

# Reviews of Collections of Programs, Curricula, Practices, Policies, and Tools: Evaluated According to Evidence

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For more information, see: <http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/resources/reviews>

This collection originated as part of the Results for Kids: Resources library of The IDEA Partnership, which transferred early contents to NIRN in 2009.

## Papers and Audiovisual Resources on Adoption and Implementation Research and Practice

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### **A Policymaker's Primer on Education Research: How to Understand, Evaluate and Use It**

Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL), & the Education Commission of the States, Denver, Colorado. (2004). P. A. Lauer.

The goal of this primer " is to help policymakers and other interested individuals answer three big questions: (a) what does the research say? (b) is the research trustworthy? and (c) how can the research be used to guide policy? Answering these questions will help policymakers to make evidenced-based decisions about education policies; gain a better understanding of research methods; and (c) become more informed consumers of research."

[A Policymaker's Primer](#)

[Foreword and click at the right for all sections]

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### **Assistive Technology Research Matters: A Research Primer**

National Center for Technology Innovation, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2011).

"This primer details several research designs that may be appropriate for demonstrating the effectiveness of educational and assistive technology tools. These sections are brief synopses of the parameters of each design, and links to resources are included throughout for those who want to learn more." The guide (a) explores six research designs; (b) discusses validity, reliability, ethical considerations, and Institutional Review Boards; and (c) provides tools and suggestions. Although primarily intended for developers, manufacturers, and vendors, the primer may also be useful for consumers.

[Full text – Assistive Technology Research Matters](#)

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### **Beyond the Methodological Gold Standard of Behavioral Research: Considerations for Practice and Policy**

*Social Policy Report*. (2004). Society for Research in Child Development.  
R. B. McCall & B. Green.

"Research methods are tools that can be variously applied -- depending on the stage of knowledge in a particular area, the type of research question being asked, and the context of the research. The field of program evaluation, critical for social policy development, often has not adequately embraced the full range of methodological tools needed to understand and capture the complexity of these issues. The dominant paradigm, or 'gold standard,' for program evaluation remains the experimental method. This standard has merit, particularly because experimental research has the capacity to draw conclusions about cause and effect ('internal validity'). This paper identifies the benefits, common problems, and limitations in three characteristics of experimental studies: (a) theory-driven hypotheses; (b) random assignment of subjects to intervention groups; and (c) experimenter controlled, uniformly-applied interventions. . . . Suggestions are offered for ways to incorporate alternative research methods that may emphasize 'external validity' (match to real-life circumstances), and complement results derived from experimental research designs on social programs."

[Full text -- Beyond the Methodological Gold Standard](#)

[Scroll to 2004 and click on #2]

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### **Choosing a School Turnaround Provider: Lessons Learned**

Education Northwest, Portland, Oregon. (2010).

"The process of selecting a school turnaround provider can seem overwhelming, with so many choices and so little time and information. External and internal pressure to make the selection as quickly as possible can lead to hurried decisions with long-term, costly consequences for both districts and students. This "Lessons Learned" brief presents concrete, clearly defined steps that can lead you to the best provider for your local context. These lessons come from Education Northwest's research, development, and technical assistance activities conducted over more than four decades on the frontlines of transforming teaching and learning."

[Full text – Choosing a School Turnaround Provider](#)

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### **Consumer Guides for School Administrators and EdTech Vendors (two charts of decision points on educational technology)**

Natl Center for Technology Innovation & the Center for Implementing Technology in Education (CITEd), American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (Undated).

"These simple and easy-to-use Consumer Guides are decision support tools to help school administrators and educational technology vendors learn what questions to ask and how to make informed decisions relating to education technology. . . . The Guides provide assistance in the following five areas: (a) alignment of standards and curriculum goals; (b) implementation of technologies; (c) scientifically-based research; (d) funding for purchasing educational technology; and (e) legislative mandates such as IDEA and NCLB."

[Both charts – Consumer Guides for School Administrators and EdTech Vendors](#)

[Click on Consumer Guides in the second paragraph]

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### **Consumer's Guide to Education Research**

Center for Public Education, National School Boards Association, Alexandria, Virginia. (2007).

"Why is it important to understand research methods? Simply put, if we want answers to certain questions, gathering information pertinent to those questions and reviewing the data can give us the

best answers. Research, then, is no more than a process of acquiring information to answer questions. Education research helps answer questions we're all interested in, effective strategies for raising student achievement. Some people may be baffled by that the various forms of research — what they are, how they're conducted, and what they say. With this guide, the Center for Public Education sets forth the basic concepts to unravel the mystery."

[Full text -- Consumer's Guide to Education Research](#)

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### **Cost Analysis in Educational Decision Making: Approaches, Procedures, and Case Examples**

Coordination, Consultation, and Evaluation (CCE) Center, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2002). J. L. White.

"Cost analysis has become an important educational decision-making tool in recent years, as educators are being asked to do more with less funding and provide tangible evidence of the effectiveness of educational programs. Yet few researchers and practitioners are familiar with how to conduct a cost analysis or interpret cost analysis data. This article provides an introduction to the principles of cost analysis and includes practical examples for how this methodology can be used in educational settings."

[Full text -- Cost Analysis in Educational Decision Making: Approaches, Procedures, and Case Examples](#)

[Click on the third title]

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### **Create Your Implementation Blueprint -- Response to Intervention**

RTI Action Network, Washington DC. (2008). A Program of the National Center for Learning Disabilities.

"Implementing RTI requires a broadening in focus. To implement this innovation in a school setting, one has to pay attention not only to research about effective instruction, but also to the change management process. For too long education has underestimated what it will take for the adults in a school setting to change their practices and behaviors. . . . When it comes to implementation planning, the focus has to be on the adults — the teachers who will use the new practices." This series for school administrators and teachers includes six steps, from exploration to sustainability, along with a section on avoiding implementation pitfalls.

[Full text -- Create Your Implementation Blueprint](#)

[Click at the right for each stage of implementation]

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### **Early Childhood Program Evaluations: A Decision-Maker's Guide (for determining the validity of interventions)**

National Forum on Early Childhood Policy and Practice, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. (2007).

"Despite increasing demands for evidence-based early childhood services, the evaluations of interventions such as Head Start or home-visiting programs frequently contribute more heat than light to the policy-making procedure. This dilemma is illustrated by the intense debate that often ensues among dueling experts who reach different conclusions from the same data about whether a program is effective or whether its impacts are large enough to warrant a significant investment of public and/or private funds. . . . This guide helps prepare decision-makers to be better consumers of evaluation information. It is organized around five key questions that address both the substance and practical

utility of rigorous evaluation research." Although the focus is on early childhood programs, this information should be useful at any grade level.

[Full text -- Early Childhood Program Evaluations](#)

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### **Electronic Statistics Textbook**

StatSoft Inc, Tulsa, Oklahoma. (Updated in 2011).

This website contains an entire, extensive, and freely available electronic statistics textbook, which may be browsed by chapter – from elementary concepts to the most complex, with a glossary and an online statistical advisor. You can also do searches, by terms and by general statistical concepts in order to make decisions about statistics used to express effectiveness of programs and practices for adoption and implementation. This is the only Internet resource about statistics that is recommended by Encyclopedia Britannica.

[Access the Electronic Statistics Textbook](#)

[Click at the left for topical sections]

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### **Evaluating Comprehensive School Reform Models at Scale: Focus on Implementation**

RAND Education, Santa Monica, California. (2006). G. Vernez, R. Karam, L. T. Mariano, & C. DeMartini.

"Despite increasing pressure for improving student achievement, most studies of comprehensive school reforms show only a modest effect — or sometimes no effect at all. . . . A survey of 250 schools from Florida and Texas that embraced comprehensive school reform models found that none had adopted all of the changes the models called for to boost student achievement. . . . Schools were most likely to adopt the curriculum prescribed by the model developer, but were less likely to adopt the recommended instructional practices. . . . Most of the schools in the study did not have the level of support recommended by developers of the models. Teachers reported receiving about half of the recommended initial training and only one-quarter of the recommended ongoing professional development. . . . In general, teachers reported a lukewarm commitment to adopting their school's reform model and most felt the training they received was not adequate. However, in schools where the level of support increased, so did adoption of the developer-recommended practices." This paper describes other findings and offers recommendations for improving the success of implementation.

[Full text -- Evaluating Comprehensive School Reform Models at Scale: Focus on Implementation](#)

[Overview and links to the summary and full text]

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### **Evidence-Based Programs and Cultural Competence: Reaching Consensus**

National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (2003). K. A. Blase & D. L. Fixsen.

"This report summarizes the key discussion points and outcomes from a meeting of 25 experts in the area of children's mental health and cultural competency, convened by the National Implementation Research Network March 2003, in Tampa Florida. During the course of the two-day meeting, diverse perspectives were solicited on the role of cultural competency in implementation of evidence-based programs. This working paper summarizes the resulting commentary on implementation phases of evidence-based programs, including the exploration stage, site selection process, installation stage, initial and advanced implementation stages, and the sustainability stage. The document concludes with

Initial work on a *Consensus Statement on Evidence-based Programs and Cultural Competence*."

[Full text – Evidence-Based Programs and Cultural Competence](#)

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## **Expanding the Reach of Education Reforms: Perspectives from Leaders in the Scale-Up of Educational Interventions**

RAND Education, Santa Monica, California. (2004). T. K. Glennan, S. Bodilly, J. Galegher, & K. A. Kerr.

"How does one spread a successful educational reform? The essays here recount the authors' experiences with the scale-up process. Among their lessons are the importance of building the capacity to implement and sustain the reforms, adjusting for local culture and policy, ensuring quality control, providing the necessary infrastructure, and fostering a sense of ownership. The process is iterative and complex and requires cooperation among many actors who must ensure that the results align with goals."

[Full text -- Expanding the Reach of Education Reform: Perspectives from Leaders in the Scale-Up of Educational Interventions](#)

[Click at the bottom right to read the full document online —"Download eBook for Free"]

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## **Fidelity of Implementation -- Selecting and Implementing Evidence-Based Practices and Programs: An Online Module**

IRIS Center for Training Enhancements, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. (2010).

"Designed for school leaders, professional development providers, and anyone who oversees the implementation of evidence-based practices and programs, this module first describes how school personnel can identify an evidence-based practice or program and highlights the importance of matching it to the school's specific needs and resources. Next, the module underscores the importance of implementing the practice or program with fidelity, or as it was intended. It then discusses a number of actions that school personnel can take to increase the likelihood that education professionals will implement the new practice or program with high fidelity. . . . The module includes fictional school examples, step-by-step demonstration movies, activities that allow opportunities to practice skills, and audio interviews with leading experts."

[To use the Fidelity of Implementation module](#)

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## **Glossary of Research Terms**

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

"The What Works Clearinghouse seeks to provide users with the information they need to be effective consumers of education research. This glossary will help you to better understand the terms used by the WWC." Terms are arranged alphabetically. You can click on single terms which immediately yield concise definitions.

[The complete glossary](#)

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## **Guide for Determining Level of Evidence for Practices and Curricula (in secondary transition)**

National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC), University of North Carolina at Charlotte. (2010).

In this guide, NSTTAC provides "two rating scales for teachers or administrators to help guide their decision-making regarding curriculum and instruction in secondary transition. Users should circle the number in the guide that best represents their professional judgment. Once ratings are provided, the user should tally the points and use the point system located at the top of the guide to make decisions regarding use of a practice or a curriculum. When deciding on an instructional practice with students, the rating scale is intended to provide guidance on what the evidence is for the use of a practice or curriculum and assistance in determining if the practice or curriculum may be used with confidence."

[To download the Guide](#)

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## **How to Know a Good Adolescent Literacy Program When You See One: Quality Criteria to Consider**

Alliance for Excellent Education, Washington DC. (2007).

"The purpose of this brief is to provide information to help policymakers, educators, parents, and others concerned with adolescent literacy make informed decisions about literacy programs for struggling readers and the programs' suitability for specific groups of students. The brief is not intended for an audience of literacy experts, and does not pretend to offer a comprehensive program evaluation guide. Rather, it is designed to help decision makers ask the right questions when assessing literacy programs for selection for federal, state, and local funding." The rating scales are in a chart format.

[Full text – How to Know a Good Adolescent Literacy Program](#)

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## **Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide**

National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. (2003). Prepared by the Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy.

"The federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and many federal K-12 grant programs, call on educational practitioners to use 'scientifically-based research' to guide their decisions about which interventions to implement. . . . This Guide is intended to serve as a user-friendly resource that the education practitioner can use to identify and implement evidence-based interventions, so as to improve educational and life outcomes for the children they serve."

[Full text -- Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide](#)

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## **Implementation Counts**

*Educational Leadership*. (2011). B. Goodwin.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, Virginia.

This paper begins with an example of how a NASA mission failed because of improper implementation. Then it reflects on disappointing findings from gold-standard studies in education, based on large-scale studies of five popular programs – and found that all five of the programs evaluated were poorly implemented and had disappointing results, and gives examples. "This inconsistent adoption makes it difficult, if not impossible, to determine whether to fault the programs themselves or the way they were implemented for their lackluster effects, especially as none of the studies parsed their data to determine whether classrooms with better implementation achieved better results. We're left asking why, in study after study, something got lost in translation from program design to implementation."

[Full text – Implementation Counts](#)

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## **Implementation Frameworks**

State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP),  
FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (Circa 2011).

“There are four implementation frameworks essential to successful uses of innovations in education and other human services.” This resource provides details of each framework: (a) implementation teams; (b) implementation drivers; (c) implementation stages; and (d) improvement cycles. Click on each framework overview for details.

[Overview and links to details – Implementation Frameworks](#)

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## **Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature**

National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (2005).

D. L. Fixsen, S. F. Naoom, K. A. Blase, R. M. Friedman, & F. Wallace.

The authors’ “intent is to describe the current state of the science of implementation, and identify what it will take to transmit innovative programs and practices to mental health, social services, juvenile justice, education, early childhood education, employment services, and substance abuse prevention and treatment. This monograph summarizes findings from the review of the research literature on implementation and proposes frameworks for understanding effective implementation processes. The results of this literature review and synthesis confirm that systematic implementation practices are essential to any national attempt to use the products of science -- such as evidence-based programs -- to improve the lives of its citizens.”

[Full text – Implementation Research](#)

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## **Implementing and Scaling Up Technology: Five Briefs**

Center for Implementing Technology in Education (CITEd),  
American Institutes for Research, Washington DC, with CAST, Wakefield, Massachusetts, &  
the Education Development Center, Newton, Massachusetts. (2006-2008).

"Scaling up and implementing technology into a school’s curriculum is an exciting process, but one that requires collaboration among school staff and knowledge of the different elements that are necessary to successfully integrate and sustain the technology. CITEd examined and explored this process, and considerations for the different aspects of the scaling up and implementing process are provided in five briefs:" (a) Implementation -- Understanding the Design; (b) Implementation Teams Make It Happen; (c) Technology Implementation in Schools -- Key Factors to Consider; (d) Sustaining Technology Innovation; and (e) Scaling Up Technology Initiatives.

[Five Briefs -- Implementing and Scaling Up Technology](#)

[Also see – Lessons Learned for Effective Technology Implementation](#)

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## **Is the Supply in Demand? Exploring How, When, and Why Teachers Use Research**

Learning Point Associates, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2009).

E. Behrstock, K. Drill, & S. Miller.

Distributed by the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC).

“The aim of this paper is to explore the demand side of the market for educational research. That is, what types of educational research do teachers find useful for advancing their instructional practice and under what conditions do they access the research currently available? Although teachers have mixed opinions — both positive and negative — of research, teachers are by no means categorically disinclined to using educational research to improve their practice. . . . However, their views of what constitutes ‘credible’ research tend to differ from those of professional researchers. Teachers include among their criteria for credibility research that is relevant and applicable to their own classroom context. More generally, perceived gaps between researchers and practitioners lead to issues with the content, presentation, and dissemination of educational research that limit teachers’ demand for it. In a profession where time is at a premium, teachers are unlikely to prioritize research that does not take into account their needs and preferences. Ensuring an appropriate match between what teachers want and what researchers supply requires that certain changes occur within the academic, policy, and practitioner communities.”

[Full text – Is the Supply in Demand?](#)

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## **Knowledge Translation: Introduction to Models, Strategies, and Measures**

National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR), SEDL, Austin, Texas. (2007).

P. Sudsawad.

Among other definitions presented in this paper, NCDDR proposes that knowledge translation is ‘the collaborative and systematic review, assessment, identification, aggregation, and practical application of high-quality disability and rehabilitation research by key stakeholders (i.e., consumers, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers) for the purpose of improving the lives of individuals with disabilities’ (although knowledge translation is useful in behalf of any population) . . . This literature review, although not intended to be an in-depth or systematic review of any one aspect of knowledge translation, is designed to bring together several aspects of it from selected literature for the purpose of raising awareness, connecting thoughts and perspectives, and stimulating ideas and questions about knowledge translation for future research of this area of inquiry in rehabilitation. The body of work included in this review was selected from frequently cited and thought-provoking literature and represents a variety of thoughts and approaches that are applicable to knowledge translation.”

[Full text – Knowledge Translation](#)

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## Measuring and Evaluating the Sustainability of Changes: An Outline of Key Variables

Coordination, Consultation, and Evaluation (CCE) Center, Wisconsin Center for Education Research, University of Wisconsin-Madison. (2004).

"In her cross-site analysis of variables affecting the sustainability of reform efforts, Florian (2001) identified the following five factors as critical to ensuring long-term sustainability: (a) ongoing engagement and development of human capacities, (b) school and district culture/climate, (c) structures of the education system, (d) school and district leadership, and (e) political context. . . . (This paper describes) the five factors identified by Florian, and extends her initial description to include those identified in the school reform literature."

*Cited reference:* Florian, J. (2001). *Sustaining education reform: Influential factors*. Aurora, CO: Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED453583)

[Full text -- Measuring and Evaluating the Sustainability of Changes: An Outline of Key Variables](#)

[Click on the fourth title]

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## Quality Indicators for Research Methodology and Evidence-Based Practices (in special education)

Division for Research, Council for Exceptional Children, Arlington, Virginia. (2004).

S. L. Odom, E. Brantlinger, R. Gersten, R. D. Horner, B. Thompson, & K. Harris.

"The Division for Research established a task force in 2003 to identify quality indicators for research in special education. The additional charge to the task force was to provide guidelines for using research as evidence for effective practices in special education. The task force focused on four research methodologies used most often in special education: (a) group, (b) single subject, (c) correlational, and (d) qualitative designs. For each, quality indicators and guidelines for evidence-based practice were identified. These indicators and guidelines appeared in four papers published in *Exceptional Children*. The manuscript forms of the four methodological papers, an executive summary, and an introductory paper are available in PDF format at the Division's website."

[Full texts -- Quality Indicators for Research Methodology and Evidence-Based Practices](#)

[Also see – Thinking and Communicating Clearly About Evidence-based Practices in Special Education](#)

[Click on 'white paper']

[And see evidence-based practice initiatives and papers: Council for Exceptional Children](#)

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## Readiness for Change: Scaling-up Brief

State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP), FPG Child Development Institute, UNC at Chapel Hill. (2009). D. L. Fixsen, K. A. Blase, R. Horner, & G. Sugai.

"The purpose of this Brief is to define the variables a state or large district leadership team may wish to consider as they determine if they are 'ready' to invest in the scaling-up of an innovation in education. As defined here, 'scaling up' means that at least 60% of the students who could benefit from an innovation have access to that innovation in schools across the State. Creating benefits to students on a comprehensive scale requires considerable change by teachers, building staff, district staff, and state leaders. 'Readiness' is defined as the developmental point at which a person, organization, or system has the capacity and willingness to engage in a particular activity. Creating readiness for change is a

critical component of both initiating and scaling up the use of evidence-based practices and other innovations in education."

[Full text – Readiness for Change](#)

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### **Reading Educational Research: How to Avoid Getting Statistically Snookered**

Heinemann, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. (2006). G. W. Bracey.

In this book, "nimble-minded number cruncher and award-winning researcher Gerald Bracey takes your hand and walks you through the process of figuring out the meaning behind the figures. You don't need to be a math whiz to follow Bracey because he writes with clarity and humor, explicitly defining statistical terminology in easy-to-understand language and even offering you thirty-two specific principles for assessing the quality of research as you read it. The book includes four major themes that every classroom teacher will find helpful as they read research and talk about it with colleagues, parents, or administrators, including: (a) understanding data and how it is used – and misused; (b) uncovering how variables are used in the construction of scientifically based research – and manipulated in politically motivated research; (c) drawing conclusions about a study and deciding whether the data presented are meaningful; and (d) assessing that data that come from standardized testing."

[For purchase -- Reading Educational Research: How to Avoid Getting Statistically Snookered](#)

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### **RTI Integrity Rubric and Worksheet**

National Center on Response to Intervention, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2011).

"The RTI Essential Components Integrity Rubric and the RTI Essential Components Integrity Worksheet are for use by individuals responsible for monitoring the school-level fidelity of Response to Intervention (RTI) implementation. They may also be used by schools for self-appraisal; however, they were not designed for compliance monitoring and therefore should not be used for this purpose. The rubric and the worksheet are designed to be used together and are aligned with the essential components of RTI."

[Complete Rubric and Worksheet](#)

[Also see related resources at the right]

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### **Seeing Improvement: A Guide to Visiting Schools That Use Effective Whole School Improvement Models and Promising Practices**

Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC, in cooperation with the American Federation of Teachers. (2006).

"This guide provides advice on conducting a school visit with the purpose of initiating a 'seeing is believing' test to help schools or districts choose a reform model. . . . It includes information on selecting evidence-based approaches for school improvement, as well as detailed guidance on conducting school visits. The appendices include checklists and sample materials to assist with school visits."

[Full text -- Seeing Improvement: A Guide to Visiting Schools That Use Effective Whole School Improvement Models and Promising Practices](#)

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## **Sustaining Change: A Models for Change Guidebook (for juvenile justice entities)**

Models for Change, supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. (2010).

J. K. Wiig (Child Welfare League of America), J. J. Cocozza (Natl Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice), J. A. Morris (Technical Assistance Collaborative), J. L. Shufelt (National Center for Mental Health in Juvenile Justice), & K. R. Skowrya (Natl Center for Mental Health in Juvenile Justice).

“Long-term program sustainability is perhaps one of the most challenging issues facing new and innovative juvenile justice programs today. . . . Despite the fact that ‘sustainability’ repeatedly emerges as a major challenge for juvenile justice and human service programs, little is known about the factors that actually affect program sustainability. This dearth of research literature is the result of a number of factors, including the lack of funding for follow-up evaluations after grants and federal start-up funding have concluded. However, some factors influencing sustainability appear to be constant across those studies that have been conducted. . . . The guidebook, which contains a workbook for your sustainability planning processes, can be downloaded in its entirety.”

[Full text – Sustaining Change](#)

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## **Systemic Change for School Improvement: Designing, Implementing, and Sustaining Prototypes and Going to Scale**

Center for Mental Health in Schools, University of California, Los Angeles. (2006).

"To encourage a greater policy discussion of the complexities of implementing major school improvements on a large scale, this report (a) discusses the need to expand school improvement planning to address how schools and districts will accomplish necessary systemic changes, (b) outlines some basic considerations related to systemic change, and (c) proposes a set of policy actions. . . . A basic framework is presented to highlight how major elements involved in designing school improvements are logically connected to considerations about systemic change. That is, the same elements can be used to frame key intervention concerns related to school improvement and systemic change, and each is intimately linked to the other. The elements are conceived as encompassing: (a) the vision, aims, and underlying rationale for what follows; (b) the resources needed to do the work; (c) the general functions, major tasks, activities, and phases that must be pursued; (d) the infrastructure and strategies needed to carry out the functions, tasks, and activities; and (e) the positive and negative results that emerge."

[Full text -- Systemic Change for School Improvement](#)

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## **The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM): A Model for Change in Individuals**

Excerpt from the chapter entitled "Professional Development for Science Education: A Critical and Immediate Challenge" by S. Loucks-Horsley in *National Standards & the Science Curriculum*, Kendall/Hunt Publishing (1996).

Distributed by the National Academy of Sciences, Washington DC. (2005).

"The concerns model identifies and provides ways to assess seven stages of concern (which are displayed in Table 3). These stages have major implications for professional development. First, they point out the importance of attending to where people are and addressing the questions they are asking when they are asking them. Often, we get to the how-to-do-it before addressing self-concerns. We want to focus on student learning before teachers are comfortable with the materials and strategies. The kinds and content of professional development opportunities can be informed by ongoing monitoring of the concerns of teachers. Second, this model suggests the importance of paying attention to implementation for several years, because it takes at least three years for early concerns to be resolved and later ones to emerge. We know that teachers need to have their self-concerns addressed before they are ready to attend hands-on workshops."

[Chapter excerpt – The Concerns-Based Adoption Model](#)

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### **The Implementation Trap: Helping Schools Overcome Barriers to Change**

Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement,  
Learning Point Associates, American Institutes for Research, Washington DC. (2005). C. Jerald.

"Educational researchers, policymakers, and leaders have consistently failed to acknowledge and communicate the importance of the crucial implementation stage in the school improvement process. Indeed, given the emphasis on planning -- and relative silence about implementation -- in many of the guidebooks and tools meant to help with school improvement, school leaders can easily come away with the impression that if a team gets the plan right, successful implementation of that plan must surely follow." This Brief reviews barriers to change -- plus roles for school principals, district administrators, and policymakers in overcoming these barriers. A set of recommendations is included.

[Full text -- The Implementation Trap: Helping Schools Overcome Barriers to Change](#)

[Click on the third title -- Also see related papers on this page]

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### **The Uses of Research in Policy and Practice**

*Social Policy Report*. (2012). Society for Research in Child Development. V. Tseng.

"This paper presents a conceptual framework for understanding the uses of research in policy and practice, findings from recent empirical work, and early lessons from the field. The framework describes the ways policymakers and practitioners define, acquire, interpret and ultimately use research. . . . Because research does not speak for itself, policymakers and practitioners must always interpret its meaning and implications for their particular problems and circumstances. This means that identifying the right translators and creating productive conditions for translation are critical.

[Full text – The Uses of Research in Policy and Practice](#)

[Click on #2 under 2012]

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### **Thinking Points: A Synthesis of Ideas About the Change Process**

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC), FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Original manuscript by Pat Trohanis. Updated by J. Hurth and S. Goode. (2009).

"Systems change involves changing the capacity, interrelationships, and interdependencies among parts, levels and stakeholders of a system with the consequence that desired changes in one part and level are accompanied by changes in other parts and levels to reach an idealized and sustainable vision of the

whole." This short paper summarizes literature on (a) general concepts of change; (b) change and organizations/systems; (c) change and individuals; (d) planning for change; and (e) sustaining change. It is part of a series on Topics in Technical Assistance.

[Full text – Thinking Points](#)

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## **What Is Scientifically Based Research? A Guide for Teachers -- Using Research and Reason in Education**

National Institute for Literacy, Washington DC. (2006).

"Effective teachers use scientific thinking in their classrooms all the time. They assess and evaluate student performance, develop Individual Education Plans, reflect on their practice, and engage in action research. Teachers use experimental logic when they plan for instruction-- they evaluate their students' previous knowledge, construct hypotheses about the best methods for teaching, develop teaching plans based on those hypotheses, observe the results, and base further instruction on the evidence collected. In short, teachers use the concepts of rigorous research and evaluation in profoundly practical ways. Teachers can further strengthen their instruction and protect their students' valuable time in school by scientifically evaluating claims about teaching methods and recognizing quality research when they see it. This booklet, distilled from the monograph *Using Research and Reason in Education: How Teachers Can Use Scientifically Based Research to Make Curricular and Instructional Decisions*, provides a brief introduction to understanding and using scientifically based research."

[Full text -- What Is Scientifically Based Research?](#)

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## **When the Best Is the Enemy of the Good: The Nature of Research Evidence Used in Systematic Reviews and Guidelines**

National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR), SEDL, Austin, Texas. (2009).

M. P. J. M. Dijkers for the NCDDR Task Force on Systemic Review and Guidelines.

The premise of this short paper is that "evidence-based practice, according to authoritative statements by the founders of this approach to health care, involves using the 'best available' evidence in addition to clinical expertise and patient preferences to make decisions on the care of patients. However, many systematic reviewers interpret 'best available' as 'best possible' and exclude from their reviews any evidence produced by research of a grade less than the highest possible (e.g., the randomized clinical trial [RCT] for interventions), even if that means making no recommendations at all. Voltaire's comment that 'the best is the enemy of the good' is applicable here. Rehabilitation would be disadvantaged especially, as it can boast few RCTs, because of its nature. The myopic focus on the 'strongest' research designs may also steer researchers away from asking, 'What is the best design to answer *this* research question?' Lastly, rehabilitation and other clinicians need to know not just *which* interventions are effective, but also *how* these interventions need to be delivered; information relevant to this latter aspect of knowledge translation is typically produced using 'weak' research designs."

[Full text -- When the Best Is the Enemy of the Good](#)

[A webcast with associated materials is also available](#)



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