



MTSS-Behavior: Selecting Programs to Provide Tier 2/Strategic Support

Schools implementing MTSS for behavior will want to establish several intervention options at Tier 2 for those students whose emerging behavioral for social/emotional concerns negatively important aspect(s) of their school experience. Students targeted for MTSS Tier 2 interventions show current evidence of problem behaviors and/or negative social/emotional symptoms that impact school success but have manageable mental-health needs that can still be appropriately addressed through efficient 'standard-treatment' approaches such as social-skills training or mentoring. The goal of Tier 2 services is to address students' emotional difficulties to permit them eventually to drop back to Tier 1/school-wide supports— rather than escalating to require Tier 3 resource-intensive, individual treatment plans (Mitchell et al., 2011).

A building-wide system of Tier 2 social-emotional/behavioral assistance offers intervention options that students can access quickly (e.g., within 1-2 weeks of referral), use data periodically to determine which students should enter or exit Tier 2 services, and are able to accommodate up to 10-15 percent of the school population in Tier 2 programming at any one time (Mitchell et al., 2011).

Schools used a variety of sources to identify students who qualify for Tier 2 services, including Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs), attendance, grades, teacher/administrator referrals, and brief norm-referenced behavior-rating questionnaires (Mitchell et al, 2011; Rodriguez et al, 2016).

Below are descriptions of 5 types of support most frequently defined by schools as Tier 2 MTSS-behavioral services. For each of the program options listed, it is expected that students will be taught behavioral expectations and given opportunities to practice desired behaviors with adult performance feedback. Furthermore, parents should receive regular communications about their child's Tier 2 progress (Rodriguez et al, 2016).

Behavior Education Program/Check In-Check Out

Description. The Behavior Education Program/Check In-Check Out (CICO) connects at-risk students to assigned educators. CICO includes individualized student contact, behavior training, data collection, and parent communication (Mitchell et al, 2011). The student starts and ends each day by briefly checking in with their CICO educator contact. During the day, teachers working with the student complete a progress report rating that student's classroom behaviors. A goal of CICO is consistently to teach and reinforce positive student behaviors.

Considerations. When selecting educators to serve as CICO contacts, schools should strive to recruit adults who project warmth and caring.

Resource. *Responding to Problem Behaviors in Schools: The Behavior Education Program* is an excellent manual written by the BEP/CICO program creators and available through booksellers (ISBN-13: 978-1606236000).

Mentoring

Description. School-based mentoring programs match educators or other adult volunteers with at-risk children or youth. Through the mentoring relationship, the mentor can help the student to avoid risky activities or behaviors and to increase school engagement. In a typical mentoring relationship, the mentor and student meet for about an hour per week, during or after school (Bernstein et al., 2009).

Considerations. A mentoring program is most likely to be successful when the school (1) designs it to meet the needs of a specific student risk profile (e.g., academic disengagement), (2) trains mentors in techniques to build effective relationships with their mentees, (3) makes available a welcoming space and activity materials (e.g.,



board games) for mentoring sessions, and (4) provides close supervision of the mentoring program and regularly evaluates program effectiveness (Smith & Stormont, 2011).

Resource. The National Mentoring Resource Center: <https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php>. This website, sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), contains links to resources for setting up peer and adult mentoring programs.

Solution-Focused Brief Counseling

Description. Solution-Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC) is a brief-counseling format that school mental-health professionals can use with students whose social/emotional needs are mild-to-moderate but interfere with school or social functioning (Jones et al, 2009). The counselor helps the student to identify a key goal that will be the focus of counseling (e.g., to reduce anxiety during academic activities; to improve peer relationships). Counselor and student formulate a plan to achieve the goal and schedule a fixed number of sessions (e.g. 4-6) to accomplish that goal. Throughout the sessions, the counselor encourages the student to tap into their own past experience to find solutions to attain their counseling goal.

NOTE: Although 1:1 counseling is usually seen as an intensive form of intervention delivery, SFBC can be considered a Tier 2 intervention because it addresses emerging social-emotional concerns, is of short duration, and follows a consistent 'standard protocol'.

Considerations. SFBC requires that the student have the cognitive and language ability to reflect, select goals, and self-monitor progress toward those goals. Therefore, it is generally best-suited for students in grades 3 and higher (Jones et al, 2009).

Resource. An article (Jones et al., 2009) that provides a helpful introduction to SFBC can be found at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ878370.pdf>

Social Skills Training

Description. Social skills training programs target those competencies necessary for social interactions such as communication, peer relations, and problem-solving (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Typically, social skills are taught in small-group format. Depending on the program, the adult instructor may be a teacher or a counselor, social worker, or school psychologist.

Considerations. Social-skills programs are most frequently used in elementary-school settings and—to a lesser extent—in middle schools. They are little-used in high schools. A challenge cited for social-skills programs as a Tier 2 support is that students' often fail to generalize social-skills gains to the classroom setting and to maintain them over time (Rodriguez et al., 2016).

Resource. NASP Social Skills Page: http://www.naspcenter.org/factsheets/socialskills_fs.html. The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) provides a useful overview of social-skills training in schools.

Behavior Contracts

Description. A behavior contract is developed with the participation of student and educator (e.g., teacher; mental-health professional; administrator) (Rodriguez et al., 2016). It outlines goal behaviors the student will work toward, reinforcers that can be earned for attaining behavior goals, and [optionally] consequences for display of problem behaviors (Downing, 1990).

Considerations. Behavior contracts are most likely to be successful when the student has received explicit instruction in the goal or expected behaviors, that student has a voice in the construction of the contract, and the behavior contract is weighted more toward positive than negative consequences.



Resources. Below are descriptions for preparing and using behavior contracts from two national educational organizations:

- National Education Association: Behavior Contracts: How to Write Them
<http://www.nea.org/tools/behavior-contracts-how-to-write-them.htm>
- National Center on Intensive Intervention: Behavior Contracts:
https://intensiveintervention.org/sites/default/files/Behavior_Contracts_508.pdf

References

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- Downing, J. A. (1990). Contingency contracts: A step-by-step format. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 26*(2), 111-113.
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- Mitchell, B. S., Stormont, M., & Gage, N. A. (2011). Tier two interventions implemented within the context of a tiered intervention framework. *Behavioral Disorders, 36* (4), 241-261.
- Rodriguez, B. J., Loman, S. L., & Borgmeier, C. (2016). Tier 2 interventions in positive behavior support: A survey of school implementation. *Preventing School Failure, 60*(2), 94-105.
- Smith, C. A., & Stormont, M. A. (2011). Building an effective school-based mentoring program. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 47*(1), 14-21.
- U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, What Works Clearinghouse. (2013, February). *Early childhood education interventions for children with disabilities intervention report: Social skills training*. Retrieved from <http://whatworks.ed.gov>.

Worksheet: MTSS-B Tier 2 Intervention Resources

School/District: _____ Date: _____

Person(s) Completing Survey: _____

Directions: Use the form below to survey resources in your school or district that can be used to support behavioral/social-emotional interventions at Tier 2.

1. Personnel Resources

Personnel/Flexible Time. List the names of any personnel available in your school/district with flexibility in their schedule to allow them—with appropriate training—to support MTSS-B in various ways (e.g., serving as mentors; participating in Check In/Check Out, assisting in a customized intervention plan, etc.) Check the 'Availability/Access?' box next to any name if you are unsure of how to access the person for MTSS support. After completing the survey, follow up to answer any availability or access questions.

Availability/ Access?	Name	Position
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____

Personnel/Expert Knowledge. List the names of those personnel in your school/district with formal training or experience in behavioral or social-emotional interventions, behavioral consultation, or related MTSS topics who can serve as counselors, consultants, coaches, or trainers to other staff. Check the 'Availability/Access?' box next to any name for which you are unsure of the *availability* of that person or of how to *access* the person for MTSS support. After completing the survey, follow up to answer your availability or access questions.

Availability/ Access?	Name	Position	Area(s) of Expertise
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	_____	_____

2. Intervention Programs/Services

Existing Tier 2 Programs/Services. List all programs or services that your school or district currently has in place to address Tier 2 behavioral or social/emotional needs. If you are unsure whether a particular program or service qualifies as research-based, list it and follow up to verify that it is supported by research. TIP: Be sure to list counseling services offered by any staff in your school/district on this inventory.

Tier 2 Intervention Program or Service	Grade Level(s) Served	Area(s) of Behavior or Social-Emotional Functioning Addressed	Person(s) Delivering This Intervention Program

3. Data Sources

Data to Recruit for Tier 2 MTSS-B Services. Review the listing of data sources below (archival sources and staff/parent referral) to identify students qualifying for Tier 2 programming. Check off those that your school plans to adopt. For each selected source, discuss (and record) details about contact person, team that will review the data, etc.

Archival Data Source:	Contact Person. Who would be responsible for compiling this data source?	Frequency. How frequently would this data be compiled and reviewed?	Team. Who would review this Tier 2 behavioral data to determine eligibility and placement in Tier 2 services?
<input type="checkbox"/> Grades			
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance			
<input type="checkbox"/> Office Disciplinary Referrals (ODRs)			

Staff/Parent Referral Source	Contact Person. Who would be the contact person for this referral?	Team. Who would review this Tier 2 referral to determine eligibility and placement in Tier 2 services?
<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher		
<input type="checkbox"/> Support Staff (e.g., Counselor)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrator		
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent		