



## **Taking a Snapshot of Early Childhood RTI Implementation**

**Center for Response to Intervention in Early Childhood (CRTIEC):**  
*A Consortium of the University of Kansas, The Ohio State University,  
University of Minnesota, and the Dynamic Measurement Group*

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### **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Taking a Snapshot of Early Childhood Response to Intervention (RTI) Across the USA**

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#### **Introduction**

Last year, we reported the results of our first national survey of state directors and coordinators regarding implementation of the RTI approach to early childhood education and early intervention (Linas, Carta, & Greenwood, 2009). In addition to State Pre-K Directors and IDEA Part B (629-preschool) coordinators surveyed last year, this year we surveyed state Head Start Directors/Coordinators. Result from last year indicated that RTI implementation was just beginning with many issues and challenges to be overcome.

A driving concept behind the survey was collection of information that might inform research, practice, and policy; by determining aspects of need that research and development could be profitably focused. Below we report results of the second annual national survey regarding the states' implementation of preschool RTI.

#### **Research Questions**

1. What is the status of Preschool RTI implementation nationally in 2010 and what change is evident from last year's survey?
2. What specific early childhood settings are seeing RTI implementation?
3. Which specific components of RTI are being implemented?
4. What curricula and learning outcomes are being emphasized?
5. Do states have RTI models ready to share with others?
6. What are the challenges implementing RTI in early childhood setting as reported by early childhood professionals?

# Taking a Snapshot of Early Childhood RTI Implementation

## Methods

### Sample

In 2009, the population of knowledgeable state early childhood special education leaders, IDEA-Part B [619] coordinators, and state PreK directors, were recruited to respond to the survey. In all, 57 responded. In 2010, we again recruited this population of leaders to complete the survey. New in 2010, we recruited the population of State Head Start Collaboration Office Directors to respond to the survey. A listing of all these leaders in each state and territory and their contact information was obtained from the NECTAC website (online at <http://www.nectac.org/contact/619coord.asp>). In all 73 responded by completing a survey in 2010.

### Measurement and Procedures

The original 2009 Preschool RTI Survey was based on 8-items developed based on brief reviews of the literature, expert feedback, and discussions among colleagues regarding topics of interest to Preschool RTI. In 2010, the 8 original items were included to track multi-year progress and 6 new items added to provide additional information, a 14-item 2010 survey. The new items were the result of analyses of 2009 results.

The first item was a multiple choice question where the choices were ordered ranging from *No Implementation* to *Full Implementation* in a state. Another survey question contained statements reflecting the perceived challenges to RTI implementation. Each question was evaluated on a 4-level Likert scale ranging from *Little/No Challenge* (a rating = 1) to *Significant Challenge* (a rating = 4). Separating these two extremes were *Some Challenge* and *Moderate Challenge* values. The final survey question (2010 only) asked respondents to indicate concerns about the implementation of RTI in early education settings and included options such as a “lack of professional development, lack of staffing, unclear policy, delay in services, lack of funding, infrastructure or state standards,” as well as offering the option of open ended comments.

If a respondent indicated that No RTI activities were going on in the state when answering the first question, the respondent was directed to the last question regarding challenges and concerns, skipping the intervening items because these details tapped only aspects of implementation when reported to be happening in the state. The survey was developed and delivered to respondents using the Survey Monkey website (online at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)) and related tools. After developing, revising, and testing the survey, respondents were sent an introductory email explaining the purpose and value of this inquiry, as well as the human subjects protection procedures used to maintain confidentiality of the information.

This 2010 survey was sent to Pre-K, 619, and Head Start state leaders electronically. However, because this was the first survey of Head Start leaders, the survey was prefaced by a very brief discussion of RTI. Otherwise, the survey items were the same. Surveys were accessed by respondents through a link in the email that delivered the survey form ready for completing.

## **Taking a Snapshot of Early Childhood RTI Implementation**

Following this first email, respondents received 4 subsequent email reminders at approximately 2 week intervals followed by individual phone contact. In the case of the Head Start survey, following the initial email, a subsequent email that requested participation and included the survey link was sent out by the Senior Advisor in the Head Collaboration Office.

In all, 2009 data was received representing 40 states, District of Columbia, 3 territories, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. 2010 survey data was received representing 46 states, Washington, DC, and 2 territories. A MS-EXCEL dataset containing the respondents records including written comments was downloaded from the website and analyzed using basic descriptive statistics and graphical displays to address the research questions.

### **Reference**

Linas, M., Carta, J. J., & Greenwood, C. R. (2009, June). [Taking a snapshot of Early Childhood Response to Intervention \(RTI\) across the USA](#). Poster presented at the IES Research Conference, Washington, DC