

# Multi-Tiered Systems of Support In Early Childhood Settings



# Entrance Ticket

10 min

In your small group

## Who are the students in your class?

In this activity, you will be randomly generating a small group of students that you will be working with throughout the remainder of this workshop.

[Roll the virtual die 6 times.](#) Each digit on the die represents a different student profile. If you are a preschool or pre-k teacher/team, you will apply that profile to a student in the age range that you serve. If you are a K-3 team/teacher, you will apply the profile to a student in the age range that you serve.

Using the chart in your workbook, compose your class and fill in the reflection prompts on the chart.

You have 10 minutes to complete this pre-assessment.

# Session #1 MTSS Overview

In this session, we will explore the following concepts:

1. What is MTSS?
  - Overview of MTSS
  - MTSS Framework Components
2. What MTSS is *not*
3. Why MTSS fails more than it succeeds

# Objectives

By the end of the session, you will be able to:

## **Describe what MTSS is (*and what it isn't*)**

How will I know? (challenge by choice)

- Create a 10-second elevator speech
- Create a vision board/collage representing MTSS
- Write a persuasive letter to a school board member
- Create a flyer that explains MTSS to parents/potential parents

# What is MTSS?

Activity: 3 minutes

In your workbook, or on a piece of paper, answer this question.

Try and elaborate on the 5 w's:

What is it?

Who is it for?

When do you do it?

Where does it happen?

Why does it happen?

How does it work?

# MTSS Overview

- MTSS stands for “Multi-tiered Systems of Support”
- What does that mean? ALL children, not just struggling children, ALL educators, not just some educators
- What are the components of MTSS?

# MTSS Framework Components

- Team leadership
  - Individual Student team
  - Classroom team
  - Program/grade level team
  - Leadership team
  
- Strong educator support system
- Layering of supports for all children
- Effective Practices
- Family and School Partnerships

## Activity: Critical Component Inventory      5 min (slide 26)

In this activity, you will do a quick inventory of the critical MTSS components as they currently exist in your educational setting.

If you are here as an individual, you will complete this activity individually.

If you are here as a team, you will complete this activity as a team.

In your workbook, complete the MTSS critical components matrix. Do what you can. If you get stuck, or get to stopping point, that's ok. We will revisit the matrix periodically throughout the workshop series.



# Why MTSS?

*School Year 2019-2020*

In Maine, across 215 SAUs, there are:

**11,871** certified classroom teachers (Pk-12) ... and... **2,006** certified Special Education teachers (Pk-12)



**\*\*14%** of our Pk-12 staff...who spend the *MOST* time with students have a special education background. **\*\***

# So what....add in this...

**30,758** of our students (18.9%) receive Special Education services (Kg-12)

**902** of our Pre-K students (14.5%) had an IEP through CDS.

**12,534** students (K-12) are in a regular classroom setting for **less** than 80% of their day.

- 17,074 are in a regular classroom setting for more 80% or more of their day.

**1,150** receive their services in an entirely separate school.

Consistently **10 & 11** year olds make up our highest special education count.



So we'll ask again...why MTSS?

How could these statistics be improved through a multi-tiered system of support?

# MTSS 101 and the Early Childhood Setting

- What it is
  - “In Maine, MTSS is defined as a comprehensive framework designed to address the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of each student in the most inclusive and equitable learning environment” <https://www.maine.gov/doe/MTSS>
  - **Multi= Many**
  - **Tiered= Levels**
  - **Systems= Programs**
  - **Support= Help**
  
- What MTSS isn't
- Misconceptions

How do the two combine, and what is your role as an early childhood educator?

# What MTSS *isn't*

Misconception #1: MTSS is a Program

Misconception #2: MTSS is the new RTI

Misconception #3: MTSS is only for struggling students

Misconception #4: MTSS is a special education referral process

# Digging deeper into the “what”

Intentional

Preventative

Inclusive

People first

**Reflection point:** Go back to your answer to the question “what is MTSS?” Did you use any of these words in your answer? If not, how might you revise your answer to reflect these concepts?

## **Why should I care about MTSS?**

Because there aren't enough resources

Because teachers are tired

Because there will ALWAYS be children who challenge us

Because the whole is greater than the sum of the parts

Because what we are doing isn't working for everyone

Because what we are doing isn't working for *everyone*

# Activity: People, Planning, Partnerships

(8 minutes)

- Team leadership
  - Individual Student team
  - Classroom team
  - Program/grade level team
  - Leadership team
- Strong educator support system
- Layering of supports for all children
- Effective Practices
- Family and School Partnerships



# The 80% rule

80% of the work that goes into implementation science exists in phases 1 and 2.

80% of an MTSS framework happens before a student ever walks into the building

80% of the effort inside the building should be on tier 1

80% of our students should be able to make adequate growth and yearly progress in a tier 1 setting.....

# Readiness and Capacity for true MTSS Implementation

Starts with you.

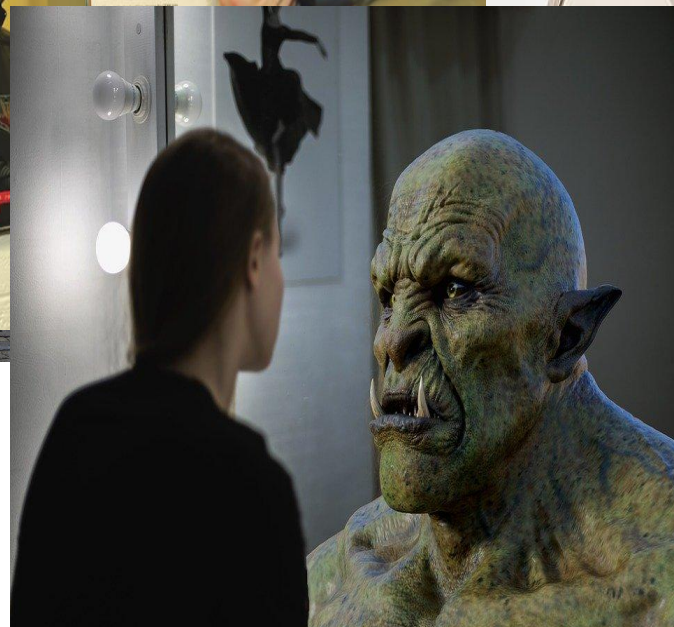
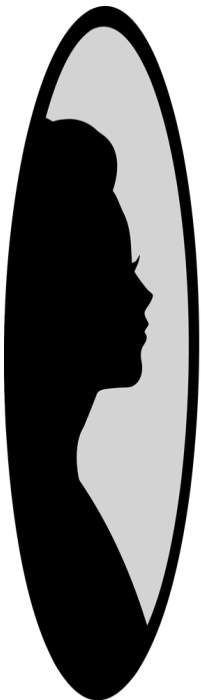
You are the biggest asset to a well implemented MTSS framework, but you can also be its biggest barrier.

Remember the quote earlier that we reflected on: “All children can learn, but I can’t teach all children.”

Yes you can.

Maybe not alone, but with the right people, planning, and partnerships, yes. Yes you can.

# First things first



# Addressing our own HOT buttons!

“Teachers are human beings, and it’s impossible to turn off personal preferences and pet peeves just because one is responsible for the care and education of a group of children. These “pet peeves” are often referred to as *hot buttons*. Behaviors that are viewed as particularly egregious by one teacher may not even register as a challenge to another.” ~Michelle Salcedo, M.Ed.

*In this next activity, take a moment to reflect on your hot buttons. Use the examples to anonymously “stamp” which ones trigger unwanted or negative feelings within yourself.*

Being Late



Clinginess



Clutter



Crying



Hitting/Kicking



Swearing



Tattling



Getting off Schedule



Not following instructions



Yelling



Being Interrupted



Whining



For behaviors that push your hot buttons, a few strategies can be helpful:

1. *Be honest with yourself and others about your hot buttons.*
2. *Recognize that a behavior that pushes your hot buttons is about you, not the child.*
3. *Communicate with a co-teacher. Have a code word that lets her know you need support in addressing a behavior that feels especially challenging to you. She can also use the word to let you know when you need to walk away from a situation.*

Why do my hot buttons get in the way? I'm an adult, and I should be able to control them.

Cognitive bias

“Rules of thumb”

# Cognitive bias: Our “rules of thumb”

To blame everything on cognitive bias however is to stand by a fire that’s burning down a forest rather than trying to put it out or discover what caused the fire in the first place.

It is easy to rally against what could be simply described as human nature, but genuine impact is made when someone stands and says, “so what can we do about it?”

But to address our biases, we have to name them, we have to own them, and we have to plan for them in advance.



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# Common ways we addressing our bias: Ignore, prevent

**First, we try to *ignore* or defend the bias.**

“That \_\_\_\_\_ is just \_\_\_\_\_ that’s not about me, that’s about \_\_\_\_\_.”

“This is just human nature.”

“Well, I am who I am. People don’t change.”

“This is the way I was taught, so this is the way I will teach.”

**Prevent the bias**

- Resolution
- Self-help books
- Professional development

# Bias in Education

**Attribution bias:** This is a common bias in educational settings because it's how we attempt to explain behavior in our students. When we are frustrated with someone's behavior, because they are behaving in a way we wouldn't, or we find unacceptable, attribution bias steps in to help us understand the situation.

How does this bias help *you*?

- It gives you the fastest path possible out of an uncomfortable situation by providing a quick answer to a situation that conflicts with our beliefs

How does this bias harm *others*?

- It dehumanizes by allowing us to think and respond in labels rather than people-first approaches.
- It prevents critical thinking

**Waterfall:** Give an example of attribution bias in your educational setting.

# Bias in Education

**Confirmation bias:** This bias appears on the heels of attribution bias. When attribution bias leads us to beliefs about uncomfortable situations, confirmation bias kicks in because we want to make sure we aren't being unfair. So, we start to seek out additional information... but, the information we seek is filtered in a way that is designed to confirm our affirmation/judgement.

How does this bias help *you*?

- It validates your attribution bias. Helps you feel “right” or “justified” for feeling a certain way

How does this bias harm *others*?

- It prevents critical thinking
- It inhibits problem solving

**Waterfall:** Give an example of confirmation bias in your educational setting.

# Bias in Education

**Availability bias:** This bias is also known as the solution effect. We use this bias to get quick solutions to problems without regarding other possible solutions. When we view problems as blocking us from getting to where we want to go, we look for the fastest solution to the problem. Often we try to recall what was done in the past to solve that problem and assume that the previous solution is now automatically the best in this situation.

How does this bias help *you*?

- It relieves you of any burden that might be impeding your own goals

How does this bias harm *others*?

- It prolongs access to actual solutions that might help someone
- It can elevate tiny issues into things that we think are much bigger
- It dismisses actual needs of others

**Waterfall:** Give an example of availability bias in your educational setting.

# Outcomes of biases

- **Halo Effect**

- When one characteristic of a person determines how you positively view them, allowing you to filter out any negative characteristics

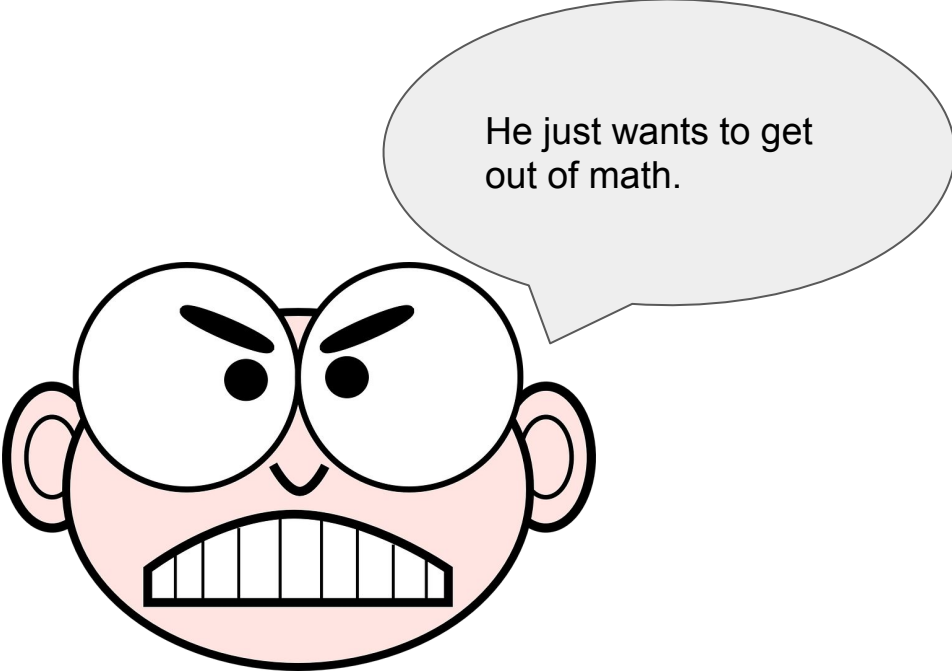
- **Horns Effect**

- When one characteristic of a person determines how you negatively view them, allowing you to filter out any positive characteristics


Waterfall: Give an example of one of these effects in your educational setting.

# One final note about bias (and this is the part that leads us back to MTSS!)

- **Attribution error effect**



He just wants to get out of math.



I'm so tired because my baby brother cried all night.

# Exit Ticket

In your home group, revisit the group of students you generated in the entrance ticket. Consider the following questions as you reflect on the students you rolled and the information we covered today in session 1.