

# The Wisconsin Model for Response to Intervention



## Applications in Early Childhood Settings

Third Edition, 2017



Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
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The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) endorses and promotes evidence-based and developmentally appropriate curriculum and assessment practices as the foundation for Response to Intervention (RtI) implementation in early childhood settings. While RtI began as a model for K-12 education, DPI believes that the concepts of RtI can also be aligned with four-year-old kindergarten (4K) and our early childhood partners in health, mental health, home visiting, child care, Head Start, and early childhood special education. The Wisconsin RtI framework provides a conceptual model to support and monitor child development and learning across all domains as described in the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, including social-emotional development, language-literacy, and mathematics. When determining screening and ongoing assessment tools and procedures, programs are encouraged to reference current established guidelines for early childhood assessment practices.

DPI acknowledges the unique circumstances to be considered when applying the Wisconsin RtI framework to early childhood:

- 1) To achieve desired outcomes, the nature of young children's development and learning often dictates different approaches to assessment and teaching than those for older students.
- 2) Because areas of child development are highly interrelated and interdependent, curriculum must address all developmental domains and content areas.
- 3) Variability in the quality of learning opportunities and nurturing relationships children have access to contributes to a significantly diverse population of early learners with a wide range of needs.

DPI advises programs to deliver content-rich curriculum with challenging but achievable goals in ways that honor and respect the unique learning needs of young children. Using a play-based curriculum to support a child's learning is important for developing self-regulation, as well as promoting language, cognition, and social competence. To this end, DPI offers these documents that compare RtI implementation in early childhood and K-12 as guidance for the development of effective and appropriate services for the young children of Wisconsin and their families.

*Note to reader: The timelines for this edition and the release of the 'Wisconsin Framework for Equitable Multi-Level Systems of Support' by the RtI Center didn't allow for tighter alignment within this publication. Greater collaboration and alignment of our efforts between DPI and the RtI Center is an ongoing goal for future work.*



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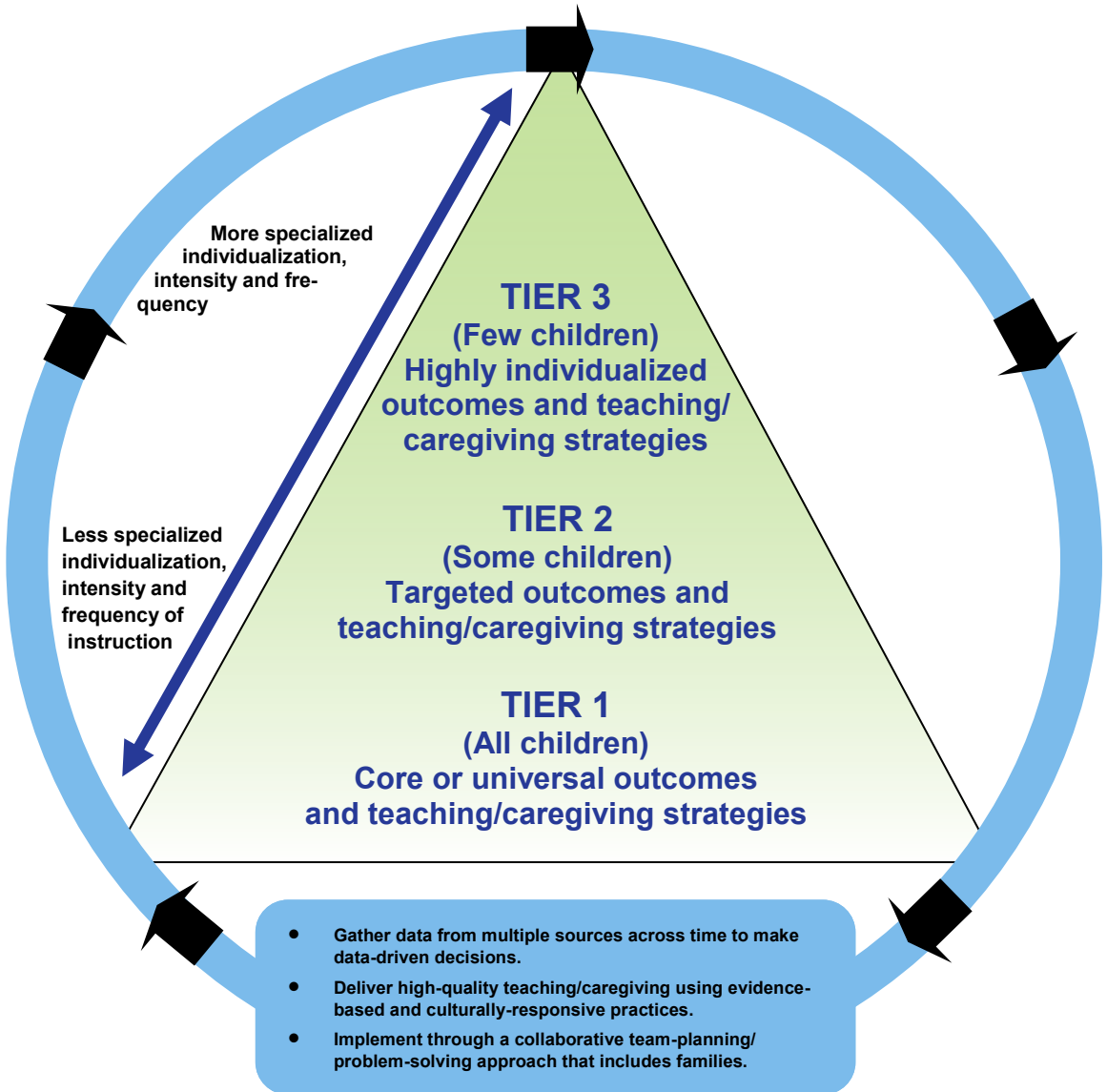
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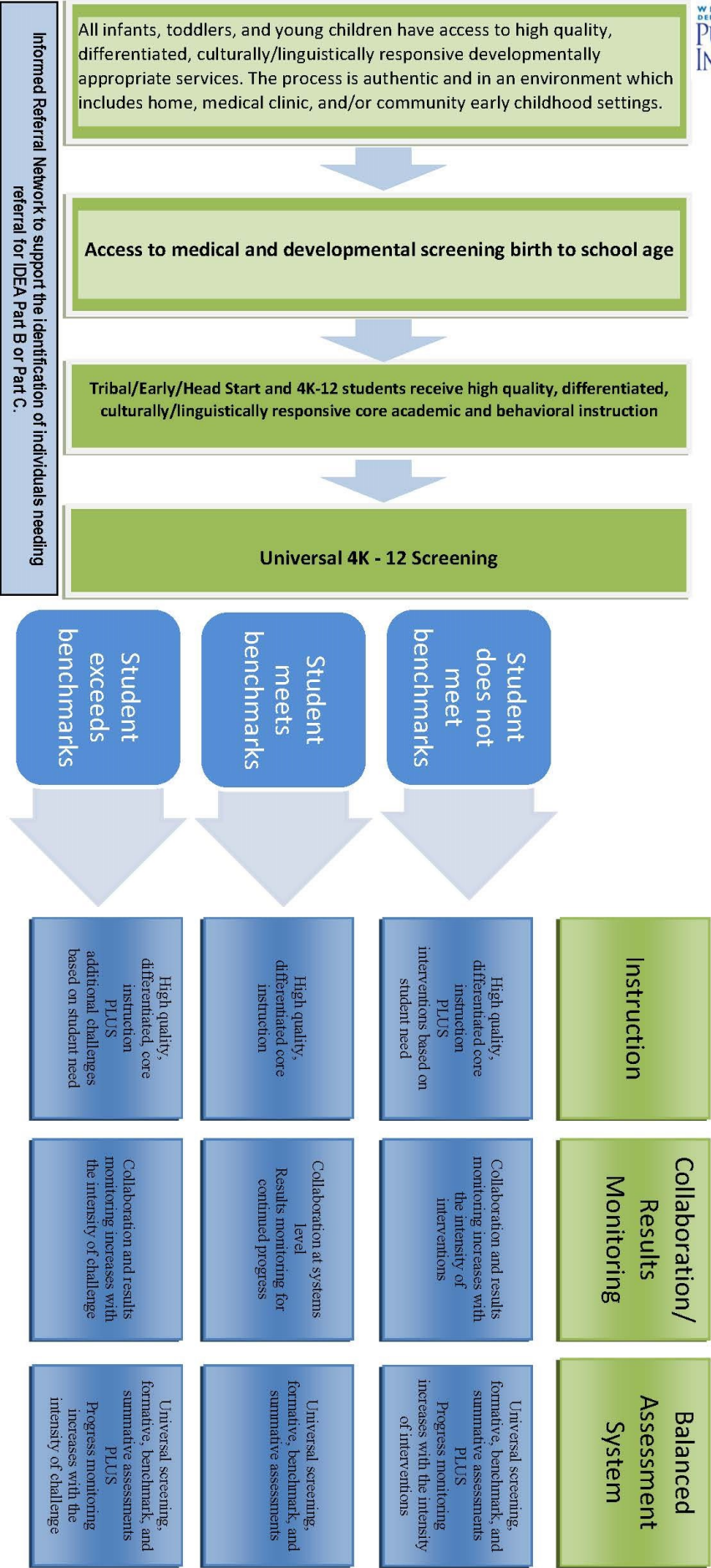
# Early Childhood RtI Framework



*Reprinted with modifications from "Frameworks for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood: Description and Implications" with permission from the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and National Head Start Association (NHSA).*



# Wisconsin Response to Intervention Roadmap: A Model for Academic and Behavioral Success for All Children and Students Using Culturally Responsive Practices: Overview Early Childhood Alignment



# Wisconsin RtI

## ***RtI applications in early childhood settings: guidance for implementation***

Response to Intervention (RtI) is a process for achieving higher levels of academic and behavioral success for all students. The underlying philosophy and model that guides the development of an RtI framework in Wisconsin schools are compatible with current knowledge and trends in early childhood education. A belief in evidence-based teaching, balanced assessment, and collaboration interact within a multi-level system of support is central to both. Early childhood RtI practices, however, sometime differ from those intended for older students due to the nature of early learning, child development, and the variety of settings that serve young children. For more information on these issues, refer to:

<http://www.collaboratingpartners.com> and Response to Intervention and Early Childhood at: [www.wisconsinrticenter.org](http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org).

The research base to guide implementation of RtI models in early childhood settings, defined here as environments serving children from birth to five-year-old kindergarten, is relatively new and emerging. There is, however, substantial research that supports the value of the model in early childhood settings (Fox et.al, 2009). Early evidence, however, provides some guidance for designing an effective RtI framework.

## ***Use early learning standards to guide curriculum and assessment decisions***

Early learning standards are statements that describe expectations for young children across all developmental domains and content areas such as emergent literacy and mathematics. They address foundational skills needed for later behavioral and academic success, and promote collaboration and continuity of expectations across early childhood settings.

The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) provide developmental expectations for young children from birth to first grade that are foundational to the Wisconsin Academic Standards for kindergarten through grade 12. DPI encourages school districts to use both the WMELS and the Wisconsin Academic Standards in early childhood special education, four-year-old kindergarten, five-year-old kindergarten programs, and the primary school years (DPI, 2010).

## ***Begin with a comprehensive, evidence-based core curriculum for all children***

Because all areas of child development are highly interrelated, core or universal curriculum should include support for all developmental domains and content areas as described in the WMELS. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) suggests “[curriculum] provides the framework for developing a coherent set of learning experiences that enables children to reach identified



The key to quality curriculum for young children is in the “how,” or the manner in which learning experiences are planned and implemented.





goals” (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009, p. 42). The key to quality curriculum for young children is in the “how,” or the manner in which learning experiences are planned and implemented (Gronlund, 2006). Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) continues to promote practices that are “appropriate to the **children’s age and developmental status, attuned to them as unique individuals, and responsive to the social and cultural contexts in which they live**” (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009, p. xii). DAP calls for *differentiated instruction* by setting challenging but achievable goals for each child and using a variety of evidence-based strategies to help each child achieve those goals. Preschool curriculum delivered by *intentional teaching* includes not only the “how” and the “what” but also the arrangement of the learning environment, provision of predictable routines and schedules, positive child and teacher interactions, and assessment of learning (Epstein, 2007, 2014).

“Research clearly demonstrates that children learn more in programs where there is a well-planned and implemented curriculum. Thus, it is essential for every early childhood setting — be it a school, a center, or a family child care home — to have a high-quality curriculum in written form and for teachers and care providers to use to guide their planning and implementation of learning experiences.” (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009, p. 41-42)

## ***A comprehensive and aligned system of screening and assessment is important for improving child outcomes***

Screening and assessment processes should be considered the cornerstone of informed decision making in early childhood (DPI, WI Blueprint, 2016). Universal screening should be conducted with all children for Child Find (the public school requirement to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities under IDEA) and as formative assessment to guide decisions about “next steps” to address individual children’s needs and to begin curriculum planning for a group of children. Use of multiple measures — observation, family input, work samples — and valid and reliable screening tools that are easy to administer, score, and interpret is best practice. *Authentic assessment* is collecting data on children’s development and learning while they are engaged in familiar routines and activities in familiar settings with familiar adults over time. Authentic assessment is recommended as an on-going assessment practice because “developmental changes [in young children] may be episodic, erratic, and rapid ... preschoolers’ ability to demonstrate their skills at any particular point in time can vary, rendering the results of any single assessment unreliable” (Ackerman and Coley, 2012, p.6). Periodically, on-going child data can be anchored to assessment tools for the purposes of monitoring progress and guiding instruction; this data is also foundational to establishing developmentally appropriate local benchmarks. When children are engaged in targeted or individualized levels of support, data collection should increase to monitor the effectiveness of these interventions.

The Early Childhood Balanced System of Screening and Assessment chart found at: <http://www.collaboratingpartners.com> provides a visual of a comprehensive, best practice screening and assessment system that can be implemented across early childhood settings. The chart describes the purpose, or what data collected will be used for, as well as the types of data to be collected—formative, benchmark, and summative.

The examples of “tools and types” are not intended to be all-inclusive nor are they to be considered as endorsements; their purpose is simply to provide examples of a few widely used/recognized processes or tools in early childhood settings. This chart is aligned with the Critical Time Periods Visual Chart on page 11 of this booklet.





## ***Science has established a link between social-emotional development and school success***

Young children's social and emotional competence is a strong predictor of academic performance in early elementary school (Zero to Three, 2003). The ability to identify and regulate emotions, focus attention, play cooperatively, follow directions, persist at tasks, problem-solve, and have positive feelings about oneself and others are some of the skills needed for learning success. Aligned with the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) model, training on evidence-based practices for supporting social-emotional development and addressing challenging behavior in young children is provided through Wisconsin's Pyramid Model <http://www.collaboratingpartners.com>, based on the research through the Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI). The Wisconsin Pyramid Model is an RtI model; it is a multi-level system of support, offering guidance for all children at the universal level with more intensive supports for children needing targeted and individualized interventions.

## ***A multi-level system of support requires a variety of instructional approaches based on individual learner needs***

When designing an RtI framework, primary focus should be put on establishing a comprehensive core curriculum. Evidence suggests that implementation of a high-quality, core curriculum increases student learning and reduces the number of children who need more intense levels of intervention (Greenwood et al., 2011). Within the core curriculum, both large and small group instructional opportunities should be a regular practice. Flexible, small group instruction can be intentionally planned, or can occur spontaneously when a teacher observes children engaged in an activity and purposefully joins them to scaffold their learning (i.e., a small group of children building in the block area; the teacher joins by asking questions or offering suggestions that involves spatial concepts identified in the curriculum).



The ability to identify and regulate emotions, focus attention, play cooperatively, follow directions, persist at tasks, problem-solve, and have positive feelings about oneself and others are some of the skills needed for learning success.

To meet expectations, some children will need support beyond the differentiated instruction and flexible small groups provided in the core curriculum. Using a collaborative team problem-solving process, teachers are encouraged to provide strategies and materials in a multi-level system of support that are research-based *and* developmentally appropriate. For example, targeted small group instruction based on student data can occur at any time, especially during 'choice' or 'center' time. Set up a playful, small-group, learning opportunity as another choice; invite targeted children to be the first group. Keep instructional time short, so children have ample opportunity to choose to engage in other 'centers.' Later, re-group and allow other students to join, forming mixed instructional groups with peer models to reinforce targeted learning goals.

Another strategy, Embedded Learning Opportunities (ELOs), provides multiple opportunities to practice important skills in meaningful contexts. ELOs are intentionally planned and 'embedded'



into a child's daily routines and transitions to target specific learning goals. ELOs, coupled with short, but frequent small group and/or individualized instruction, is a developmentally appropriate approach that yields promising results within a tiered framework (Greenwood et al., 2011).

## ***EC RtI practices need to be intentionally aligned with K-12***

Numerous research studies have shown that children's achievement levels from age three-to-eight are important predictors of later success (NAESP, 2014; p. 11). Yet one education experience is not a silver bullet solution to future learning in WI's Public Schools. Research shows that child development is a continuous process and gains made in early childhood can be sustained when intentionally aligned to K-third grade years.

Developed in partnership with the WI RtI Center, WI promotes a 4K-5K alignment to help promote a seamless education that will sustain the gains made in preschool and lead to better outcomes later in school. Providing a continuous and well-aligned set of early learning experiences is imperative for improving student achievement and social-emotional success. In addition, consistent access to high-quality classrooms and schools in the early years provides opportunities for all children to build upon their strong foundational skills. A visual of the process to address "Fade-Out" from quality 4K when transitioning to 5K to improve outcomes for all young children in WI can be found at [www.collaboratingpartners.com](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com).

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## Critical Time Periods for Early Childhood Screening and Assessment: Visual Chart

# A Model for a Cross-Sector Screening and Assessment System for Wisconsin's Young Children (Birth to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade)

[illegible]

\* Refer to: Promising Practices in Preventative Oral Health, [http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ecac/pdf/summary\\_oral\\_health\\_promising\\_practices\\_survey.pdf](http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ecac/pdf/summary_oral_health_promising_practices_survey.pdf)

### Ongoing Comprehensive Assessment of Development During Enrollment in a Program

Ongoing Comprehensive Assessment of Development During Enrollment in a Program	
<p>Assessment of Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standard Domains including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical health</li> <li>• socio-emotional</li> <li>• language</li> <li>• communication</li> <li>• approaches to learning</li> <li>• cognition/ general knowledge</li> </ul>	

## Caveats:

- Each screening date is on this chart because it is supported research or a policy statement. Refer to Screening Fact Sheet for each purpose area for further details.
- In addition to the universal critical time periods for screening listed above, a response (screening, rescreening, referral for additional evaluation, and/or referral for a specific service or program) is recommended whenever a concern is identified.
- Coordinate with primary care provider for any concern or referral, across all areas of screening and assessment.
- Screening and/or assessment may occur more frequently if it is recommended or required by a specific program, or if a child has an identified medical or environmental risk for a condition (e.g., prematurity, low birth weight).
- Screening and/or assessment may occur for some children upon enrollment into a specific program based on program standards and guidance (e.g., Head Start, Child Care/YoungStar, home visiting, 4 & 5 K).

# BLUEPRINT FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AND ALIGNED SYSTEM FOR SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN

[www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/Healthy\\_Children\\_Blueprint\\_9\\_22\\_16F.pdf](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/Healthy_Children_Blueprint_9_22_16F.pdf)





# Comparison of Elements

## Wisconsin Rtl Framework and Early Childhood Recommended Practices

Rtl Elements	Wisconsin Rtl Framework	Early Childhood Recommended Practices Alignment and Comparison
High Quality Instruction	Curriculum, instruction, and assessment that is engaging, standards-based, data-driven, research-based, and grounded in culturally responsive practices	<i>Intentional teaching</i> (setting realistic goals that are based on early learning standards and child development research, utilizing evidence-based instructional strategies that include a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated experiences, and on-going child data collection to guide instructional decisions) grounded in culturally responsive practices
Balanced Assessment	A system that includes a continuum of strategies and tools designed to meet specific needs; to guide, monitor, and evaluate student learning and program effectiveness	A flexible, collaborative, and on-going decision-making process of gathering data from multiple sources about a child for multiple purposes; to inform teaching, monitor child development and learning, and assess program effectiveness
Universal Screening	A process utilizing multiple measures; includes administration of a screener (an assessment given as one part of a screening process that is easy/quick/repeatable; establishes a baseline to align instruction with student needs and helps to examine the impact of core instruction)	A process utilizing multiple sources of information (including administration of a valid and reliable screening tool) to identify children with suspected disabilities (as required of public schools under IDEA Child Find); or to guide decisions about “next steps” to address individual children’s needs; and to begin curriculum planning for a group of children
Progress Monitoring	Process to assess student academic and behavioral performance; student response to intervention/challenge; evaluate effectiveness of intervention/challenges; intensity/frequency of progress monitoring increases as intervention or additional challenge increases; considered one source of data in determining Specific Learning Disability	Part of an on-going assessment process to monitor children’s development and learning and measure their response to instruction and intervention; guides decisions regarding instructional effectiveness; generally linked to curriculum goals and done with an entire group of children; can increase in intensity/frequency as interventions or additional challenges increase for individual children



Rtl Elements	Wisconsin Rtl Framework	Early Childhood Recommended Practices Alignment and Comparison
Collaboration	A multi-level system of support with meaningful family involvement, data-driven decision making, and effective leadership; a systematic process of collective problem solving about and planning for teaching and learning	A multi-level system of support with meaningful family involvement, data-driven decision making, and effective leadership. Can include general and special educators and community service providers
Culturally Responsive Practices	Practices that account for, and adapt to, the broad diversity of race, language, and culture in Wisconsin schools and prepare all students for a multicultural world	Practices that account for and positively reflect what is known about the social and cultural context in which children live; practices that help the growing child understand and value diversity in their environment
Academics and Behavior	Targets academic areas of reading and mathematics but includes other areas; Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) or other approaches to address behavior	Curriculum includes all developmental areas as well as content areas and based on early learning standards; the Wisconsin Pyramid Model/SEFEL can be used to address social-emotional development and behavior
Core/Universal Curriculum and Services	Services (curriculum, instruction, and assessment) that all children receive; reflect standards, local curricular framework, and assessment (formative, summative, and benchmark); should be evidence-based, differentiated, and culturally responsive	Developmentally appropriate curriculum includes traditional content areas such as literacy and math in the context of children's overall development (physical, social-emotional, communication, and cognition), is standards-based, guided by assessment data; and uses differentiated instruction to address each child's individual needs while setting challenging, achievable goals for all children
Interventions	Designed for students who are not meeting benchmarks in core areas; intended to increase student performance in the general curriculum; flexible and fluid; adjusted to meet individual learner needs based on multiple sources of data	Evidence-based approaches selected for children who are not meeting expectations; guided by multiple sources of data; intended to increase the rate and quality of children's development and learning that leads to success in the general curriculum
Universal Design for Learning	Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a scientifically valid framework that provides multiple means of access, assessment, and engagement and removes barriers in instruction to achieve academic and behavioral success for all.	UDL in early childhood suggests a student-centered instructional design that encompasses a range of flexible learning materials and activities. Learning environments are developmentally appropriate and responsive to all young children's abilities, needs, and interests. Instruction is differentiated in a variety of ways for children to represent their learning.



Rtl Elements	Wisconsin Rtl Framework	Early Childhood Recommended Practices Alignment and Comparison
Additional Challenges	Curriculum and instruction intended to meet the needs of students exceeding benchmarks	DAP model requires teachers to employ a wide range of skills and strategies to adapt curriculum, activities, and materials to meet the developmental and learning needs of all children in the group; applied to all levels in a multi-level system of support, including added challenges for children exceeding expectations
Differentiated Instruction	The dynamic adjustment of universal curriculum and instructional practices based on the learning needs of students	DAP model – same as description above
Multi-level System of Support	School-wide plan to systematically provide differing levels and intensity of supports based on student responsiveness to instruction and intervention (sometimes referred to as “tiered intervention system” or “pyramid of interventions”)	Designed to meet the individual needs of all children through developmentally appropriate and evidence-based practices; provides a Least Restrictive Environment option for all young children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs); and offers an environment where home cultures and languages are visible, valued, and supported for all young children
Sources	<p>DPI. <i>Wisconsin Response to Intervention: A Guiding Document</i>, 2010  <a href="http://rti.dpi.wi.gov">http://rti.dpi.wi.gov</a></p> <p>DPI. <i>Recommendations of the Next Generation Assessment Task Force: Crafting a Balanced System of Assessment in Wisconsin</i>, 2009  <a href="http://oea.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/oea/pdf/NGTFbr.pdf">http://oea.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/oea/pdf/NGTFbr.pdf</a></p> <p>DPI and Rtl Center. <i>Response to Intervention in Wisconsin Glossary</i>, 2011</p> <p><i>A Curriculum Framework for Supporting Young Children Served in Blended Programs</i></p>	<p>Copple, C. and Bredekamp, S. <i>Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children Birth through Age 8</i>, NAEYC, Washington, DC, 2009</p> <p>Epstein, A. <i>The Intentional Teacher – Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children’s Learning</i>, NAEYC, Washington, DC, 2007 and 2014</p> <p>Sandall, S., Hemmeter, M.L., Smith, B.J., and McLean, M.E. <i>DEC Recommended Practices</i>, Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), Division for Early Childhood (DEC), Missoula, MT, 2005</p> <p>Jennifer Grisham-Brown and Kristie Pretti-Frontczak, 2014</p>





# Selecting High Quality Curriculum

There is general agreement in the field of early childhood education today that high-quality programs require the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive written curriculum linked to ongoing assessment and program evaluation (Dodge, 2014, p.208). Important elements of a high-quality early childhood curriculum have been identified and used widely by early childhood professionals (Division for Early Childhood [DEC]/National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 2009; Cople & Breedkamp, 2009). A high-quality curriculum at Tier 1 serves as the foundation for all other tiers of teaching and caregiving. The curriculum should include the following elements:

- **Scope and Sequence** — defines learning goals in developmental domains and content areas such as social-emotional, motor, language/literacy, and cognition/math; generally presented in a developmental sequence from simple to difficult/least mature to more mature skills based on Early Learning Standards.
- **Screening/Formative Assessment** — a process used to gather data about children's development and learning to guide "next steps decisions" for individual children and for program-planning for groups of children.
- **Progress Monitoring** — a function of an **on-going assessment system**; a process, using multiple methods, to collect information about a child's learning over time to measure progress toward identified learning outcomes; can increase in intensity based on a learner's needs.
- **Activities and Teaching Strategies** — daily routines and schedules, arrangement of the environment, children's experiences, and what teachers do and say to support learning.

Use the rubric on page 16 as a guide when evaluating the quality and completeness of any early childhood curriculum framework.

## Early Childhood Companion Guide to the School-wide Implementation Review (SIR)


As schools assess their RtI practices using the School-wide Implementation Review (SIR), they are strongly encouraged to include early childhood representatives in the process. The intent is to assist programs in developing a plan for implementing a multi-level systems of support to better meet the developmental learning needs of ALL children. This companion document was developed to assist teams in bridging the language and practices found on the SIR with early childhood language and practices. The EC SIR can be found at:

<https://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/educators/rti-in-action/earlychildhood.html>

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Component	0	1	2	3	Score
<b>ASSESSMENT</b> (Initial data collection to guide program planning)	Provides little or no guidance for data collection prior to providing instruction	Provides some guidance for data collection prior to providing instruction	Provides a way of collecting and recording baseline data but might or might not be linked to instructional planning	Provides a systematic way of collecting and recording baseline data that guides instructional planning	
<b>SCOPE AND SEQUENCE</b> (Content goals and the order children generally achieve them)	A. Addresses the whole child; aligned with state early learning standards  B. Concepts and skills are presented so that more complex learning builds on easier concepts/skills	Some of the domains of the WMEELS are included  Provides some learner goals, in some order, but not necessarily building from least to more complex	Most of the domains of the WMEELS are included  Provides some learner goals and outcomes in an understandable order that builds from least complex to more complex	All domains of the WMEELS are included  Provides a comprehensive list of learner goals and outcomes in an understandable order that builds from least complex to more complex	
<b>ACTIVITIES AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES</b>	<div></div> <div><b>Daily Schedule</b></div> <div><b>Learning Environment</b></div>	Little guidance on how to establish daily routines; little or no explanation of how to embed learning goals	Some guidance on how to establish daily routines; some explanation on how to embed learning goals	Clear guidance on how to establish daily routines and clearly demonstrates how to embed learning goals	
<b>Routines</b>	No guidance provided for developing daily schedules	Some guidance provided for developing daily schedules	Examples given for half-day and full-day schedules; does not specify group and play times	Examples given for half- and full-day schedules that include small and large group and play time	
<b>How/What Teachers Do to Support Learning</b>	Lists a few, if any, materials and equipment; does not provide suggestions for room/materials arrangement or floor plan	Lists some materials and equipment, but does not provide suggestions for room/materials arrangement or floor plan examples	Lists some materials and equipment; may provide suggestions for room/materials arrangement or floor plan examples	Describes recommended materials and equipment; provides suggestions for room/materials arrangement; provides floor plan examples	
<b>Developmentally Appropriate Activities and Materials</b>	Provides limited or no examples of ways teachers interact with and guide children to support learning; no information on evidence-based practices	Provides some examples of ways teachers interact with and guide children to support learning; no information on evidence-based practices	Provides some clear, evidence-based examples of ways teachers interact with and guide children to support learning	Provides many clear, evidence-based examples of ways teachers interact with and guide children to support learning – individually and in groups	
<b>Individual and Cultural Diversity</b>	No activities and materials support hands-on, active learning; does not address a range of interests, abilities, and learning styles	Few activities and materials support hands-on, active learning; addresses a limited range of interests, abilities and learning styles	Activities and materials support some hands-on, active learning; and meet a wide range of interests, abilities and learning styles	Activities and materials support hands-on, active learning with a variety of materials to meet a range of interests, abilities and learning styles	
<b>Involves Families</b>	Does not provide any suggestions for adapting activities, materials, and/or expectations to meet individual learner needs; does not address cultural diversity	Offers few limited suggestions for adapting activities, materials, and/or expectations to meet individual learner and/or cultural needs	Lists some suggestions for adapting activities, materials, and/or expectations to meet individual learner and/or cultural needs	Lists multiple examples/suggestions for adapting activities, materials, and/or expectations to meet individual learner and/or cultural needs; may suggest additional resources	
<b>ON-GOING ASSESSMENT</b> (Progress monitoring—collecting data over time to monitor child's learning toward goals/outcomes)	Offers no plans/materials to engage families/parents	Offers limited plans/materials to engage families/parents	Family/parent partnerships are valued; offers some plans/materials to engage families/parents	Family/parent partnerships are highly valued; clear plans/materials included to engage families/parents	
	Does not include an assessment tool	Offers an assessment tool; but no guidance provided on use of the tool and data collected	Offers curriculum-based assessment tool; provides some guidance on use of the tool and data collected	Offers valid, reliable curriculum-based assessment tool; provides clear guidance on use of the tool and data collected	

# Lessons Learned...

from “A Sampling of Rtl Practices in Wisconsin 4K Programs”

## ***Strengths/frequently identified practices:***

- Implementing an Rtl framework in 4K is a dynamic, on-going process. Districts add/modify/improve their policies and practices as their experience and knowledge increases.
- Regularly scheduled meetings that include ALL team members (school and community-based teachers, leadership, special education staff, pupil services staff and, when child-specific, families) are essential to making the system work.
- Well-organized meetings that include an agenda, facilitator, defined participant roles and responsibilities, and outcomes focused on the children are more effective than loosely organized meetings. Professional Learning Community (PLC) structures also promote respect, an increase in the pool of common knowledge, honest communication, and collaboration among members.
- Adults who know the children well and are known by the children are best equipped to deliver the instruction and interventions. District specialists/interventionists are utilized more effectively when placed in a coaching role to direct service staff.
- Programs recognize the critical role social-emotional development plays in building a foundation for academic learning.
- When this is an intentional outcome, an Rtl system of supports in 4K can ensure effective and efficient transitions into 5K.

## ***Challenges/Areas for Improvement***

- In EC programs, Rtl is sometimes seen as an “add-on” or separate initiative rather than a framework for ensuring the delivery of high-quality education and care of all children.
- Before suggesting a child might need additional supports, consider if that child has had the opportunity to experience a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate high-quality universal curriculum in Tier 1 first. (An Rtl framework, however, should never be a barrier to a referral for special education when screening data suggest this could be a child with a disability.)
- Clearly defined curriculum and clearly defined student expectations are essential before determining who needs additional supports or challenges. This is best developed through a process that includes many stakeholders, including 4K and 5K teachers through an intentional 4K-5K alignment.
- While most programs have a literacy and/or social-emotional focus, curriculum should reflect ALL domains of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (Health and Physical Development; Social and Emotional Development; Language Development and Communication; Approaches to Learning; and Cognition and General Knowledge) and be aligned with Common Core State Standards for literacy and mathematics.
- Children who exceed expectations (i.e. “advanced”) are frequently not provided with additional challenges to address their unique learning needs.
- Child information collected in a variety of ways through different sources provides a more balanced and reliable profile of the child’s strengths, needs, interests, and style of learning. A “balanced assessment” approach suggests more than one tool or one source for data.
- Families are welcomed as partners in their child’s development and learning and are meaningfully engaged at all levels of support.







# Online Early Childhood RtI Resources

- **Balanced Screening and Assessment Early Childhood and K-12:**  
**By Purpose** — a chart that provides additional guidance for creating a balanced early childhood screening and assessment system can be found on the Wisconsin RtI Center early childhood webpage  
[www.wisconsinrticenter.org/educators/rti-in-action/earlychildhood.html](http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/educators/rti-in-action/earlychildhood.html)
- **Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL)** — promotes evidence-based early literacy learning practices  
[www.earlyliteracylearning.org](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org)
- **Center for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood** — clearinghouse with links to current research and resources  
[www.crtiec.org](http://www.crtiec.org)
- *Comprehensive and aligned system for early childhood screening and assessment: W1 Blueprint.* Third edition, 2016. By WI EC Collaborating Partners Healthy Children Committee (found on [www.collaboratingpartners.com](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com))
- **Concept Paper on RtI in EC January 2012** — based on work by NAEYC, CEC-DEC, and National Head Start Association  
<http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/>
- **Early Childhood Math** — a joint position statement of NAEYC and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics  
<https://oldweb.naeyc.org/about/positions/psmath.asp>
- **Early Childhood Technical Assistance** — Response to Intervention resources for improving systems, practices and outcomes.  
[ectacenter.org/topics/RTI/RTI.asp](http://ectacenter.org/topics/RTI/RTI.asp)
- **Early Dual Language Learners Initiative (EDLLI)** — offers Facts & Tips, a Learning Module series, and other resources for supporting dual language learners, birth-5 years, and their families  
[www.collaboratingpartners.com/dual-language-learners\\_about.php](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/dual-language-learners_about.php)
- **Early Literacy Initiative** — evidence-based free resources from the National Center for Family Literacy  
[www.iicf.org/literacy.html](http://www.iicf.org/literacy.html)
- **Framework for RtI in Early Childhood** — a joint paper by DEC, CEC, NAEYC, and HeadStart to define early childhood response-to-intervention frameworks and promote broader understanding of the topic.  
[www.naeyc.org/content/frameworks-response-intervention](http://www.naeyc.org/content/frameworks-response-intervention)
- **Get Ready to Read!** — designed to support early literacy skills in the years before kindergarten; offers a standardized early literacy screening tool  
[www.getreadytoread.org](http://www.getreadytoread.org)
- **Individual Growth and Development Indicators for Infants and Toddlers** — research-supported tools used as performance measures to identify progress toward developmental outcomes [www.igdi.ku.edu](http://www.igdi.ku.edu)



- **Preschool Assessment: A Guide to Developing a Balanced Approach** — current research and recommendations from National Institute for Early Education Research  
<http://nieer.org/policy-issue/policy-brief-preschool-assessment-a-guide-to-developing-a-balanced-approach>
- **Reading Rockets** — “Teaching Children to Read and Helping Those Who Struggle” and “Implementing Response to Intervention in Early Childhood Settings”  
[www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)
- **Recognition and Response** — a preschool RtI model developed at the UNC -Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute; managed through the RtI Action Network  
[www.randr.fpg.unc.edu](http://www.randr.fpg.unc.edu)
- **RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD**
  - \***WI RtI Center and PBIS Network** resource for application of early childhood concepts  
[www.wisconsinrticenter.org/educators/rti-in-action/earlychildhood.html](http://www.wisconsinrticenter.org/educators/rti-in-action/earlychildhood.html)
  - \***Response to Intervention and the Pyramid Model, 2009** — a paper that overviews RtI and discusses Pyramid Model and its application for promoting young children’s social competence and preventing challenging behaviors  
[challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/do/resources/documents/rti\\_pyramid\\_web.pdf](http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/do/resources/documents/rti_pyramid_web.pdf)
  - \***Roadmap to Pre-K RtI** — a paper exploring RtI in Pre-k settings, identify critical elements, and provide guiding questions to program readiness  
[rtinetwork.org/learn/rti-in-pre-kindergarten](http://rtinetwork.org/learn/rti-in-pre-kindergarten)
  - \***Response to Intervention (RtI) in EC-Building Consensus on the Defining Features, 2012** — a review of defining features for the framework including linking assessment with instruction.  
<http://npdci.fpg.unc.edu/sites/npdci.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NPDCI-RTI-Concept-Paper-FINAL-2-2012.pdf>
- **Summary of States Pre-K Assessment Policies and Issues** — compiled by the Educational Testing Service, 2012  
[www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PIC-PRE-K.pdf](http://www.ets.org/Media/Research/pdf/PIC-PRE-K.pdf)
- **What Works** — parent resources and research-based teacher’s guide from the National Center for Family Literacy  
[www.famlit.org/NELP/pdf/What%20Works.pdf](http://www.famlit.org/NELP/pdf/What%20Works.pdf)
- **What Works Clearinghouse** — search for Early Childhood Education  
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc>
- **What Works for Early Language and Literacy Development: Lessons from Experimental Evaluations of Programs and Intervention Strategies** — from Child Trends, 2011  
[www.childtrends.org/Files/Child\\_Trends-2011\\_06\\_10\\_FS\\_WWLanguage.pdf](http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2011_06_10_FS_WWLanguage.pdf)
- **Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS)** — provide developmental expectations for young children from birth to first grade that are foundational to the Wisconsin Common Core State Standards for kindergarten through grade 12  
[www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-about.php](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-about.php)







**Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction  
Cooperative Educational Service Agency #4  
Wisconsin RtI Center/Wisconsin PBIS Network**