# Guide to Designing the Screening Process

Teams need to design a screening process that is aligned to their desired outcomes and that clearly identifies the target population, administration schedule, implementation procedures, and data analysis approaches. This resource can help teams consider how to design their screening process.

## Purpose for Screening

While the general purpose of screening is well defined, school teams need to come to consensus about the purpose of screening for their site. Having a clear purpose can help teams better use screening data to reach their desired outcomes. While all may apply, select up to three as the primary purposes for screening.

* To evaluate core curriculum, core instruction, and intervention effectiveness.
* To evaluate program effectiveness for target groups (special education, Title 1, racial/ethnic groups).
* To identify students who need additional assessment and intervention.
* To identify number/percentage of students at risk.
* To assist in decisions about resource allocation.
* To maximize performance on end-of-year tests.
* To contribute to school improvement efforts.
* To assist in reporting district, school, or student performance to parents.
* To identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes.
* To reduce inappropriate referrals to special education or overidentification of students as students with disabilities.
* Other:
* Other:
* Other:

## Assessing Your Needs, Priorities, and Logistics

To assist in selecting a screening tool and establish a process for screening, teams must first identify the needs and priorities of the school or district and determine the logistics for implementing screening. Use the questions below to guide teams in assessing their needs, priorities, and establish screening processes. Teams should keep in mind the purpose(s) for screening identified in the *Purpose of Screening* section.

**1. What are the outcomes we are focused on?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What are our outcomes of interest?  (e.g., behavioral, academic, social, postschool) |  |
| What specific outcome measures are we focused on, if any? (e.g., word reading fluency, computation) |  |
| Are our outcomes aligned with the current curriculum? |  |

**2. What is our scope?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Is it a district- or school-level initiative? Are efforts aligned? |  |
| Are there other efforts in place that can be aligned with screening? |  |

**3. Who is the target population?[[1]](#footnote-2)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What school(s)? |  |
| What grade level(s)? |  |
| Are there specific subgroup(s)? |  |
| What are the demographics/ characteristics of the population we need to consider (e.g., English learners, race/ethnicity)? |  |

**4. What do we need to know about timing?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How frequently will screening occur? |  |
| When during the year will screening occur? |  |
| Will screening measures be administered individually or as a group? |  |
| How will time be scheduled for the administration and scoring of the assessments? When will the assessments be scored? |  |
| How will time be scheduled for reviewing results and incorporating them into instruction? When will this occur? |  |

**5. What are the staff roles related to screening?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Who will conduct the screening? |  |
| Who will score the screening tools? |  |
| Who will interpret the results? |  |
| Does staff have adequate skills and knowledge? |  |

**6. What do we need for administration of screening?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What materials are required to administer the screening tools? |  |
| Are there accommodations for students with special needs and/or English learners? |  |
| What, if any, statistical software will be used for analysis, reporting, and monitoring? |  |

**7. What funds are available?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What funds are available to purchase screening tools and materials? |  |
| What costs are associated with training? |  |
| Are there additional cost demands for hiring staff? |  |

**8. What do we need for training?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How much time is available for training on screening tool administration and data analysis? |  |
| Who will provide the training and technical assistance (internal or external)? |  |
| How much training is needed to implement with fidelity? How much training is needed to use assessment results for decision-making? |  |

## Selecting Screening Tools

Using the results of the *Assessing your Needs, Priorities, and Logistics Handout,* teams can select an appropriate screening tool or determine whether the current screening tool is appropriate. It is important to recognize that the “best tool” may not be the same at every grade level or school.

The National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII) has developed a screening tools chart [(<https://intensiveintervention.org/>)](file:///C:/Users/mpigatt/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/Temporary%20Internet%20Files/Content.Outlook/LAHP9U0Q/(www.rti4success.org)), which lists and provides ratings for commercially available screening tools, and supplemental resources to use the tools chart. Each tool has been reviewed by NCII’s Technical Review Committee (TRC). Information and data are provided about the technical rigor of the tool, the efficiency of the tool, and implementation requirements.

These questions can help teams consider whether a tool is appropriate for their site.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Question | Yes | No | Comments |
| Does the tool match our priorities and provide the data needed to make the decisions we hope to make? |  |  |  |
| Has the screening tool been shown to be valid? |  |  |  |
| Has the screening tool been shown to be reliable? |  |  |  |
| Has the screening tool been shown to be generalizable? |  |  |  |
| Has the screening tool been shown to accurately classify students’ risk status? |  |  |  |
| Is the tool appropriate for our student population? |  |  |  |
| Is the tool appropriate for the resources we have available? |  |  |  |
| Is the tool appropriate for the materials that we have? |  |  |  |

1. In thinking about the target population, it may be necessary to look at district- or school-level data in order to understand the demographics of your population. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)