



Navigating Common Challenges and Pitfalls in the First Years of Special Education

Solutions for Success

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During the first years of teaching, new special education teachers (SETs) face many unique challenges as they work to establish themselves as professionals. Upon entering the classroom on the first day of instruction, SETs are expected to be prepared (Sayeski, 2015), and they are presented with a daunting list of responsibilities and expectations, including the need to be equipped to (a) understand the characteristics and needs associated with multiple disability categories; (b) develop and implement individualized education programs; (c) collect progress-monitoring data and manage data collection systems; and (d) communicate and collaborate effectively with parents, co-teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and other stakeholders.

Moreover, they must do these things all while implementing specially designed instruction to improve the academic, behavioral, and social outcomes of students with disabilities (SWDs) with a diverse array of needs. In addition, they are often tasked with intervening only after their students are already years behind in these areas. The difficulties experienced by their students are seldom minor or simple to address. Indeed, there probably is no other population of students with a greater need for skilled teachers. Finally, SETs must meet student needs—often with limited support and resources—in a variety of contexts and circumstances that may change over time, making it especially hard to master all of the skills necessary to teach SWDs effectively (Billingsley, Griffin, Smith, Kamman, & Israel, 2009).

It is not surprising that beginning SETs have reported being unprepared to manage all of these responsibilities

(Flippin, 2004). Some switch positions or schools, and some leave the profession altogether, adding to the long-standing shortage of highly qualified teachers in the field (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003). With such a high rate of teacher turnover in special education in the first years, beginning SETs need a variety of supports to develop skills, manage stress, and consequently persist in the teaching profession. Toward these ends, scholars have identified a number of formal and informal supports that improve the odds that beginning SETs will be successful and remain in the field. In this article we offer (a) two promising practices to help beginning teachers navigate these initial challenging years on the job, (b) three reliable resources to assist in planning and implementing evidence-based practices (EBPs) for SWDs, and (c) one thought to keep in mind during the first few years of teaching special education.

Promising Practices for SETs

SETs must manage two significant domains to navigate their initial years successfully: (a) the personal domain, which includes managing the many stressors presented by their new role and the relationships it brings; and (b) the professional domain, which includes developing the necessary skills to teach students effectively and perform numerous additional job duties (Billingsley et al., 2009). Teachers who secure, or are provided with, supports and resources in these two domains are more likely to have greater job satisfaction, lower stress, greater commitment to remaining in the profession, and a greater sense of efficacy (Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, &

Whitaker, 2000). Given that resources are limited and schools may not have such formal supports, savvy teachers may have to seek out supports for themselves.

In the personal domain, new SETs can pursue mentoring relationships and professional learning communities from which they can receive both personal and professional support (Billingsley et al., 2009). Many SETs have reported that their most meaningful form of support has come from informal relationships with teachers down the hall with whom they develop informal mentoring or co-mentoring relationships (McLeskey et al., 2004). In particular, sharing experiences, listening to one another, and providing encouragement are activities new teachers consider highly valuable.

In the professional domain, being able to provide highly effective instruction that meets the unique learning needs of SWDs is probably the most important need of new SETs. Much of the need for personal and emotional supports among beginning teachers likely stems from the stress of developing professional competence as a teacher (Billingsley et al., 2009). Consequently, developing and refining skill in the instructional practices most likely to improve learner outcomes (i.e., EBPs; Cook & Schirmer, 2003) may benefit new SETs both professionally and personally. We recommend two practices to promote personal and professional development for beginning SETs: (a) conducting self-assessment to develop a professional growth plan that includes networks of support and practice; and (b) using performance feedback to build fidelity and fluency in select EBPs, with the goal of gradually increasing the number of practices in their teaching repertoire.

Sharing experiences, listening to one another, and providing encouragement are activities new teachers consider highly valuable.

(Gable, Tonelson, Sheth, Wilson, & Park, 2012). Many leave the profession, often within the first 4 years of their teaching career (McLeskey, Tyler, &

Harniss, 2001). Accordingly, scholars have frequently recommended providing beginning teachers with formal induction and mentoring

Promising Practice 1: Self-Assessment of Professional Support and Practice

Beginning SETs may not be sure what types of support they need to be

Figure 1. Self-assessment: Characteristics of beginning special education teachers who thrive

<p><i>A number of characteristics and supports are linked to beginning special educators thriving and remaining in the profession. Complete the following checklist, identifying which of the items you already have in place. Afterward, identify any missing items that you can proactively address by seeking support from colleagues or other resources.</i></p>	
Collaboration	
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to engage in open, productive communication with other teachers. <input type="checkbox"/> I have shared planning time available with the teachers with whom I collaborate. <input type="checkbox"/> I have opportunities for shared professional development with other general and special education teachers. <input type="checkbox"/> I am able to talk openly with an administrator about my role, needs, instruction, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> I have a productive, positive working relationship with my paraprofessional(s).	
Instruction	
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to and do attend professional development and meetings relevant to my needs. <input type="checkbox"/> I have opportunities to observe other general and special education teachers. <input type="checkbox"/> I have access to a variety of reliable resources to support my instruction. <input type="checkbox"/> I proactively engage in classroom management strategies to foster a positive, productive instructional environment and to prevent problems.	
Responsibilities	
<input type="checkbox"/> I clearly understand my role and responsibilities and the roles of those with whom I work. <input type="checkbox"/> I have strategies for managing my time well to perform all of my duties. <input type="checkbox"/> I know someone I can talk to when I'm not clear about my role or responsibilities. <input type="checkbox"/> When I have a need, I proactively seek the resources and supports I need to be successful.	
Relationships	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have access to a formal induction program for beginning teachers. <input type="checkbox"/> I attend trainings or meetings for beginning teachers. <input type="checkbox"/> I have identified someone who will formally or informally mentor me. If so, my mentor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Is a good fit for me <input type="checkbox"/> Works or has experience in my same area of special education <input type="checkbox"/> Is approachable and supportive <input type="checkbox"/> Meets with me regularly and frequently <input type="checkbox"/> Schedules meetings with me formally but also is open to unscheduled meetings <input type="checkbox"/> Provides personal or emotional support <input type="checkbox"/> Provides professional support <input type="checkbox"/> Sets and monitors goals with me <input type="checkbox"/> Provides helpful feedback to me <input type="checkbox"/> Discusses current issues I am facing <input type="checkbox"/> I have identified other special education teachers, colleagues, or outside supports who provide personal and professional support.	

Note. Based on the work of Billingsley, Griffin, Smith, Kamman, and Israel (2009).

successful during their initial years. Certain factors—especially in the areas of collaboration, instruction, role responsibilities, and relationships—play a large role in how well these first years go (see Billingsley et al., 2009). Self-assessment can help SETs identify professional strengths and needs in these areas (Avalos, 2009). In Figure 1, we provide a self-assessment checklist

of factors that are linked with improved job satisfaction, stress level, and likelihood of remaining in the profession for new SETs. Below are five steps to guide beginning SETs through the process of self-assessment. In Figure 2 we provide an example of a teacher who has followed these steps to apply her self-assessment results to an action plan.

Step 1: Complete the self-assessment checklist. Begin the school year by identifying the supports and resources currently in place within the context of the school or district. Check any items that are currently in place.

Step 2: Choose an area of focus. After the checklist has been completed, revisit the items that were

Figure 2. Sample action plan for beginning special education teachers

Building Networks of Support and Practice Action Plan Teacher: Diana Nuckols School: Emmerton Elementary School Year: 2016–2017						
Area of support	Growth target	Supports/resources		Goal(s)	Progress monitoring	
		Needed	Available (Y/N)		Data collection	Status of progress
Collaboration	I have opportunities for shared professional development with other general and special education teachers.	Professional learning community	N (join virtual professional network)	Participate in one Reality 101 Blog each semester.	Checklist	In progress: 1 out of 2 completed
Instruction	I proactively engage in classroom management strategies to foster a positive, productive instructional environment and to prevent problems.	Professional development in identifying and implementing EBPs	N (complete web-based PDF)	Complete <i>Evidence-Based Practices</i> IRIS modules (1–3) by end of first semester.	Checklist	Completed
		Performance feedback to monitor implementation fidelity	Y	Train TA to monitor use of behavior-specific praise 2x/week. Increase use of BSP to 6 statements/15 minutes	Fidelity training checklist	Completed
					Event recording	Ongoing: Current rate 4 statements/15 minutes
Responsibilities	I have strategies for managing my time well to perform all of my duties.	Planner and self-monitoring checklist	Y	Organize a monthly and weekly checklist for annual IEP reviews and re-evaluations and record important dates in planner.	Self-monitoring	Ongoing: Currently meeting all deadlines
Relationships	I have identified someone who will formally or informally mentor me.	Formal mentoring program	N	Ask a colleague with at least 5 years of special education experience to serve as an informal mentor and meet twice a month.	Event recording	Ongoing: Currently meeting goal of 2 meetings per month
		Informal mentor	Y			

not checked, and identify a target in each of the four areas on which to focus. It is important that the areas selected are within the control of the teacher. Figure 2 displays how a new SET, Miss Nuckols, used her self-assessment results to identify some growth areas, including her need to identify a mentor.

Step 3: Develop an action plan. After identifying growth targets, develop a specific plan of what needs to be done to grow in each area. For example, Miss Nuckols planned to find an informal mentor even though her school did not offer a formal mentoring program.

Step 4: Identify necessary supports. Determine any resources or supports needed for the growth target. Many schools or districts allocate funding for enhancing special education services, so we encourage SETs to inquire with school administration to determine if funding is available for professional growth opportunities. As part of her action plan, Miss Nuckols chose to use free web-based professional development to increase her use of EBPs because her school did not have financial resources to help achieve her goal.

Step 5: Set a goal and monitor progress. As a final step, SETs should set a reasonable goal for each section of the action plan and determine how progress will be monitored. We suggest that teachers evaluate their progress at convenient times during the school year, such as at the end of a quarter. Miss Nuckols set several goals for her growth targets and made progress-monitoring plans. For example, she set a goal to ask an experienced colleague to serve as an informal mentor and planned to keep track of how often they met.

Engaging in professional communities and professional development activities with colleagues has been shown to improve SETs' intentions to remain in the field (Gersten et al., 2001). It has been suggested that the use of effective instructional skills is essential for improving the outcomes of SWDs

(Cook & Schirmer, 2009). Thus, when new SETs build networks of support, it is important that these supports focus on fostering the use of EBPs.

Promising Practice 2: Performance Feedback to Build Fluency in EBP

Although beginning SETs must address multiple and varied student learning needs, we recommend that they focus on just one or two key EBPs in the content area(s) or skill domains most relevant to their context and students' needs. Due to the sometimes overwhelming nature of SETs' multiple new roles and responsibilities, trying to master many instructional techniques at once may contribute to stress and burnout (Billingsley et al., 2009). Ideally, building consistency and fluency in implementing targeted practices will lead not only to student success and growth but also to increased teacher efficacy and efficiency. As teachers gain experience in effectively implementing some practices with fidelity, they can begin to move toward implementing more—and more complex—practices and interventions.

When choosing which practices to focus on first, teachers will get the greatest return from EBPs. These practices are ideal because scholars have already identified how best to implement them and have validated that they are generally effective for improving certain outcomes for certain student populations (Cook, Tankersley, Cook, & Landrum, 2008). After choosing an EBP, teachers must implement the selected practice with fidelity to maximize student outcomes (Cook & Odom, 2013). Implementing with fidelity requires an understanding of the necessary components and procedures (e.g., a checklist of the essential steps) that should be followed when implementing that practice (Swanson, Wanzek, Haring, Ciullo, & McCullo, 2011).

One approach that has been supported by research as effective for helping teachers to maintain the fidelity of their practice is performance feedback (Solomon, Klein, & Politylo, 2012). Performance feedback involves

someone (a) observing and collecting data on a teacher's implementation of a practice and (b) providing feedback to the teacher so he or she can improve. Practitioners might ask a colleague, a mentor, or an administrator who is familiar with a chosen practice to observe them teaching while completing a checklist of the crucial components of the practice. Below we provide five steps for implementing performance feedback; in Figure 3, we provide an example of a teacher who has followed these steps to improve her practice.

Step 1: Identify an instructional practice to focus upon. Teachers should begin by choosing a practice or intervention that is the most relevant to their context and students' needs. In Figure 3 we see that Mrs. Klass worked with her co-teacher, Mr. Bradley, to identify choral responding as a strategy that could help her improve student engagement during her math class.

Step 2: Break the practice down into smaller steps. Identify each step or action needed to implement the practice as well as any necessary materials or resources. It is helpful to list these out as a checklist that can be used daily to make sure all the necessary components and procedures of the intervention are being implemented. For example, Mrs. Klass and Mr. Bradley determined that using choral responding requires her to (a) remind students of lesson expectations, (b) review and model choral responding procedures (which includes several substeps), and (c) implement a certain number of choral responses in each lesson.

Step 3: Set a reasonable goal. Teachers tend to be more successful at improving their practice when they set concrete goals. If teachers choose to improve a practice they already use (e.g., specific praise), then it may be helpful to collect some baseline data to determine how well they are already implementing a practice before setting a goal to improve performance. In addition, creating some form of reward for meeting goals may help to reinforce improvement. In Mrs. Klass's case, she

Figure 3. Sample checklist and graph for improving choral responding

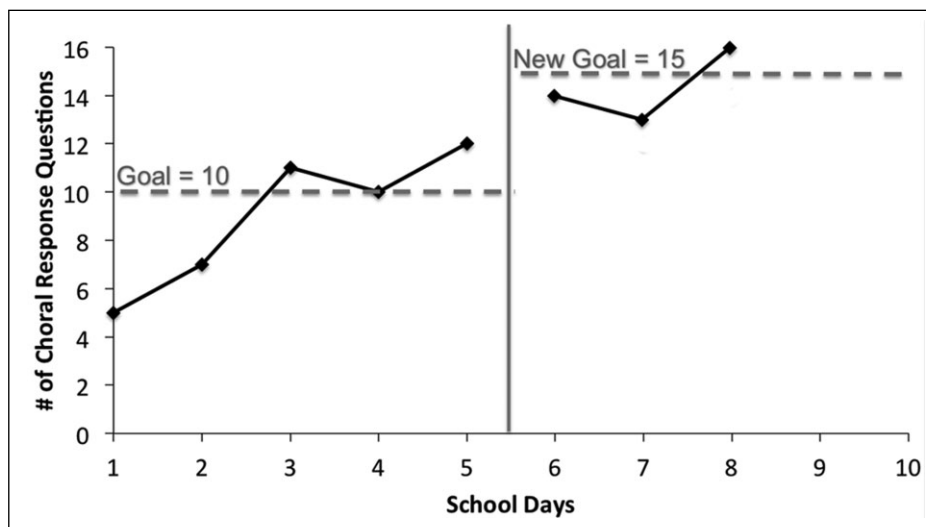
Mrs. Klass decided to improve her use of instructional strategies to increase her students' active engagement during whole group math instruction. She decided to ask her co-teacher, Mr. Bradley, to help her improve. They decided she could use choral responding to give students a greater number of opportunities to respond. After making a checklist together and setting a goal, each day Mr. Bradley has observed Mrs. Klass and given her data-based performance feedback, including the checklist and an updated graph.

Checklist for Choral Responding

- ☒ Remind students of the expectations for the lesson
- ☒ Review and model choral responding procedures
 - ☒ Ask a question ("Okay class, what . . . ?")
 - ☒ Provide wait time with signal (*teacher's palms up at waist*)
 - ☒ Signal students to respond (*raise hands up*)
 - ☒ Provide positive and corrective feedback
- ☒ Goal: Ask at least 15 questions using choral responding (*tally below*)



Mrs. Klass has been pleased to see her own quick progress over the past eight school days. She has improved her use of the strategy and recently has increased her goal from 10 to 15 choral response questions per lesson



had never used choral responding before, so she conferred with Mr. Bradley to identify a reasonable yet challenging goal of 10 choral response questions per lesson.

Step 4: Implement the practice with performance feedback. Begin implementing the practice during instruction. If working with a partner, schedule regular times when your partner

can observe to collect data (e.g., fill out the checklist, count how often the practice is used). Because they are co-teachers, Mr. Bradley was able to collect data daily on Mrs. Klass's use of choral responding. He filled out the checklist and tallied the number of choral response questions during each lesson, a task that was simple enough he was still able to complete his other teaching responsibilities in the classroom.

Step 5: Evaluate progress regularly and make changes as needed. Graphing observation data is especially helpful for giving a visual of progress made. Examples of what teachers might graph include the percentage of intervention steps completed or the number of times a practice was implemented. Teachers should check their progress toward their goal and discuss with their

partner. If regularly meeting the goal, it may be helpful to increase the goal, or teachers may determine they have mastered the practice and select another practice to work on. At the end of her first week using choral responding, Mrs. Klass met with Mr. Bradley to discuss her performance. Because Mrs. Klass had met her goal 3 days in a row, they decided she was ready to increase her goal to 15 choral response questions per lesson for the next week. They plan to continue meeting regularly to discuss Mrs. Klass's progress, and when they determine she has developed enough fluency with choral responding, they plan to identify a new instructional strategy to add to her skill set.

Reliable Resources

As SETs become proficient in their implementation of select EBPs and encounter novel situations, they will require additional information about effective practices. However, although educational resources (e.g., books, curricula, websites, products) are plentiful, not all sources provide valid information (Test, Kemp-Inman, Diegelmann, Hitt, & Bethune, 2015). Accessing practitioner-friendly journals, reliable web-based resources, and meaningful professional development experiences that provide valid information on effective instruction can benefit SETs during their initial years and throughout their careers.

"Practitioner-Friendly" Journals

Peer-reviewed journals are generally regarded as a useful source of information, and the peer-review process adds a significant layer of trustworthiness to published articles. At minimum, professionals in the field with specific knowledge and expertise about a topic have reviewed a submission, and editors have provided feedback to authors (often requesting specific revisions), before a paper is accepted for publication.

Peer-reviewed journals fall into two broad categories, based on their intended audience. Research journals publish

primarily original research studies and generally target researchers, teacher educators, and advanced graduate students. In contrast, practitioner-focused (sometimes called *practitioner-friendly*) journals contain almost exclusively articles that describe how to implement a specific practice. Although research journals contain useful information, we encourage teachers—especially

the website and whether the concepts and practices it presents are based upon high-quality, empirical evidence. However, many teachers may find they lack the time necessary to evaluate the validity and quality of web resources. Test and colleagues (2015) evaluated web-based resources and identified websites that SETs can trust (see Table 2).

Teachers tend to be more successful at improving their practice when they set concrete goals.

beginning teachers—to read mostly practitioner-friendly journals, as a matter of efficiency. Reading individual research studies is an inefficient way for a very busy beginning SET to find out how to help a specific student with some particular academic problem or behavioral skill deficit (Santangelo, Novosel, Cook, & Gapsis, 2015). The authors of a well-written paper in a trusted practitioner-friendly journal, on the other hand, will have already gleaned from the research literature the best elements of effective practice and summarized these in straightforward language in a how-to format. We list in Table 1 some trustworthy, peer-reviewed, practitioner-friendly journals geared toward special education.

Reliable Web-Based Resources

Although many teachers ask colleagues for ideas and support when faced with a challenging situation or a need to learn new skills, the first place that teachers often turn for information is the Internet (Jones, 2009). Web-based resources are ideal in that they are usable and accessible, two characteristics of resources that have been suggested to facilitate teachers' use of EBPs (Carnine, 1995; Jones, 2009). Although the Internet is a convenient and quick tool for gathering information, it is flawed by a lack of peer review. Thus, SETs must be extraordinarily cautious in order to avoid subscribing to ineffective educational fads that are promoted on the Internet. It is important to consider the quality of

The National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII; www.intensiveintervention.org) is an example of a trustworthy website that specifically promotes the use of data-based individualization (DBI) for students with deficits in academic or behavioral functioning. The NCII is a product of a partnership between the American Institutes for Research and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education, and the information on this website is reviewed by a technical review committee. We think this is a good example of a website that is especially helpful for new teachers because it (a) offers a comprehensive overview of DBI; (b) includes videos, modules, and webinars; and (c) provides materials for data collection and lesson planning. In addition, NCII offers a review of evidence for academic interventions, including intensive and individualized reading and mathematics (www.intensiveintervention.org/chart/instructional-intervention-tools) and behavioral interventions (www.intensiveintervention.org/chart/behavioral-intervention-chart). Teachers can use this section to familiarize themselves with the quality of evidence that supports a specific practice. One resource that may also be particularly helpful for beginning SETs is a question-and-answer section (www.intensiveintervention.org/resources/ask-the-expert); in this section, leading experts in the field respond to frequently asked questions about the delivery of intensive interventions.

Table 1. Reliable Practitioner-Friendly Journals

Journal	Description ^a
<i>Beyond Behavior</i> ccbd.net/publications	Features practitioner-friendly articles that address compelling issues and EBPs related to individuals with challenging behavior.
<i>Communication Disorders Quarterly</i> journals.sagepub.com/home/cdq	Delivers pertinent information for speech-language pathologists and teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, including empirical research, tutorials for implementing specific procedures, and reviews of books and materials related to the field.
<i>Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities</i> journals.sagepub.com/home/foa	Offers practical educational and treatment suggestions for supporting persons with autism or other pervasive developmental disabilities, including research reports, position papers, effective intervention procedures, descriptions of successful programs, and media reviews.
<i>Journal of Special Education Technology</i> journals.sagepub.com/home/jst	Provides practitioners with technological information and resources, policies, and discussion concerning current issues and programs and practices that include technology for SWDs.
<i>Learning Disabilities Research & Practice</i> teachingld.org/pages/ldrp	Publishes research and practitioner articles specifically written to guide instructional practice for a wide variety of professionals who work with students with learning disabilities.
<i>Intervention in School and Clinic</i> journals.sagepub.com/home/isc	Focuses on practical strategies for improving assessment, instruction, and management for individuals with learning disabilities or behavior disorders. Articles focus on curricular, instructional, social, behavioral, assessment, and vocational strategies and techniques that can be directly applied to the classroom.
<i>TEACHING Exceptional Children</i> journals.sagepub.com/home/tcx	Features research-to-practice information and materials that can be applied immediately in the classroom as well as current issues in special education teaching and learning, including the latest data on instructional technologies, strategies, procedures, and techniques with applications to students with exceptionalities.
<i>Young Exceptional Children</i> journals.sagepub.com/home/yec	Presents practical, research-based strategies and resources for SETs, administrators, and therapists who work with young children with exceptionalities.

Note. EBPs = evidence-based practices; SWDs = students with disabilities; SETs = special education teachers.

^aAdapted from journal website.

Professional Development Resources

Even though most schools and districts offer professional development in some form or another, novice SETs may benefit from additional, outside sources. For example, web-based professional development allows teachers to target their individual needs for professional growth and customize their professional development experiences. Rather than broadly searching for information to inform teaching, we suggest that SETs identify

the area of instruction or intervention in which they need support (based on the self-assessment procedure previously described) and begin with a trusted website that provides relevant information to target a specific area of development. For example, the IRIS Center (iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu) website is organized around common topics (e.g., reading instruction, behavior management, tiered systems of support) and provides resources, case studies, and training modules that translate research into practice. The IRIS modules are designed to be

user-friendly and practical while also thorough and evidence based. Teachers can go to IRIS to get in-depth information on important topics from leading experts as well as step-by-step instructions and examples for implementation.

Final Thoughts

Clearly, beginning a career in special education can be daunting. The challenges are formidable, the stakes are high, and burnout is too common. But what about SETs who stay? Who

Table 2. Selected Credible Web-Based Resources With Explicit Evidence

Website	Overview
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association <i>asha.org</i>	Supports audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists by providing advocacy, setting standards, and identifying EBPs.
Best Evidence Encyclopedia <i>bestevidence.org</i>	Provides reviews and ratings of the strength of the evidence supporting a variety of K–12 programs.
IRIS Center <i>iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu</i>	IRIS resources (modules, case study units, activities, etc.) are designed to address instructional and classroom issues of importance to educators and promote EBPs.
National Autism Center <i>nationalautismcenter.org</i>	Provides leadership and comprehensive evidence-based resources to families, practitioners, and policy makers regarding ASD.
National Center on Intensive Intervention <i>intensiveintervention.org</i>	Supports implementation of data-based individualization in reading, mathematics, and behavior for students with severe and persistent learning and behavioral needs.
National Professional Development Center on ASD <i>autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu</i>	Promotes the use of EBPs for children and youth with ASD, birth to 22 years of age.
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition <i>transitionta.org</i>	Assists stakeholders in implementing evidence-based and promising practices and predictors that promote positive post-school outcomes for all SWDs.

Note. Adapted from “Are Online Sources for Identifying Evidence-Based Practices Trustworthy? An Evaluation,” by, D. W. Test, A. Kemp-Inman, K. Diegelmann, S. B. Hitt, and L. Bethune, *Exceptional Children*, 82, Table 1. Copyright 2015 Council for Exceptional Children. EBPs = evidence-based practices; ASD = autism spectrum disorder.

thrive? Who build networks of personal and professional support? Who develop fluency in an array of EBPs targeting their students’ needs? Such teachers make a positive impact on the lives of students who most need highly skilled and persistent professionals to support them (Cook & Schirmer, 2003). They are likely SETs who actively participate in building a collegial culture of EBP in their schools (Cook & Cook, 2004). It is far too common for teaching to become an insular event, with educators closing their classroom doors and operating in a silo. Indeed, too many beginning SETs report being burdened by a sense of isolation (Billingsley et al., 2009). By approaching teaching in a collaborative manner that encourages constructive interactions among colleagues about both personal and professional challenges—particularly with a focus on mastering implementation of EBPs—beginning SETs will be more likely to gain the support necessary to thrive during

their initial years and, most importantly, will be equipped with the most effective skills and resources for promoting positive outcomes for SWDs.

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