

Monitoring Student Progress for Behavioral Interventions

Webinar Transcript

Moderator: Dr. Daniel Maggin is an Assistant Professor of Special Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He earned his PhD in Special Education from Vanderbilt University. His expertise addresses three areas related to the education of students with and at risk for developing emotional and behavioral disorders, including identification of evidence-based practices, training of school personnel to evaluate intervention effectiveness, and development of methods to ensure that effective interventions are implemented with integrity. Previously, Dr. Maggin taught for three years in New York City public schools. He was a teacher in a self-contained setting with children in grades 1 through 5 and primarily with students who had the greatest social, emotional, and behavioral needs. I will now turn it over to Dr. Maggin.

Dr. Dan Maggin (Presenter): Thanks, Laura. Just one check here, I have control of the PowerPoint?

Moderator: Yes. You can go ahead and advance the slides if you want to give it a quick test.

Presenter: There we go. Perfect. Thank you very much.

[Slide 1] So I want to thank everybody for joining us today. I know you guys all have busy schedules and hopefully what we're going to talk about today is of some use to you. The emphasis of today's presentation is going to be on the procedures and some methods for monitoring student behavior within the data-based individualization process.

Before reviewing those procedures, we're going to talk about the considerations that you need to take for contextualizing behavioral progress monitoring for specific students into the broader three-tiered model. We're also going to begin with taking a broader perspective on this and then consider the procedures for monitoring student behavior. We will use a case example who we will call Jeff to illustrate how these tools and methods might be applied and conclude with some questions at the end. I'm actually going to stop intermittently to see if there are any questions surrounding specific sections and then we'll also have some time at the end, hopefully, for some follow-up. As Laura pointed out, type those questions into the box and we'll address them as they come.

[Slide 2] I am sure by now that you're all familiar with this triangle in some form or another. Because we talk about it most often in regards to interventions, we're going to begin there. The following slide, the one after this, is going to provide an illustration of the triangle logic within the context of assessment and data-based decision-making. Within the context of intervention however, which we're going to talk about here and start there because that's how everybody frames the conversation, we're going to start at the bottom. I'm sure you guys are all fluent with

this, but just bear with me for a moment because I'm going to use this as a heuristic and this is going to help us frame the remainder of the webinar.

At the bottom we have Tier 1, also called the green zone. The logic of the triangle suggests that most kids, about 80 percent, are going to respond positively to strong systematic prevention techniques at this level. Those might include reminding students of the school rules, determining and specifying what the classroom expectations are, and awarding tokens or tickets or simply some verbal praise to students who are following these expectations. Remember, the reason we reward for appropriate behavior is to make the students aware that there will be positive consequences, not just negative consequences but also positive consequences, for being respectful and working hard which are, obviously, behaviors that we value in school.

Ultimately, having these preventative processes in place will improve the efficiency of the system by increasing the number of students demonstrating positive pro-social behaviors and, therefore, reducing the number of students needing more intensive behavioral supports. If we have a lot of students that need more intensive supports and are acting out more, then that's going to require more time and energy on behalf of the school personnel. Because we expect that about 80 percent of students are going to respond to these really positive approaches and preventative measures at Tier 1, we obviously have about 20 percent of students that we anticipate will not be responsive.

So these kids are going to require further support to maintain appropriate behavior. The typical process, according to the three-tier model, is to move these non-responding students to an intervention that will provide additional feedback on student behavior an opportunity to access rewards and positive attention. Really, what we're talking about here, the logic is we specify what the school rules are, what the expectations are in the classroom. We ensure that we have some method of providing some feedback to the students on whether they're following those rules or not. For those kids who continue to not follow the rules or meet the expectations of the classroom, we then try to provide some extra support for them. That can look differently for different kids, but the first step that we take is having some institutionalized intervention there for them to be moved into.

This is typically called the secondary or Tier 2 intervention. The fact is the anticipated response rate for the secondary intervention is about 15 percent. So we expect about 15 percent of students to respond positively to this secondary intervention. So that leaves an additional 5 percent of students that have not been responsive to preventative or secondary intervention supports.

So, to just put it in another way, these are the most challenging students. What do we do for them? These are the students for whom we apply the data-based individualization process we're going to be talking about today. It's important to remember that the DBI process is not applied to more than 5 to 7 percent of students. These are the most challenging kids. You're going to see as we move across this process and I explain a little bit more what we're advocating for, you're going to see it's going to take a lot of time and energy. We want to make sure that we have good preventative techniques and good secondary interventions in place to be sure that we're targeting those students with the greatest need. That's the intervention logic. I'm sure you guys are all fluent on that.

What does this look like for assessment however? Because without assessing an intervention, we can't tell whether it's working or not. That's why assessment is so important. I use that to illustrate the underlying logic, the multi-tiered supports. Our focus today is going to be on learning the fundamentals and rationale of assessment and progress monitoring. Because

the triangle logic is so useful for describing the intervention framework, we're also going to use it to describe the assessment that we use. This is meant to impress on you the critical relationship between intervention and assessment. That's to say that assessment processes are needed to determine whether the intervention you have developed is working. The data collection and evaluation procedures require just as much attention, if not more, than designing an intervention. For the moment though, let's just discuss what kind of data we collect at each of the three tiers.

At the first level of the triangle are the methods and tools used to determine whether a student is responding to preventative supports or not. These assessment procedures should be readily available for the entire student body and collected and reviewed systematically to identify those students who are not being responsive. This type of assessment is widely called a screener because it acts as a filtering system for students. Examples of these assessment methods include office discipline referrals or standardized screening instruments.

The second type of assessment technique is progress monitoring which is the collection of data targeting specific behaviors. Progress monitoring is used at both Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels because it allows for the effectiveness of the intervention on student behavior to be evaluated, that is to determine whether it is working or not. Although the purpose and procedures of the progress monitoring process is similar for Tier 2 and Tier 3, there are some important differences such as how often data are collected and reviewed and whether the focus of the data being collected relates back to school expectations which would be the case for secondary level or to an individualized behavior which would be the tertiary or Tier 3 level.

As you can see here on the slide, screening instruments are used to determine who is not responding to general supports in the environment. Those students that are moved to secondary interventions are then assessed on a weekly or a monthly basis on kind of somewhat general assessment that's linked to the expectations, and then those kids that are moved to the Tier 3, we're really talking about individualized intervention so we're talking about individualized assessment practices, and that's what we're going to be talking about today.

[Slide 3] Now that we've placed behavioral progress monitoring within the context of the three-tier model, let's formally define the process. At the end of the day, what are we talking about? After we define it, we'll move into considerations for carrying out the process within the DBI framework.

As you can see from the definition, behavioral progress monitoring is more than simply collecting assessment data. Of course, the collection of data is important, but it's ultimately how the data are used that is most important. As such, behavioral progress monitoring also includes the evaluation of the data which is used to determine whether the intervention is working or not. This general two-step process requires careful consideration of specific features of data collection and evaluation akin to the development of an intervention plan. The development of meaningful individualized assessment processes requires careful planning to make sure that the data being collected address the specific needs of the student. These methods will be introduced and discussed in the following sections of the presentation. We're beginning to focus on planning for behavioral progress monitoring. I'm just going to pause there for a second and I'm going to illustrate what we just talked about. But I just want to see if there are any questions upfront. Laura, are there any questions?

Moderator: We don't have any questions in the chat box now, but this would be a great time if

anyone has a question to go ahead and type it into the chat. We'll give it one second. It doesn't look like anyone is starting to type so we can pause later on, but no questions at this point.

Presenter: I'm going to keep checking back in.

[Slide 4] Before we move any further, let's solidify or illustrate what this is going to look like. We're going to use a case example of our buddy Jeff here. Jeff is a 12-year-old student who has consistently demonstrated disruptive behaviors in class. These behaviors included calling out, talking back, and interrupting peers. These behaviors prompted his enrollment in the school tier-2 intervention program. And despite the extra support, Jeff's disruptive behaviors have actually seemed to increase in frequency and intensity. As a result, Jeff's teacher, Ms. Coleman, has referred him to the school team. So we're going to follow Jeff through the planning, and data collection, and evaluation process to see how this might be applied to him.

So the DBI process advocated by the NCII has a few underlying assumptions. The first is that the student has been systematically identified as not responding to Tier 1 or Tier 2 interventions. Systematic identification refers to the use of a preplanned screening process that has a clear, well-articulated decision point for making referrals.

As you can see here, Jeff's school uses number of ODRs as an initial screen to identify students as eligible for intervention. The school leadership team has determined that students with two or more ODRs for two consecutive months would qualify for school-wide Tier 2 interventions. Clearly, Jeff has proven himself eligible for additional support. What you see here is that he's averaging approximately 5, 4.5 ODRs a month for three straight months. What you see in the red there is the average student. So he's clearly exceeding what the average student was and is meeting those predetermined markers for non-response to preventative Tier 1.

[Slide 5] Then he is entered into the Tier 2 program. Not only is Jeff been identified through the universal screening method, but he's also been non-responsive to the Tier 2 intervention. You see the Tier 2 intervention was implemented in November, so the system is in place for determining whether a student is eligible for the DBI program. That's to say that the school had determined that students that are not responding to the Tier 2 intervention if they continue to have more than two ODRs following the implementation of the intervention and do not demonstrate improvement in classroom behavior based on the number of points earned on the point sheet. The team also defined that non-response to Tier 2 as earning fewer than 65 percent of points for 8 of 10 days. Essentially, there are these preplanned markers to say what is responsiveness and what is not, and Jeff has not met those.

[Slide 6] This is an example of a point sheet that was used during Tier 2. As you can see, the decision rule for the team was that he was going to have to earn more than 65 percent of his points on 8 of 10 days as I just mentioned, and he has clearly not done that. Now we can say here are the candidates for the DBI process. The point I'm trying to emphasize here is that in order to make this as easy – I guess it's never going to be easy – but as efficient as possible, then you really want to focus on having these structures in place upfront.

Moderator: I'm sorry to interrupt you, Dan. It just seems like this might be a good time to ask a quick question that just popped up after our last check-in. We've got this question. What were the interventions used – and I'm assuming for Tier 2 – so what could have been some of those

interventions used for Tier 2? How long were they used before it was determined that the student was non-responsive?

Presenter: That's a great question. I guess in this example they are generic in mindset because we're really trying to focus on the assessments and the preplanning that needs to happen upfront, and the progress monitoring that needs to happen at all three levels. Now we're going to enter into the progress monitoring that needs to happen at the Tier 3 level. But just examples, for argument's sake, of interventions that you might use would be the one that's commonly used within the PBIS framework is check in/check out. That's a pretty flexible set of procedures that includes checking in with the kids in the morning. So a teacher or some adult in the school meets with a student at the beginning of the day [and] gives them their point sheet. The student then goes from class to class or period to period; if they're in elementary school, time point to time point. They get feedback on whether they're following the rules or meeting the expectations of the classroom. At the end of the day, then they check-out with an adult.

Let me just back up for a second. The feedback that they receive is essentially a point sheet that is directly linked to the school or classroom expectations. So you're respectful. You were working hard. You were keeping your hands and feet to yourself. You met these expectations, then you give them points, and then you say if you earn, say, 80 percent of your points across the entire day, at check-out then you might get a reward. A reward might be a verbal praise. It might be a token. It might be something more tangible like maybe edibles or something like that. But at the end of the day, then they get rewarded for following the rules essentially. So they're getting consistent feedback across the day, and then they're getting some reward for meeting those expectations.

That's the typical example in the PBIS framework. There are others, but for now - for this argument, for this webinar - I want to focus on the preplanning process and the assessments because I think it's a part that gets overlooked very often. That is an example. Laura, were there any other questions?

Moderator: No. That was the only question we got so far, thank you.

Presenter: Great, great. Keep them coming.

[Slide 7] So now we're going to talk about the individualized behavioral progress monitoring process. We've identified a kid that needs to go to Tier 3 or that could benefit from some further support. What does this look like? This is really where this can be really challenging. It's worth emphasizing that today's presentation is focused on the development of the measurement system as opposed to the selection of the intervention. Ultimately, both are needed to successfully address these needs of the students with intensive behavioral need. However, the planning required to develop an individualized assessment system is often not considered. That makes today's webinar essential for developing a comprehensive plan for individualizing assessment and intervention practices. What we're talking about is a three-step process.

Step (1) is going to be identifying and selecting the target behaviors. Step (2) is going to be developing the measurement system based on that preplanning information. Then, step (3) is going to be using that measurement system and evaluating whether the intervention has worked or not and then decisions that you might make from there.

[Slide 8] As discussed previously, behavioral progress monitoring is a three-part system of planning, data collection, and evaluation. Perhaps the most important part of this process is the development of a clear and concise plan for implementing it. Just as we recommend having a reasoned purpose and approach for developing individualized interventions, it's critical that a formal plan for data collection and evaluation be implemented. The preplanning stages of the process will allow you to chart a course to determine whether the goals for this student are being met. This process will consist of three specific steps, including the identification of behavior to target, prioritizing which target behavior should be addressed if there are several identified.

As you can imagine, kids with the most intense needs are going to present a variety of behaviors. To make this most feasible, we're going to advocate for you guys only to select a couple of behaviors to focus on. The third step is developing a definition for these behaviors, and that's going to be then used to develop the data collection tool. It's important to remember that this process is going to be unique for each student. That's what makes data-based individualization both effective and also somewhat challenging.

[Slide 9] Step number one, identification of a target behavior. What is a target behavior? A target behavior refers to a specific behavior or set of behaviors that are being displayed by the student that are deemed inappropriate, or dangerous, or disruptive. Naturally, the first step of reducing the occurrence of these behaviors is to identify them so that they can be addressed directly. This selection process requires the collection of some background information on the context and features of the behavior. So what does it look like, when did it occur, why does the student present the behavior? This information is going to be used then to not only develop your measurement system and the approach that you're going to use to actually collect the data, but it's also going to inform your actual selection of the intervention that you want to use. As you can see, these are tightly linked, these two concepts of intervention assessment.

[Slide 10] Fortunately, there are several methods available for gathering some information for selecting the target behaviors. It's possible that school personnel might be able to identify the target behavior right off the bat, but we still believe that formalizing the process is important to increase transparency and obtain agreement across various stakeholders, like parents or colleagues, on the target behaviors of concern. This is going to allow the teacher and leadership team to clearly articulate the behavior which will facilitate the development of a formal definition of what that behavior looks like.

Examples of types of data to be collected at the outset. This is part of the planning process. The run-up to the development of the system would include using some questionnaires and interviews, a behavioral checklist, anecdotal reports, and/or direct observations. Time constraints are going to prevent me from describing the uses of each of these in depth, but I'm going to give a quick example of each of how you might use them. Actually, the forms that Laura mentioned in the box to the right of the screen have to do with this portion of the talk. In there, you're going to see an example of a questionnaire/interview that you might use, examples of a checklist that you can use in addition to anecdotal reports, and an example of a direct observation method that you might use.

Let's just talk broadly about these things. In terms of questionnaires and interviews, they can act similarly. It depends really on how you want to deliver them. So it's essentially a set of questions, 10 or so questions, that the teacher or the referring school person will fill out. It's going to focus on aspects of the behavior. So what are we looking at? What behaviors are

inappropriate, or dangerous, or difficult to manage? It's going to get a sense of what is the problem.

A more formal approach, which could also be used in conjunction -- so I view the questionnaire as a first path of what the issue is. A more formal approach would be a checklist, and this come in two different forms. One is the standardized checklists that are often used for psychological evaluation such as the BASC or the Behavioral Assessment Screener for Children; the SSBD, Systematic Screener for Behavior Disorders and the like. Those are norm reference tests.

One way that you might use those if you have that data available, you can go through the items because they are essentially based on observable aspects of student behavior. Does the student throw up a lot? Does the student interact with friends? Does the student hit, scream, act inappropriately? You can use those items to help you identify which behaviors you might want to focus on.

There are also informal checklists, one of which is included in the packet there. Again, it's the same idea. It will prompt you to check off a series of behaviors and give you ideas of how to define them topographically. What do they look like? So just going through those and then really using those responses to identify which behaviors you want to focus on. In addition, you could use anecdotal reports often in the Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence format, the ABC format. What those are typically narrative reviews of what the behavior was. So you look at what occurs before the behavior, that's the antecedent event. What triggers the behavior? Describe the behavior. What immediately follows? That's going to give you some information for selecting an appropriate intervention for that student.

The final approach that you might use is once you've narrowed down a couple of behaviors, you might ask a colleague or the school psychologist to come in and do some direct observations in the classroom to identify which behaviors you might prioritize because sometimes behaviors such as fighting or screaming might seem like they're happening a lot, but there might be precursors to those that you might want to address first.

[Slide 11] Ultimately, you take all the information collected and you integrate it to determine those behaviors that are occurring most often. Generally speaking, there should be some effort by the school team and classroom teacher to collect the background information to specify the behaviors. Regardless of the specific procedures used, these are just some examples of what you might use. The information obtained from these sources is then used to develop a list of key behaviors that might become the focus of the individualized intervention and assessment process.

Successful integration of these methods requires examining the products in conjunction with each other to identify a particular behavior that is consistently cited as being problematic. So the goal here is to identify patterns across the tools to determine the features in context with the behavior. This information will subsequently be used when developing an approach for collecting the data. Any questions?

Moderator: Yes, we do have a question. Someone asked would you also include information that was gathered from a private provider or assessment that were completed outside of the school setting in your information gathering?

Presenter: I think to understand the student, I think you certainly would use that information to understand where the student is coming from. What we advocate for here in the DBI process is

really using information within the school. Because each environment is going to be different, so the student might present different behaviors across environments. If it's similar behaviors, then fine. But if it's not, then we're really talking about addressing specific behaviors that you can see within the context.

I think that outside information from an external provider is certainly important and should be considered in relation to the student and what you might choose to do for the student. But when you're developing the measurement system and the school-based intervention for the individual student, I think it's best to work with the information that's available in that particular setting.

[Slide 12] Let's just see how this might play out with a specific student. So we're going to return to our case example. We're going to return to Jeff. After two months in the Tier 2 program, it's clear to Ms. Coleman and the school leadership team that Jeff was not responding. Remember, that's where we left off. So his ODRs and his point sheet totals did not reflect any improvement from the Tier 2. Now we really know he is a candidate for Tier 3.

The school team and Ms. Coleman worked collaboratively to gather more information about specific features and context of the behavior and the behaviors that Jeff is emitting that are problematic. So specifically, Ms. Coleman filled out a questionnaire on Jeff's behavior per the school leadership team's request. They completed anecdotal reports within the moment. I said they, Ms. Coleman did, the teacher within the classroom. She had a colleague come to observe Jeff's behavior five times over a two-week period for about 20 or 30 minutes each time just to see once she had identified some behaviors of concern, just to see how often these behaviors were occurring.

[Slide 13] Let's take a look at that. What you can see here following the identification of these behaviors from the target behavior questionnaire and an anecdotal report. The school psychologist came in and here are the behaviors that were identified. Jeff is out of seat a lot. He curses. He threatens. He fights. He argues. He hits and kicks. He talks out. A lot of these you can imagine happening around in similar instances. But the first wave through the questionnaire and the checklist, these are the behaviors that arose of greatest concern.

Then the school psychologist came in to take a look at how often these are occurring. What did they find? They found that threatening and cursing happened most often; whereas, out of seat behavior and arguing and talking out, yes, these seemed to be concerns but they may not be the behaviors that you want to focus on initially. So you always want to think about this process not as it comes short of static, you know, what you do the first time is going to always be right. It might take some revisions. You might focus on threatening. You might focus on cursing. But it might, over time, evolve into different behaviors.

It should be a dynamic process that you're continually revising. That's really the benefit of progress monitoring, that it forces you to consider not only the data but what's happening with the kid continually, on a schedule, keep thinking about it. Not that you don't go home and think about the kid every single day, but it prompts conversation around what's going on. So as you can see threatening and cursing were the most prevalent while arguing and talking out also were occurring at a fairly high rate. So these behaviors were then considered for the prioritization process. So they took these four behaviors - threats, curses, arguing, and talking out - and they put them into the prioritization process.

[Slide 14] Now the prioritization sheet, the one that we used, is also included in that packet. So as you might imagine, this process might lead to the identification of several possible target behaviors for various kids. In fact, the data for the case example demonstrated this problem. There were four behaviors - cursing, threatening, hitting, and talking out - that were identified. Given that, we want to emphasize feasibility. It is necessary to carefully select those behaviors that will be targeted. This prioritization process requires considering each of the behaviors identified in the initial process and rating the extent to which they relate to school success.

As you'll see on the accompanying information sheet, it's essentially 10 questions. And then there's four, well, there are four spots that you can put in four different behaviors. You rank the behaviors or you rate the behaviors on a small scale from 0 to 3 on their prevalence. So examples of questions that are asked on that: does the behavior present danger to the student or others? Obviously, those behaviors that are presenting any potential for harm for those in the environment are going to be prioritized first. Other questions are: how often does the behavior occur? Will a change in the behavior allow the student to obtain more positive attachment?

So these are examples of questions that are rated and then through that, then you obtain information on which one should be prioritized.

So this is an example of a sheet that's included in the packet, and the results of those were that it was indeed that the threatening and cursing were rated to be the greatest priorities. So moving forward, we're going to focus on threatening for the rest of the presentation but this is to illustrate that, perhaps, the intervention that's developed should focus on two specific behaviors - cursing and threatening. And then the data collection system would be developed to reflect those behaviors. Moving forward however, we're only going to focus on threatening.

[Slide 15] We've identified our behaviors. We've selected our behaviors. Now that we've done that, it is time to develop a clear definition of each. What we're talking about is developing an operational definition. Good operational definitions of target behaviors provide an accurate, complete, and concise description of the behavior to be measured. This is really an important part of the DBI process.

This includes ensuring that the language used emphasizes objectivity. The definition should also allow for the behavior to be readily observed and measured. This is accomplished by using clear, concise language in constructing the definition in such a way that it can be readily applied by others. That's to say that a colleague should be able to read the definition and be able to say, "There it is. That is the behavior." A good definition of the target behavior will allow instances of the behavior to be readily identified and assist in the development of the measurement system. In addition to using objective language and stating the definition in measurable terms, it is also often necessary to clearly state which behaviors are included in the definition and which are not.

Really, the goal here is to define the behaviors in such a way that we can get agreement across as many people as we can. We want to be able to say, "Ah, that is an instance of the behavior, and that is not." The reason why we want that is because the more clear that we are in what we're looking for, the more reliable our data is going to be. The more reliable our data is, then the firmer and the better our decision-making can be.

[Slide 16] Here is an example of target behavior definitions. For Jeff, Jeff had two behaviors although one of them was different. We're doing that for a moment. So hitting and kicking were one of the behaviors or might be a behavior that was of concern. So Jeff will be considered to be

hitting or kicking if his foot or hand makes contact with another student with the intent to cause harm. The physical contact must be initiated by Jeff and put forth with sufficient intensity to cause harm to the intended target. Hitting and kicking will not include instances in which Jeff accidentally touches the student with his hand or foot. So again, we want to be as clear and as concise as possible about what we're looking for. Once we can do that, then we can collect better data.

Another example of an operational definition is threatens. So threat means verbal statements that refer to harming other people including peers or teachers. This includes statements such as "I will throttle you" or "I will knock you out," but will not include statements such as "I said, leave me alone," or other statements indicating an attempt to cope with the situation. You might imagine that a student becomes frustrated with the situation and that they say "Leave me alone" in an aggressive way. Now, some people might say out of context that that is a threat taken out of context. But defining it as clearly as we have here, then we know that – you know what? We're not going to say that that's an instance of threatening because that is actually an attempt for Jeff to cope with the situation in a more desirable way than threatening another student.

As you can see, these definitions reduce subjectivity and increase the likelihood of agreement across different people, including teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school personnel so that we can get a really good idea of how often the behavior is occurring.

[Slide 17] Now, this is where the rubber meets the road. We'll use the definitions and the preplanning information to develop a measurement system. Just before we go into what that's going to look like and we're going to review the various methods associated with collecting the data, but first it's worthwhile to discuss some considerations for developing an effective approach to measuring behavior.

So remember, the progress monitoring for students that need individualized behavioral support requires data to be collected more often. So if you remember back to the initial slide with the triangle, we have screening information to identify kids based on the broader school population and then we moved those kids into Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 and we progress-monitor more specific behaviors more often. Because of this, the teacher and school team has to consider the most appropriate schedule to review the collected data. Is daily assessment needed or would it be more helpful to have data collected on a weekly basis? Are there questions to be considered related to who will collect the data and at what time?

It is also necessary to consider the design and the procedures for ensuring that data are inputted and how often they're going to actually be looked at for evaluation. Most of these steps will be clear following the identification of the target behaviors and conditions of greatest concern. So as you're going through the initial run-up and the planning period, you should be thinking about who's going to be inputting the data. How often are we going to look at it? Is this a really dangerous behavior that happens a lot like self-injurious behavior? For example, you might want to look at that behavior on a daily basis to say, did we get a decrease on that? Whereas, disruptive behaviors may be on more of a weekly basis so they're not quite so dangerous if they're not happening quite so often. In order to make this as individualized as possible, the student's information in case is going to dictate those decisions. But these are the things to consider when moving up.

[Slide 18] Data collection methods that we typically use: Specifying the time and place for data

collection and the individual charged with collecting and entering the data is important in developing a comprehensive approach, but the data still needs to actually be collected. There are many approaches to data collection available and each has its own strengths and limitations. The traditional method for collecting student behavioral data is through systematic direct observation.

The primary advantage of this set of techniques is that it leads to a direct representation of how often, or how long, or how intense the behavior is occurring. Despite this benefit though, systematic direct observation can be extremely challenging to carry out accurately in the classroom while trying to attend to 25 or 30 kids, deliver instruction, and manage behavior all at the same time. Because of these challenges, our emphasis here will be on using an emerging technology called Direct Behavior Rating which increases the practicality and ease of data collection without sacrificing the quality of data. Specifically, we're going to consider how to incorporate the target behaviors into the existing tool and use them in conjunction with behaviors included to the standard form. We're going to introduce this Direct Behavior Rating.

Systematic direct observation, as a side note, it's a technique that is extremely flexible and it gives you really useful information. However, as I mentioned, it can be really difficult to carry out in the moment. So we're going to use the Direct Behavior Rating.

[Slide 19] So we call this DBR for short and it can be adapted to focus on a range of target behaviors while also providing an opportunity to measure broader, more general outcomes. The premise of DBR is based on the idea that teachers can reliably and accurately rate student behavior on a continuum found some specified period of time. So these ratings are then used as the data to monitor student progress. There are actually several different DBR-like tools currently being developed and in use. These include methods using multiple items to rate student performance and those using a single-item scale. We're going to talk about the one — well, I guess I'll introduce that in a second. But it's worth noting that the various tools are at different stages of development.

[Slide 20] The one we're going to talk about is the Single-Item Scale, Single-Item Form. This is the method with, perhaps, the greatest research to date. It was developed by Sandy Chafouleas and Chris Riley-Tillman and others through a couple of Department of Education research grants. You can go to directbehaviorratings.org to download this information. It's on the slide there on the lower right-hand side. We got a lot of this content directly from them from their website. So you can go to their website and a lot of this content is there, and they have downloadable forms.

With that out of the way, this particular approach allows the user to rate the behavior on a single continuum from 0 to 10. So these numbers are anchored by terms such as the behavior never occurred during the observation session, sometimes it occurred, or it always occurred during the observation session. As you can see, the completion of the form does not require constant recording or attention to paperwork like systematic direct observation would, but rather it allows you to instruct and manage freely by also providing a research-based method for tracking student behavior.

[Slide 21] As I mentioned before, the DBR Single-Item Scale comes with three intact behaviors. This includes academic engagement, disruptive behaviors, and respectfulness. The advantage of having these three behaviors on the standard form is that not only will you be able to track the target behavior that we're going to talk about how to develop the forms specifically for the target

behavior that we've identified, but then you also have the ability to track these broader, more general outcomes that are needed for school success. So we're going to consider the application of these examples and then discuss how to incorporate the individualized target behavior for your students on to the instrument.

Although we will review the information here, we strongly encourage each of the districts to visit the DBR website for their full DBR training and printable materials clearly because we are going to focus on the use of DBR for the individualization process and not the use of the generalized measures here. However, I will say that the academic engagement and the disruptive and the respectful behavior scale of items are important to collect.

So, you might be focusing on threatening, cursing, hitting, kicking, scratching, biting - one of those or several of them. What is also nice to know, and which is going to be illustrated in a few minutes, is, okay, so we're getting a reduction in hitting, but is it also having an impact on academic engagement or disruption? Knowing that will then allow you to go and, perhaps, revise the intervention or adapt it specifically to other behaviors of concern, more general behaviors that might relate more directly to school success.

[Slide 22] So the standard DBR items are useful for tracking whether a student is being responsive to broad indicators of school success. However, the data-based individualization process will require the tracking of behaviors specific to the particular student. This will require school personnel to clearly define the target behaviors, which we've already done for Jeff, and align them with specific criteria to increase the consistency of the rating. The ratings on the DBR are based on a 10-point scale with each point reflecting a different level of occurrence for the behavior. The scale can then be interpreted as either the frequency of occurrences, that is how often or how seldom, or the percentage of time in which the behavior might have occurred during that session. Does it happen sometimes, all the time, none of the time, et cetera?

[Slide 23] Here's how you might develop DBR anchors. You're going to use the preplanning information to anchor each of the 10 points on the scale. Here's an example of how we're going to do that. The operational definition would be for Toby here: Toby's aggression is defined as the use of any behavior that involves making contact with others with an intent to injure or harm. This includes punching, hitting, kicking, spitting, scratching, pushing, and biting. This does not include patting on the back or shaking hands. The definition was devised based on the collection of the preplanning data and the prioritization, and then we came up with the operational definition.

Now we want to know how often the behavior occurred. So with Toby's data, we did some direct observations in the classroom and we found that it occurred during math. We found that his behavior was occurring sometimes at zero, sometimes he would never be aggressive and sometimes it occurred as many as 12 or 15 times.

[Slide 24] So we linked that range of occurrences to the scale. Low occurrence would be 0 or 1 on the scale, it would be a 1 or a 2, all the way up to more than 10 which is considered high. So then the teacher teaches for math and then after math class, as quickly as possible, rates a student - takes a moment to rate the student on the 10-point scale - and then that data is then used as a basis for determining whether the student is responsive or not. Here you'd see that a 3 rating would be Toby displayed aggression for 30 percent of the math class, which would be somewhat low for Toby.

[Slide 25] Here's another example of what the DBR form might look like for Jeff. So took his information - threats refer to verbal statements that refer to harming other people, put it right in there. Then took the observational data and, again, linked it directly to the points on the scale.

[Slide 26] Just some considerations for implementing the DBR: It's important to review the definitions and anchors to ensure that you're applying them consistently. If there's not a consistent application, then you're not sure what the data is going to tell you. So just being sure that the definition is being applied consistently and the tools being applied consistently. And always having the form ready to be completed after the observation session and then completing ratings immediately after the pre-specified time. Again, rather than looking back three hours later on math class, that's going to increase your ability to recall closer to the moment.

[Slide 27] Let's pause there and then we're to run into the final section. Any questions, Laura?

Moderator: We had a few questions come up. One was whenever you were talking about conducting observation, someone asked how much time was used for gathering the frequency of the student behavior? I guess during the observation, generally how much time would that take? I'll tell you what the other two questions are just so you might want to answer these at the end. One was asking about - they said - we have a computer-based Tier 3 intervention program. Do you know anyone who has computerized this progress monitoring approach and then, maybe, SWIS? Someone else asks what is SWIS. Those could be good things to discuss.

Presenter: Yes, I will actually -- at the end, if you could remind me of those questions, I will certainly address those at the end because I want to elaborate a little bit on that. But the first question was how long. You know what? It's going to depend on the behavior. If you have a behavior that occurs frequently, then your observation period might take less time. You can get enough occurrences to say, you know what? I have a pretty good read on how often that behavior is occurring. But for behaviors that occur less frequently, then you might have to spend a little bit more time in the classroom observing them and seeing how often they occur. So it's really going to be based on the behavior. There's always got to be an if-but question. There's no black and white around here. There's only gray. So letting the behavior dictate to you how often or how long an observation session, how many, I think is the right approach. But thinking about it in terms of how often it occurs can be a useful consideration.

Moving into the last form here, so what do you do with the data once you've collected it? We have a bunch of information collected and we put it into Excel or into SWIS or whatever. The data collected from a DBR form will then be used to evaluate whether the student is responding to the intervention or not. So evaluation consists of analyzing the DBR data to determine whether students are making progress toward the predetermined goal. This process requires the DBR information has to be managed and organized in a way that supports summary and analysis. And because the DBR data will be collected on individual students, the most straightforward approach for displaying data is going to be in a line graph. This process is going to be described in the following slide.

[Slide 28] I think in the packet of material from the right-hand side there is an Excel spreadsheet to help people with graphing that may not have either expertise or experience with it. It's

somewhat crude at this point. I think we're going to work on making it better, but there are also other applications. There's a graph dog through interventioncentral.com that's also useful. But a line graph is what we advocate for because they display the information. You can make decisions based on that.

Again, we always want to think about upfront what are we going to do with the data? The first consideration is how we're going to move the data from the DBR form into the graph. Who's going to do it? How often are we going to look at it? And actually who is going to look at it? Is it going to be the leadership team? Is it going to be the classroom teacher? Is it going to be a combination of people? Those are considerations.

[Slide 29] Once the process for inputting data has been outlined, so once you have an idea of who's going to input it, who's going to look at it, it's necessary to pilot the tool and begin to establish how the individual is currently performing on the tool before intervention has begun. Essentially, we want to get a baseline read on the behavior. So the purpose of this try-it-out phase is to make sure the DBR anchors and ratings are reflective of the student behavior and to determine a present level of functioning, so again, a baseline level.

There are no set of rules for how long this phase needs to be, but there needs to be enough information to determine whether the tool is accurately reflecting student behavior. The general recommendation is five or more assessment points. Indications of problems with the tool might be the collection of data that are in -- so ways that you may think or may identify what are the tools that are problematic. If the data you're getting are inconsistent or there is no clear pattern, in such cases, it might be necessary to revise the definition or the anchors to make sure that the instrument is providing accurate information, to make sure the assessment is providing accurate information.

[Slide 30] So not only will testing of the DBR tool provide information whether it is accurately reflecting student behavior, but it will also provide a basis for comparing student behavior once the intervention has been implemented. This test period also provides a basis for the school team to determine what responsiveness will mean for the student and decide when to retain, remove, or revise the intervention procedures. Because the data-based individualization process is unique to each student, there are no firm rules regarding what constitutes responsiveness. But whether a student is responding will depend on the target behavior and the initial level.

So if you have a really high rate, then maybe get some traction on slightly lower. So if you have 10's across the board based on the DBR, maybe it's a meaningful change to see 7. Then if you consistently see around 7's, then you think about do we have to increase the intensity of the intervention? Do we have to change it in some way? This information gives you the point for making the decision. Again, there is no firm rule. There's nothing that we can say that it's going to work for every student at this point, but really just looking at the data and trying to interpret it as best as you can and thinking always in terms of shall we revise the intervention, shall we remove the intervention, or shall we keep it in place? Should we retain the intervention?

[Slide 31] In terms of developing intervention goals, it's important to specify the amount of time the intervention must be in place before revising. If you implemented intervention and it's not working in the first three days, that may not be a point to remove the intervention unless you see drastic deterioration in the behavior. But being clear upfront, we're going to give this a shot for

six weeks and see what happens because over time, once the intervention is applied more consistently, then you might be able to see some movement and make better decisions. Again, it's important to link the intervention goals directly to the DBR anchors and the behaviors that you've identified and prioritized. The goals should not be seen as static. They should change and evolve over time depending on how the student is responding.

[Slides 32] Here are a series of graphs to show how you might make these decisions. You see the pre-intervention data here. The line means that there was an intervention and then you see some post-intervention data for a while. So that's after the intervention was implemented. As you can see here, this is disruptive behaviors and that's on the DBR rating, so you'd expect a decrease in disruptiveness following the intervention. Just taking a look at this data, it might be inconclusive. I would probably say, you know what, let's get another week of data and see whether it's still inconclusive. But it would give you the basis to make those decisions. Graphing data gives you the basis for making those decisions.

[Slide 33] So here are Jeff's data on the "threatens." The school team picked a pretty successful intervention for reducing the rate of threats. As you can see, there was a pretty sharp change right when the intervention was in place. It seems to be going down, continuing to go down.

[Slide 34] However, when we look at the engagement data, those broader items on the Single-Item Scale, you see maybe the intervention has to be tweaked a little bit to get some traction on Jeff's engagement, so to get that to increase a little bit.

[Slide 35] As you might expect with decreases in threats, there's probably also decreases in general disruptiveness which is also seen in Jeff's data. But you know what? Maybe it's not at the level that we would be happy with. So, again, this might give you a reason to say we have to revise the intervention. By revision, it might be increasing intensity in intervention or choosing a totally different technique.

[Slide 36] I know I'm a little bit over time, it usually happens with me. So what are the takeaways here? One is that developing an approach to behavioral progress monitoring for this group of kids that needs the most intensive supports that we can develop, it requires a lot of hard work. It's preplanning and it's thinking carefully about which behaviors you want to prioritize and identify, and how to define them and how to create a tool that's really going to relate to their behaviors. It really takes time and thoughtfulness, and that is a way of saying that we want to make sure that there's good Tier 1, Tier 2 behavioral supports in place so we can be as efficient as possible, so that we only have to address as few students as possible. On a related note, we only want to be doing this - the DBI process - for only 3 to 5 percent of the students. So if there's more than that, if you see 12 or 15 percent of students coming in that require the DBI process, then you need to go back or we would advocate for you to go back and take a careful look at the Tier 1 and Tier 2 intervention.

The final takeaway is that there's a need -- so we always think about intervention and personalizing interventions, individualizing interventions. But just as important is individualizing those assessments and making sure that the interventions address the behaviors of greatest concern. In order to understand whether those are working or not, is to develop assessment strategies that really address those behaviors of greatest concern. So I'm going to

pause there. There's the disclaimer that nothing I said is actually supported by the Department of Education.

I'm going to return quickly to the question on SWIS. So SWIS is the School-Wide Information System. It's a method for collecting data. It was developed at the University of Oregon in conjunction with the National Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. It provides a basis for collecting an array of behavioral data - for example, office discipline referrals - and it really gives a nice system for collecting who, what, when, where, and how and then you take that information and you apply your decision rules. So there are kids that are having two, or three, or more ODRs a month and those might be the kids that are candidates to move to Tier 2 and then interventions. So that's SWIS.

In terms of behavioral progress monitoring, I know that they recently developed a program called ISIS which I don't recall what it stands for, but I have been treated to an overview of it, a demonstration of it. In my opinion, it's very impressive. I think it's an excellent way to monitor student progress. I believe that ISIS is developed specifically for kids at Tier 2 and Tier 3. It's not for the general population, but it's for those kids that need greater support. So I hope that addressed that question. Laura, any others?

Moderator: No, not at this time. I believe that you kind of answered whether or not anyone else has developed a computerized progress monitoring approach. That's definitely the ISIS system within SWIS, and it's relatively new. It's still being rolled out.

Presenter: Yes. The DBR developers also have a progress monitoring system, which the name is escaping me. I want to say it's BASIS. But if you go to their website at directbehaviorratings.org, they should have a link to a computerized progress monitoring tool.

Moderator: Great. We'll post that specific name in our Q&A.

Presenter: Great.

Moderator: All right, we may have one more question. I will just start to wrap up with some quick announcements. Just in case you didn't already check out the handouts that are posted on the right-hand side of the screen, you may click on those and download those at any time. Our survey link is in the chat box on top of the screen. Your computer will also be rerouted to it at the end of the presentation. We really appreciate your responses because they help us to shape our future presentations so we'd really appreciate that.

[Slide 37] It looks like that's all the questions we have so thank you so much, Dr. Maggin, and thank you to all of those who joined us today. As a reminder the webinar will be archived on our website, and the PowerPoint will be posted along with the Q&A document with answers to all of the questions. If we didn't get to your question today, which I believe we got to most of them, it will be included in the Q&A document.

Great. We just got a question from Linda. Let's now go back to the slide with the presenter's name.

Next month, we will have a webinar in May on using the NCII tools charts presented by Dr. Allison Gandhi. Thank you everyone for joining today. This concludes our webinar.

Presenter: Thanks everyone.
[End of transcript]