Why Screen? Which Screen? Promising New Screens

What is Screening?

According to the Center on Response to Intervention for the American Institutes for Research, "Screening is conducted to identify or predict students who may be at risk for poor learning outcomes. Universal screening assessments are typically brief, conducted with all students at a grade level, and followed by additional testing or short-term progress monitoring to corroborate students’ risk status."

What Research-based Universal Screening Reading Assessments Should Teachers Use for Grades K-3 Students?

The importance of using a research-based screener cannot be overstated. In July 2014, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) identified research-based assessments that met standards for technical rigor and efficiency, and published the Approved Menu of Research-based Grades K-3 Universal Screening Reading Assessments. "For the school year commencing July 1, 2016, and each year thereafter, such assessments shall also assist in identifying, in whole or in part, students at risk for Dyslexia or other reading-related learning disabilities. As a critical component of a comprehensive, standards-aligned reading instructional program, districts will select an assessment for use as a universal screening. ... For additional information, review the document entitled, 'Special Considerations for Dyslexia.'"

If you live outside of Connecticut, contact your State Department of Education to determine what screeners have been approved for use in your state and see this information from the International Dyslexia Association. Peruse this list of early literacy assessments and screeners for dyslexia risk compiled by Gaab Lab staff. You can find different tabs for pre-readers and early readers, as well as which screeners are validated/peer-reviewed.

DIBELS 8 Training Workshops in Connecticut and Massachusetts

DIBELS 8 is among the CSDE-approved universal screening reading assessments. In partnership with Hill for Literacy, we are pleased to offer DIBELS 8 one-day training workshops in our Trumbull, CT office on December 3, 2019 and March 24, 2020. For further information and to register, click on the flyer or here.

Promising Screening Apps to Help ID Struggling Readers Early

"It’s never too late to identify dyslexia ... but for every year after pre-kindergarten you wait, the effect of the intervention goes down by 25-50%.

Fumiko Hoeft, Director, UConn Brain Imaging Research Center

Hoeft and colleagues in the AppRISE (Application for Readiness in Schools and Learning Evaluation) Project have developed and are testing a universal screener that assesses school readiness and dyslexia risk in young learners of ages 3-8 in the form of a gamified app. Visit their website to learn how your school or district can participate in the validation process. In neighboring Massachusetts, Dr. Nadine Gaab and her team are developing The Early Literacy Screening App, which is projected to be released in 2020. “The goal is to identify, with a high degree of specificity, all children who struggle with reading, regardless of why they will struggle, as early as possible, and provide support for educators, parents, and health professionals through an easy-to-use, accessible platform,” says Gaab.

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