains the features deemed essential for success by Sugai (2013), including a systematic approach to designing CI3T models.

In this book, we extend the focus of multi-tiered models to include low-intensity, teacher-delivered supports that can be easily integrated into routine instructional practice—ideally as part of Tier 1 but also in instances in which screening data

suggest that students may not be responding to Tier 1 efforts but before connecting them to Tier 2 and 3 supports. The low-intensity strategies explained in detail in each chapter can be used in a CI3T model, as well as independently. In fact, teachers will pick and choose among the strategies depending on the needs of their particular students and the school context. However, a multi-tiered approach is exponentially more powerful and, with that in mind, the next part of the chapter provides a description of the CI3T model. This background information will help demonstrate how the strategies can be used as Tier 2 supports. In addition to explaining how each strategy is used, the chapters provide illustrations of how they can be integrated into a multi-tiered approach. This chapter concludes with a brief introduction to each of the strategies.

A Systems-Based Approach: CI3T Models of Prevention

As we have discussed, CI3T models of prevention include a data-informed continuum of supports developed to meet students' academic, behavioral, and social needs (see Figure 1.1). In essence, the model addresses these three domains (or building blocks) to create a structure for supporting all students in inclusive

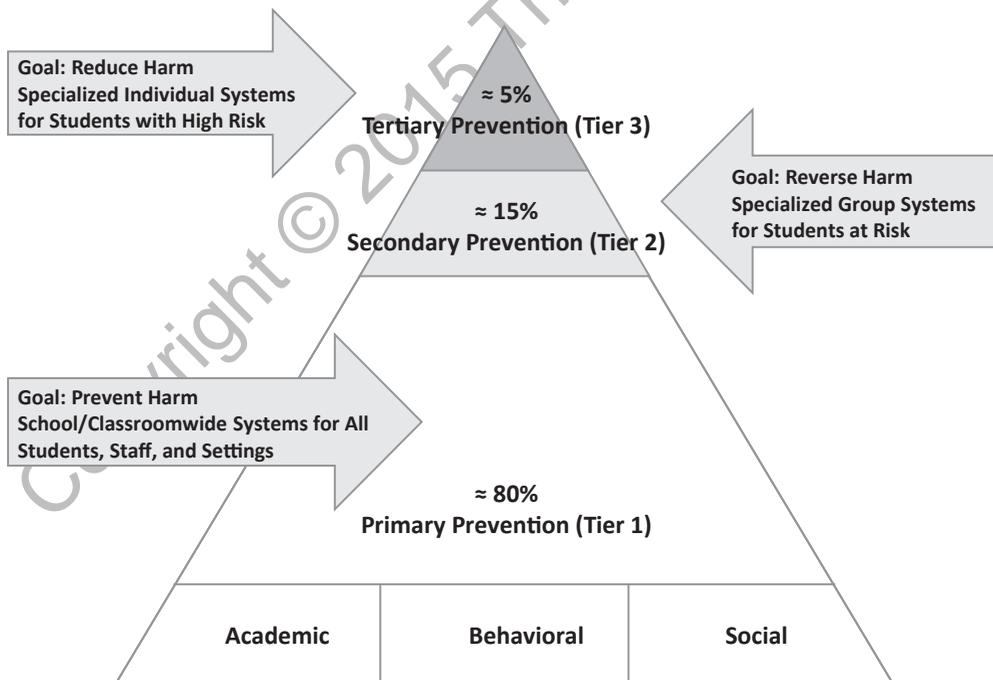


FIGURE 1.1. The comprehensive, integrated, three-tiered (CI3T) model of prevention (Lane, Kalberg, & Menzies, 2009). From Lane, Oakes, and Menzies (2014). Reprinted by permission of Taylor & Francis (www.tandfonline.com).

environments by capitalizing on the talent and expertise of school personnel who collaborate together and in conjunction with parents and community members (Lane, Kalberg, & Menzies, 2009).

In a CI3T model, school-site leadership teams examine multiple sources of data to inform the decision-making process, including data from attendance records (absenteeism and tardiness), ODRs, academic screening tools (e.g., AIMS-web; www.aimsweb.com), and behavior screening tools (e.g., the Student Risk Screening Scale [SRSS]; Drummond, 1994). Student performance measures are analyzed in conjunction with treatment integrity data (to determine how well the plan is being implemented) and social validity data (to determine stakeholders' views about the goals, procedures, and outcomes). During the analysis process, school-site teams focus on accurately examining (1) the overall level of risk evident in a school (often used as part of school improvement plans), (2) the extent to which Tier 1 efforts were able to meet students' needs, (3) which students may require more intensive supports, (4) the appropriate Tier 2 and 3 supports that may hold benefit for each student, and (5) circumstances in which low-intensity supports implemented by teachers for an entire class may be warranted (Lane & Walker, in press).

CI3T models include regularly scheduled planning time for school-site leadership teams, grade-level teams, and department-level teams to examine these data, assess implementation, solicit stakeholders' opinions, and review student performance (academically, behaviorally, and socially).

Tier 1: Primary Prevention

All students access Tier 1 efforts just by virtue of attending school (Lane, Robertson, & Graham-Bailey, 2006). Tier 1 includes: (1) academic instruction as defined by local or state standards and, for some states, addressing Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010); (2) social skills instruction using a validated curriculum to address the school's (or district's) focal area (e.g., developing character, teaching social skills, preventing bullying); and (3) participation in a school-wide PBIS framework to teach expectations for success in all key settings (Lane, Menzies, et al., 2013).

In the academic domain, the CI3T team defines the roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, and administrators) to increase the likelihood that the core curricula are implemented with integrity. This is critical, as part of closing existing achievement gaps among students is closing the gap in access; some students do not succeed because the school is unable to provide an adequate learning environment. To illustrate, teachers have the responsibility of teaching the core reading and math programs with integrity, including allocating the appropriate time or dosage (e.g., 4 days a week, 90-minute session). In addition, they might be asked to incorporate starting and closing activities for

each instructional segment and to differentiate instruction (process, content, and products; Tomlinson, 2005) to support student engagement. Teachers might also be asked to communicate daily with parents using a Web-based system to post work requirements and provide information on grades. Students may be asked to bring required materials, arrive on time and stay all day, and give their best effort. Parents may be asked to support students in being present for the full school day, to provide a space at home to facilitate homework completion, and to check the Web-based communication system.

In the social domain, the school-site team selects an evidence-based social skills curriculum to address the school's or district's identified area for growth. For example, if analysis of ODR data indicate students need social skills to improve interactions with teachers and peers, the team may select to implement the Social Skills Improvement System—Classwide Intervention Program (Elliott & Gresham, 2007), which involves directly teaching all students 10 critical social skills (often referred to as academic enabler social skills; Kettler, Elliott, Davies, & Griffin, 2009). To support implementation, the team would again define roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders to assist with efforts in this domain.

The behavioral domain involves establishing a PBIS framework (which is not a curriculum). Faculty and staff determine schoolwide expectations (e.g., respect, responsibility, and best effort) for all students in each key setting in the building (e.g., classrooms, hallways, and cafeteria). Teachers (often in collaboration with school counselors) provide instruction to all students, giving them opportunities to practice and to receive reinforcement for meeting defined expectations.

Treatment integrity data for each component are monitored to make certain the plan is implemented as designed. Social validity data are also monitored to obtain stakeholder perspectives on the goals, procedures, and outcomes. Student progress is examined using the data sources to determine whether additional assistance may be required (Lane, Oakes, Menzies, & Harris, 2013).

Tier 2: Secondary Prevention

Secondary supports include low-intensity strategies, some of which include small-group interventions. This level of prevention includes a range of research-based strategies, practices, and programs, such as the Check-In/Check-Out program (Crone, Hawken, & Horner, 2010), self-management strategies (Mooney, Ryan, Uhing, Reid, & Epstein, 2005), and small-group instruction focusing on common areas of concern (e.g., conflict resolution groups). Again, the goal is to address students' academic, social, and behavioral needs in an integrated fashion, with an expectation that 10–15% of the student body will need this level of prevention. Tier 2 supports are additive in nature, meaning they are used to supplement (not replace) Tier 1 efforts.

For example, if a fourth-grade student scores below benchmark on AIMSweb (www.aimsweb.com) winter reading assessments while also being rated as

moderate risk on the Student Risk Screening Scale, this student may join a Tier 2 reading intervention to increase fluency (e.g., Six-Minute Solution; Adams & Brown, 2007). This group may be led by a reading specialist in a general education classroom during the school's intervention block, offering an additional 30 minutes of instruction to supplement Tier 1 efforts (a recommended 90-minute instructional block). To increase the likelihood of the student participating in the support, she may also have a self-monitoring checklist with the reinforcement system tied back to the schoolwide plan (e.g., a PBIS ticket).

Tier 3: Tertiary Prevention

Tertiary supports are even more intensive, reserved for the 3–5% of students needing more than Tier 2 support or those with multiple risk factors. Examples include functional assessment-based interventions (Kern & Manz, 2004; Lane, Oakes, & Cox, 2011), wraparound services (Eber et al., 2009), and intensive reading supports (Denton, Fletcher, Anthony, & Francis, 2006).

For example, a seventh-grade student scoring in the extremely-elevated-risk category on the BASC-2 Behavioral and Emotional Screening Scales (BASC-2 BESS; Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2008) who also fails two courses during the first quarter may be supported with a functional assessment-based intervention to increase participation in class and reduce disruption.

In brief, each school offers a comprehensive, integrated, coordinated system of support. These models hold several benefits, two of which are transparency and access.

Benefits of CI3T Models: Transparency and Access

In an effort to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the continuum of supports and how to access them, we recommend that school-site leadership teams create a blueprint of the full CI3T model. Particular attention should be given to describing the available secondary and tertiary supports. We suggest including all of the following: a description of the support, schoolwide data (and the specific scores) that could be analyzed to determine which students might benefit from this support (also referred to as inclusion criteria), progress monitoring data (which includes student performance data, as well as treatment integrity and social validity data) to see how the students are responding, and exit criteria that indicate when the support should be faded. These are referred to as secondary and tertiary intervention grids.

By developing these grids, teachers, support staff, parents, and students can be fully aware of all existing supports for students—both enrichment and remediation. Having a detailed written plan facilitates transparency and clarity. In essence, these grids take the guesswork out of determining supports available for those students for whom primary prevention efforts are insufficient.

In addition, CI3T models of prevention offer other benefits. For example, they provide a coordinated approach for addressing students' multiple needs, address instructional barriers of time and collaboration, offer increased opportunity for equal access to supports, and provide an equitable method and formal structure for the legal mandate of "search and serve" processes.

A Focus on Teacher-Level Strategies

Before connecting students to Tier 2 and 3 supports, we advocate an intermediate step: a look at what can be done at the teacher level to introduce low-intensity, easy-to-implement, highly effective strategies to support desired behaviors and facilitate the instructional process. Intensive assistance in the form of Tier 2 and 3 supports should primarily be used when less intensive efforts are unsuccessful. Usually, these low-intensity strategies are conceptualized as Tier 1. However, teachers can examine their classroom management and instructional techniques as an additional consideration when considering students' performance. Teachers' actions profoundly influence their students, and sometimes alterations in classroom practice can dramatically change student behavioral and academic performance. In addition to revisiting classroom procedures and basic instructional practices, teachers can adopt low-intensity strategies. Examples of these include increasing the rates of BSP (Thompson, Marchant, Anderson, Prater, & Gibb, 2012), introducing instructional choice (Kern & State, 2009), and increasing students' opportunities to respond (Partin, Robertson, Maggin, Oliver, & Wehby, 2010; see also Chapter 2, this volume). Each strategy can be incorporated into instructional time to decrease disruption, increase students' level of engagement, and ultimately increase *all* students' access to the curriculum.

To be very clear, we are not suggesting behavior screening data be used to evaluate teachers. Instead, we recommend behavior screening data be expanded in use to inform teacher-driven supports and to help focus professional development to support teachers in becoming knowledgeable and confident in using these strategies as part of their instructional repertoire (Lane, Oakes, & Magill, 2014).

Purpose

As you may have gathered, this book is designed for the busy teacher, paraprofessional, behavior specialist, school psychologist, social worker, mental health provider, administrator, technical assistance provider, and/or teacher preparation professor who may already have knowledge of specific behavioral strategies but needs a quick and easy guide for implementing them. It is also appropriate for those who are new to positive behavior supports.

As we have worked with schools and districts across the country over the past 15 years to design, implement, and evaluate CI3T models of prevention, a number of professionals have asked for a book that provides detailed (but user friendly!) instructions on how to implement specific strategies for managing behavior. We respectfully offer this book to address this charge.

In Chapters 2 through 8 we introduce specific teacher-level strategies as follows: opportunities to respond (OTR; Chapter 2), behavior-specific praise (BSP; Chapter 3), active supervision (Chapter 4), instructional feedback (Chapter 5), high-probability requests (Chapter 6), precorrection (Chapter 7), and instructional choice (Chapter 8). Each chapter follows the same easy-to-use format. We begin with an overview of the strategy, define it, and then explain why it is effective.

Then we offer a look at some of the supporting research for the strategy. We feature a few key studies and provide enough detail about them so you can see what the strategy looks like in various settings and with different types of students (e.g., students receiving special education services). For the interested reader, we also include a table (Table 1, “Supporting Research”) of representative studies for other applications of the strategy. These are not exhaustive reviews of the literature, but they provide a sample of the research conducted to date for each strategy introduced.

Next, we provide a brief discussion of the benefits and potential challenges of implementing the strategy discussed. This information is intended to inform the decision-making process when choosing which low-intensity support to employ in the classroom.

Then we focus on the details of how to implement the strategy in the classroom, providing a checklist for success. In this section, we provide a step-by-step approach for implementing the strategy featured in each chapter. To help guide the reader, there is a table containing an implementation checklist (Table 2), as well as a hypothetical illustration of how these steps can be used in a CI3T model (Box 1). These illustrations span the preschool through high school continuum. For example, in Chapter 8 you will read an illustration of instructional choice at the elementary level, and in Chapter 4 you will read an illustration of active supervision at the middle school level. In each illustration, you will see a graph of student performance across the intervention process (Figure 1), a sample treatment integrity form (Figure 2) to determine the degree to which the intervention is being implemented as planned, and an example of a social validity form (Figure 3) to see what people think about the goals, procedures, and outcomes.

Because it is critical to determine how well a strategy is working, we include a section on how to examine the effects. This section is written to help answer the question, How well is it working? This section offers practical design considerations to show how to assess the strategy in a classroom (and explains why this is important!), how to make sure the strategy is in place (how to measure treatment integrity), and how to determine what stakeholders think about the strategy before

getting started and after the strategy is under way (how to measure social validity). We wrap up each chapter with a brief summary.

In the final chapter of the book we offer tips for success. Here we focus on understanding how the seven strategies noted in this text can be used within and beyond the context of multi-tiered models. We included a table summarizing the teacher-driven, PBIS strategies discussed in this book, as well as some considerations for professional learning to help you move forward. Because these strategies are grounded in applied behavior analysis (ABA) principles, we offer a very brief primer on ABA principles (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1968; Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007). In particular, we focus on issues of reinforcement central to supporting desired behaviors that facilitate the instructional process. Here you will read about the differences between positive and negative reinforcement and the differences between reinforcement versus punishment. In addition, we discuss how using PBIS can lead to an improved school climate. We close by introducing additional resources for you to explore as you look for efficient, effective methods for meeting students' multiple needs in an integrated fashion.

As always, we admire and respect your commitment to assisting students in meeting their academic, behavioral, and social needs in an integrated way. We hope you will find these strategies to be effective and feasible, with sufficient detail provided to assist you in introducing these strategies at your school or district in the days ahead. For now, grab a nonfat decaf pumpkin-spice latte and read on! (And feel free to treat yourself to the whipped cream!) We look forward to receiving your feedback and wish you every success as you move ahead!