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The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative:
INVESTING IN PROGRAMS THAT WORK

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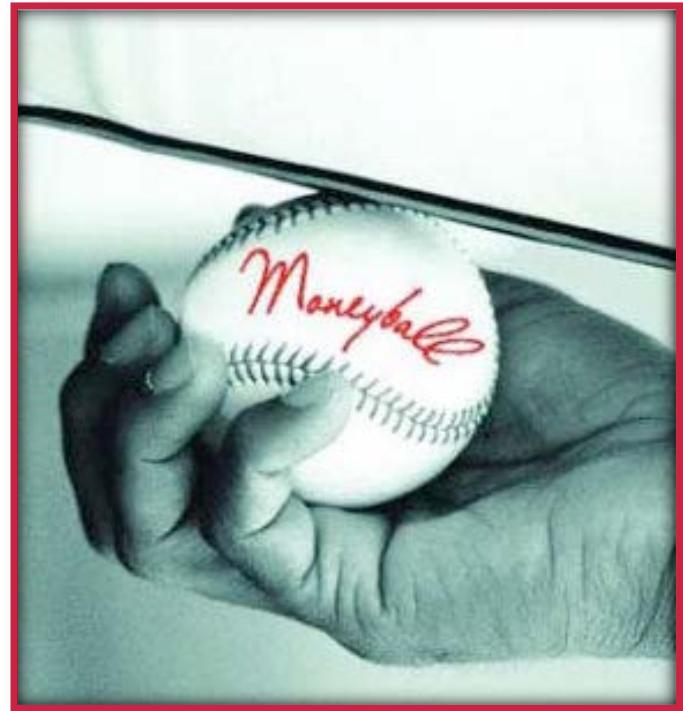
The Policy Challenge

- Though policymakers strive to make strategic choices, the process often relies on inertia and anecdote
- Governments have very limited data on:
 - What programs they fund
 - What they accomplish
 - How they compare
- **Results First Solution:** bring more systematic evidence into the process



Results First

- Focuses on “**What Works**” – programs shown to be effective by rigorous research
- Enables policymakers to determine whether current programs are evidence-based and if benefits justify their costs
- Built on approach pioneered by WSIPP



The Results First Approach



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Identify currently funded programs
and assess evidence of effectiveness

Conduct cost-benefit analysis to
compare returns on investment

Help policymakers target funds to
evidence-based programs

Goal: Achieve dramatic improvements
without increased spending



Aggregate Program Outcome Evidence: RF Clearinghouse Database



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Policy area	Intervention	Blueprints	CEBC	Coalition	Crime Solutions	NREPP	PPN	WWC	WWR
Substance abuse	Active Parenting of Teens: Families in Action		●		●	●			
Substance abuse	Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach		●		●	●			
Juvenile justice	Adolescent Diversion Program (NY)				●				
Juvenile justice	Adolescent Diversion Project				●				
Child welfare	Adolescent Parenting Program	Clearinghouse: Intervention: Evidence Rating:			CrimeSolutions.gov Adult boot camps No effects practice				
Mental health	Adolescents Coping with Depression						Learn more ➔		
Adult criminal justice	Adult boot camps					●			
Adult criminal justice	Adult drug court (Guam)					●			
Adult criminal justice	Adult drug courts					●			
Adult criminal justice	Adult drug courts (OR)					●			
Adult criminal justice	Adult mental health courts	Displaying results 1-60 of 1001		Back to top ↑					

Develop Program Inventories and Assess Evidence of Effectiveness



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PROGRAM INFORMATION		BUDGET		EVIDENCE-BASED	
Program Name	Program Budget	% of Program Budget	Ratings		
Correctional industries	\$125,000	6%	High level of effectiveness evidence		
Cognitive behavioral therapy	\$50,000	3%	High level of effectiveness evidence		
Vocational education	\$300,000	15%	Moderate level of effectiveness evidence		
Drug courts	\$180,000	9%	Moderate level of effectiveness evidence		
Intensive supervision	\$250,000	13%	Evidence indicates program is ineffective		
Veterans courts	\$100,000	5%	Lacks evidence		
All others	\$950,000	49%	Lacks evidence		

9%
24%
13%
54%

Rank Programs by Return on Investment



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ADULT CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS	COSTS	BENEFITS	BENEFIT TO COST RATIO
Cognitive behavioral therapy	\$431	\$10,095	\$23.42
Vocational education	\$1,645	\$19,594	\$11.91
Correctional industries	\$1,485	\$6,818	\$4.59
Drug courts	\$4,951	\$15,361	\$3.10
Intensive supervision (surveillance only)	\$4,305	-\$1,139	-\$0.26
JUVENILE JUSTICE PROGRAMS			
Aggression Replacement Training (state institutions)	\$1,575	\$16,827	\$10.68
Functional Family Therapy (probation)	\$3,406	\$29,026	\$8.52
Drug courts	\$3,275	\$8,110	\$2.48
Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care	\$8,232	\$20,065	\$2.44
Scared Straight	\$67	-\$12,319	-\$183.87

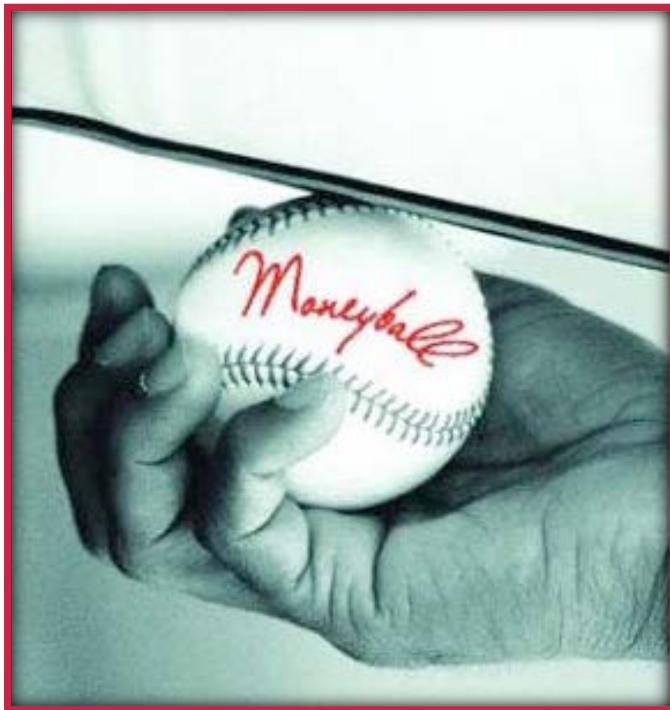
Source: Based on WA State data



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Use Policy Levers to Target Funds to High ROI Programs



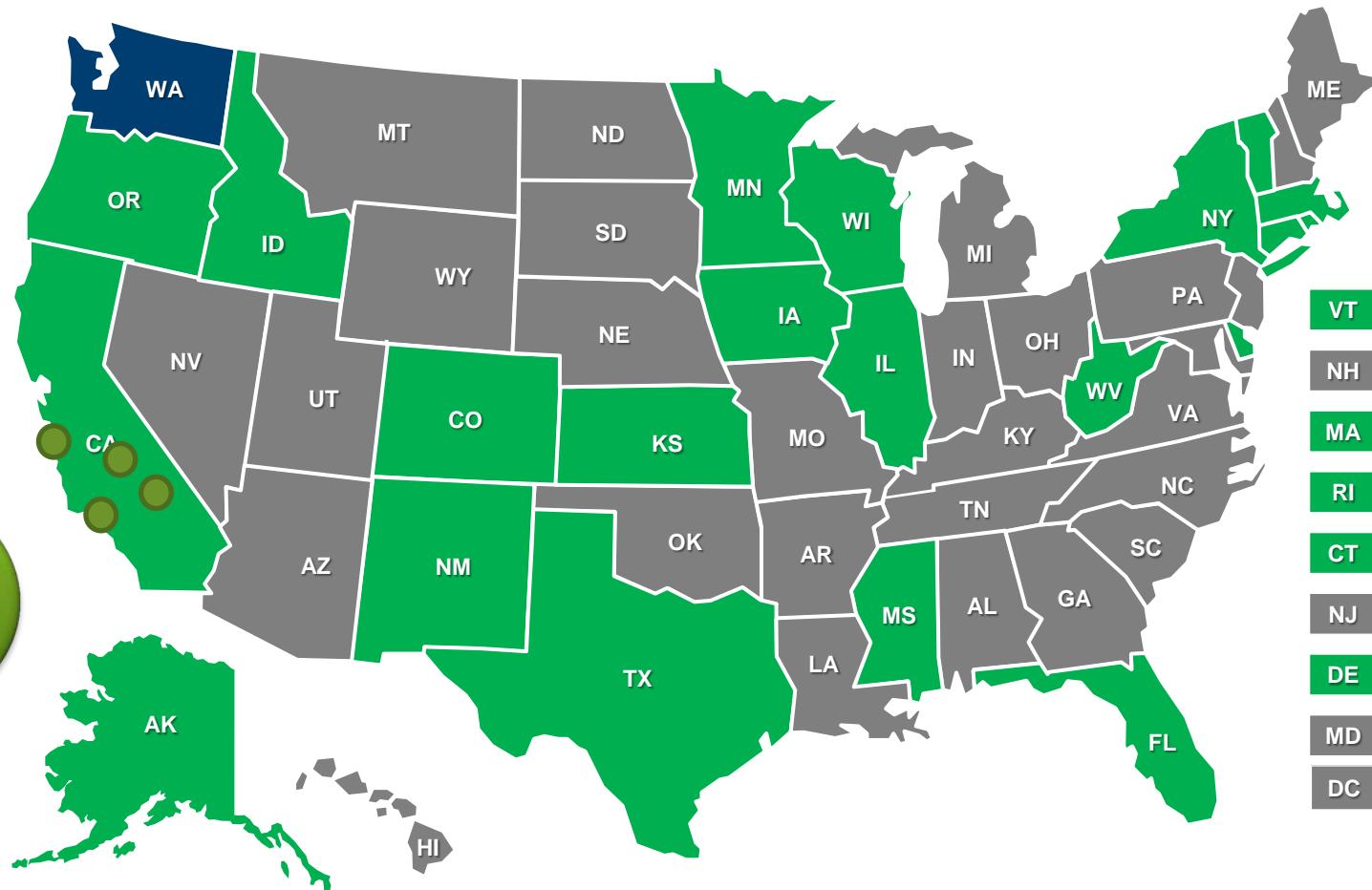
- Establish evidence definitions
- Mandate program inventory and evidence assessment
- Require funding requests to pass evidence screen
- Create preferences for evidence-based, high ROI programs

Participation in Results First



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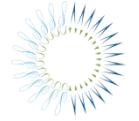


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Lessons Learned:

- It must be easy for policymakers to access and use evidence
 - Evidence must be curated and aggregated
 - Tools need to utilize curated evidence on portfolio-wide basis
 - Budget/policy offices must incorporate evidence tools into their routine work
 - Policy levers should create preferences for evidence-based solutions (but allow for tested experimentation)

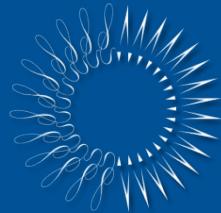


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Lessons Learned:

- **Leaks in evidence pipeline must be plugged**
 - More evaluations are needed
 - Evaluation standards should be tightened (rigor, disclosure)
 - “Open evaluation portals” should be created
 - Clearinghouses should adopt more standardized terminology & protocols



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