SECTION 2: PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION
OUTLINE

- What is the purpose of the Problem Identification section?
- Where do I gather information from?
- How do I decide what the problem is?
- How do I state the problem?
- How do I depict the discrepancy in performance?
- How do I graph my baseline data?
WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION SECTION?

The purpose of the Problem Identification section is to generate an observable, measureable, objective statement about a behavior or academic concern based on a comparison of the desired and observed behavior. This discrepancy is the foundation for justifying intervention and setting goals.

**Problem** = discrepancy between current and desired levels of performance

- Larger discrepancy → larger problem
**WHERE DO I GATHER INFORMATION FROM?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Needs Development</th>
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<td>2.1</td>
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- **Information is gathered from multiple sources (e.g., Record review, Interview, Observation, and Testing [RIOT]).**
- **Data are not gathered from multiple sources.**
WHERE DO I GATHER INFORMATION FROM?

- Gather data from **MULTIPLE** sources
- **Review Interview Observe Test (RIOT)**
  - Record Reviews — previous evaluations, state assessments, school assessments
  - Interviews — teachers, parents, etc.
  - Observations (across multiple settings)
  - Testing
- Consent is not sufficient involvement and does not represent collaboration
  - Interviews
  - Multi-informant data collection
  - Assistance in creating operational definition
  - Agreement that appropriate behavior has been identified
  - Agreement with level of functioning
HOW DO I DECIDE WHAT THE PROBLEM IS?

- Problem is collaboratively defined
- Others involved in the problem identification process
| 2.2 | □ The problem is operationally defined in observable, measurable terms (i.e., the referral concern is restated as an observable, measurable dependent variable). |
|□ The problem is not operationally defined. (e.g., it is reported as a categorical/descriptive cause such as Autism, Depression, ADHD; or terms such as aggression, anxiety or hyperactivity). |
| 2.3 | □ Expectations for the identified behavior are stated based upon an appropriate source for comparison (e.g., grade level standards, peer performance, normative data, etc.). |
|□ Expected performance is not based on an appropriate source for comparison or is not included OR □ The difference between actual and expected levels of performance is not explicitly stated. |
HOW DO I STATE THE PROBLEM?

- State the problem in observable, measurable terms

- Include
  - Operational definition of the problem behavior
    - Avoid general imprecise terms (aggression, anxiety, etc.)
    - Avoid categorical terms (ADHD, autism)
  - Explicit description of current level of performance
    - X student performing at X level
  - Explicit description of desired level of performance
    - Benchmark is X
    - Class/comparison is performing at X level
HOW DO I DEPICT THE DISCREPANCY IN PERFORMANCE?

- Discrepancy in performance
  - Difference between what is seen and what you want to see
  - “Comparison of the desired and observed behavior…”
  - Put it all together (difference, percentage, etc.)
  - Explicitly indicate the difference between actual and expected levels of performance for the identified problem

- Examples of well-defined problem statement:
  - John correctly identifies 8 letter sounds while his peers identify 21.2 sounds.
  - Sally’s most recent RTI score on the Measure of Academic Progress was 201; the average for a student her age is 216.3.
### How Do I Graph My Baseline Data?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.4</th>
<th>Adequate baseline data are graphed to depict the discrepancy between the case's performance relative to an appropriate comparison.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Baseline data are not graphed OR</td>
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<td>Baseline data include fewer than three data points OR</td>
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<td>Expected level of performance is not included in the graph (i.e., aimline or goal line).</td>
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HOW DO I GRAPH MY BASELINE DATA?

- Establishing a baseline
  - A minimum of *three data points* represent a trend
    - Baseline data may include observations, ratings scales, grades, scores on CBMs, etc., depending on the problem
    - Three separate observations, CBM tests, behavior reports, etc.
  - *Utilize graphs and charts to present baseline information*

- Utilize other data
  - Peer data
  - Norm data
  - Baseline data
  - Aim/trend line
  - Goal line
HOW DO I GRAPH MY BASELINE DATA?

IMPORTANT: use the same tool/measure for baseline that you will use for evaluation

- When using different tools:
  - Potentially measuring different behavior
  - Cannot say you are addressing the identified problem
2.1 WHAT MULTIPLE SOURCES WERE USED TO IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM?

Include your response -
2.2 WHAT IS THE OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM IN MEASURABLE TERMS?

Include your response -
2.3 WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS FOR THE BEHAVIOR STATED WITH AN APPROPRIATE COMPARISON?

Include your response -
2.4 DOES THE ATTACHED GRAPH PROVIDE ADEQUATE BASELINE DATA TO DEPICT THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE STUDENT’S PERFORMANCE RELATIVE TO AN APPROPRIATE COMPARISON?

Include your response -