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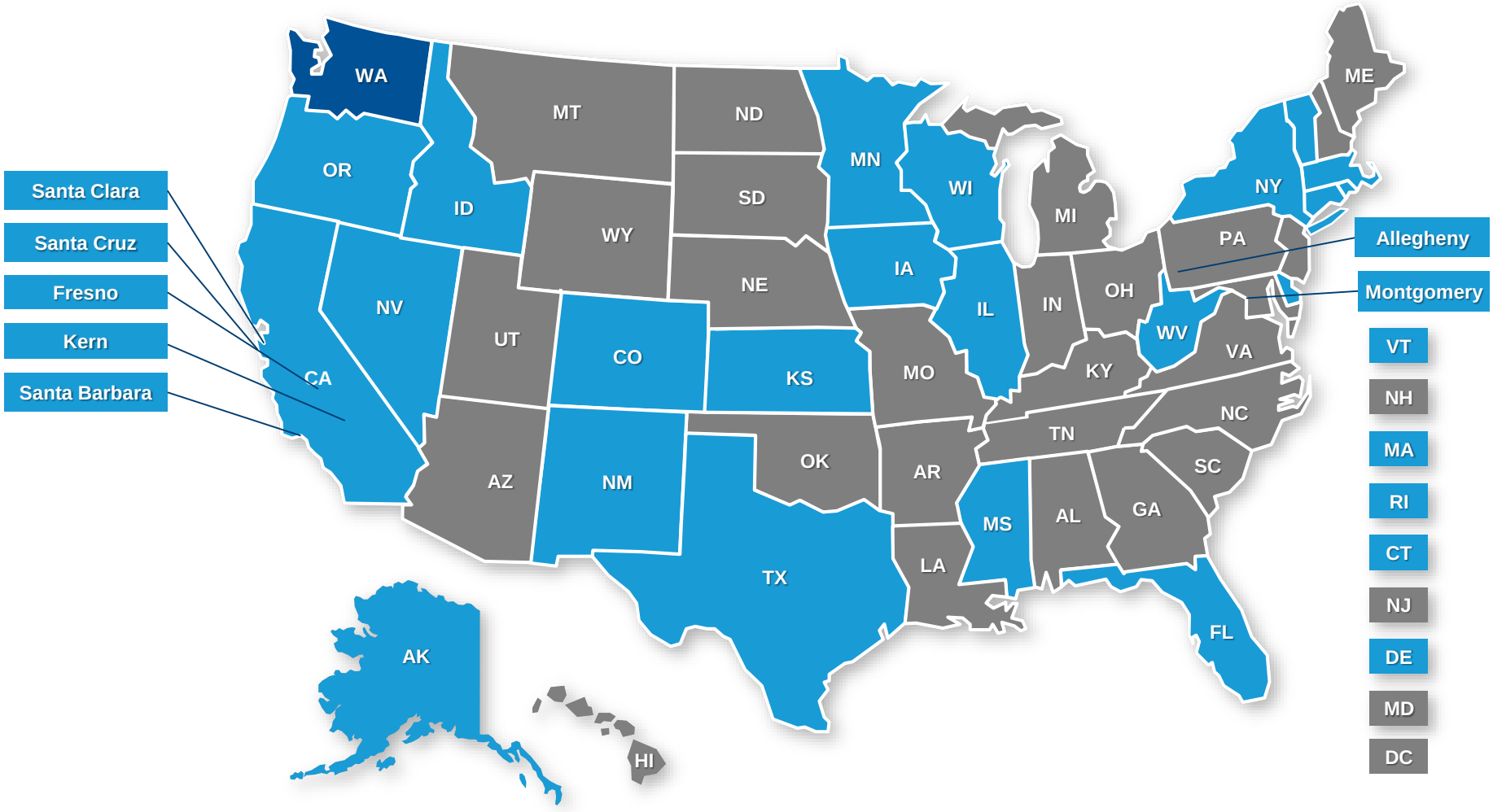
The Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative:

INVESTING IN PROGRAMS THAT WORK

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

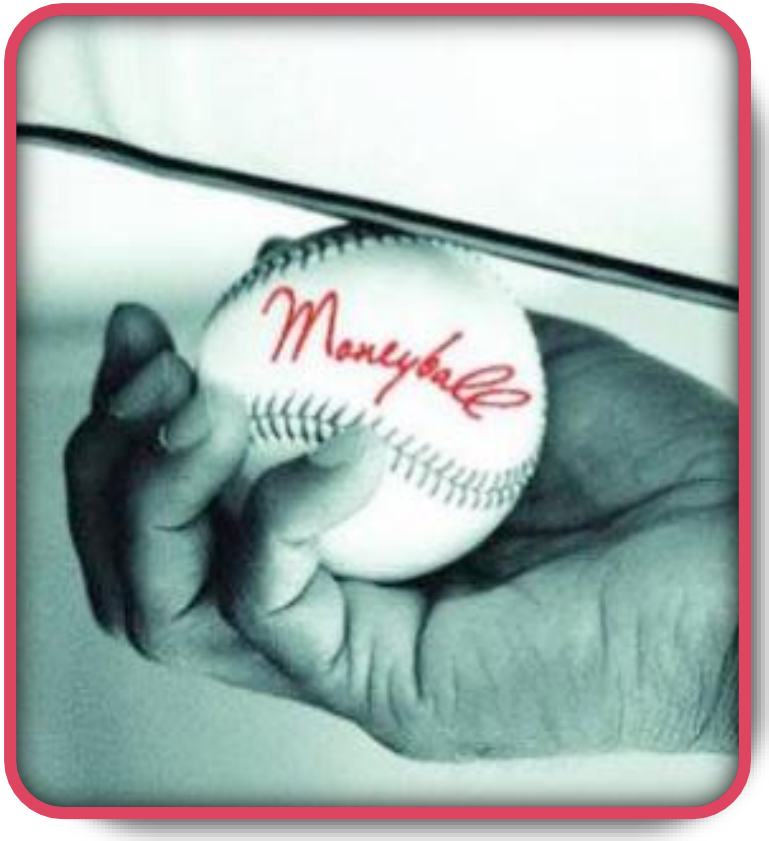
Participation in Results First



The Policy Challenge

- Budget development often relies on inertia and anecdote
- Limited data on:
  - What programs are funded
  - What each costs
  - What programs accomplish
  - How they compare

The Solution:
Bring Evidence into the Process



- **IDENTIFY** program budget portfolio and what you know about each program
- **CONSIDER** whether benefits justify costs
- **TARGET** funds using rigorous evidence

ACHIEVE dramatic improvements *without* increased spending

The Results First Approach

Compare current programs to evidence

Inventory Programs

PROGRAM INFORMATION	BUDGET	
PROGRAM NAME	PROGRAM BUDGET	% OF PROGRAM BUDGET
Correctional industries	$125,000	6%
Correctional education	$50,000	3%
Vocational education	$300,000	15%
Drug courts	$250,000	13%
Adult boot camps	$180,000	9%
Veterans courts	$100,000	5%
All others	$950,000	49%

Note: Data created by author for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to reflect any actual program budget.

Compare Inventory to Database of Evidence-Based Programs

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Assess Level of Funding for Evidence-Based Programs

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PROGRAM INFORMATION	BUDGET		EVIDENCE-BASED	
PROGRAM NAME	PROGRAM BUDGET	% OF PROGRAM BUDGET	RATINGS	
Correctional industries	$125,000	6%	Highest rated	9%
Correctional education	$50,000	3%	Highest rated	
Vocational education	$300,000	15%	Second-highest rated	28%
Drug courts	$250,000	13%	Second-highest rated	
Adult boot camps	$180,000	9%	No evidence of effects	9%
Veterans courts	$100,000	5%	Not rated	54%
All others	$950,000	49%	Not rated	

Note: Data created by author for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to reflect any actual program budget.

The Results First Approach

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- Compare current programs to evidence
- Conduct benefit-cost analysis to compare returns on investment

The Results First Model

1 Use the best **research** to identify what works

2 Predict the **impact** in your jurisdiction

3 Calculate long-term **benefits** and **costs**

Compare Benefits & Costs

PROGRAM NAME	PROGRAM BUDGET	RATINGS	COSTS	BENEFITS	BENEFIT TO COST RATIO
Correctional industries	$125,000	Highest rated	$1,485	$6,818	**$4.59**
Correctional education	$50,000	Highest rated	$431	$21,720	**$18.40**
Vocational education	$300,000	Second-highest rated	$1,645	$19,594	**$11.91**
Drug courts	$250,000	Second-highest rated	$4,951	$15,361	**$3.10**
Adult boot camps	$180,000	No evidence of effects	—	—	**—**
Veterans courts	$100,000	Not rated	—	—	**—**
All others	$950,000	Not rated	—	—	**—**

Source: Based on Washington data

The Results First Approach

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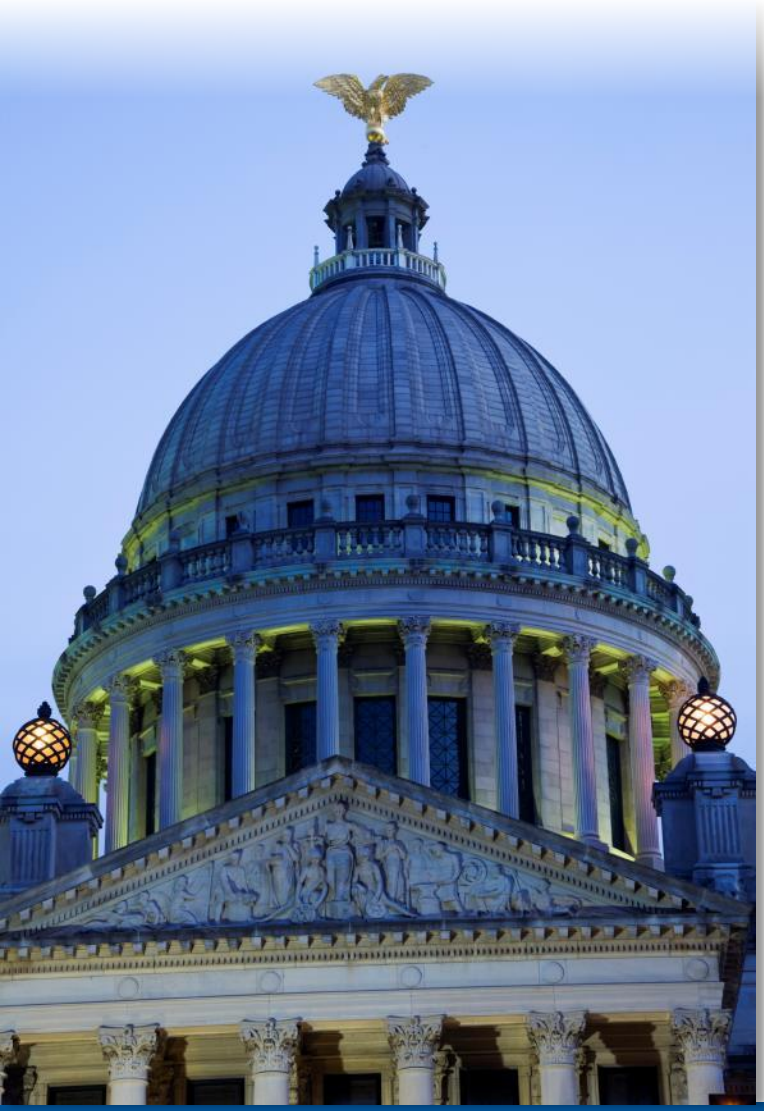
- Compare current programs to evidence
- Conduct benefit-cost analysis to compare returns on investment
- Target funds to evidence-based programs

GOAL: Achieve dramatic improvements without increased spending

Iowa

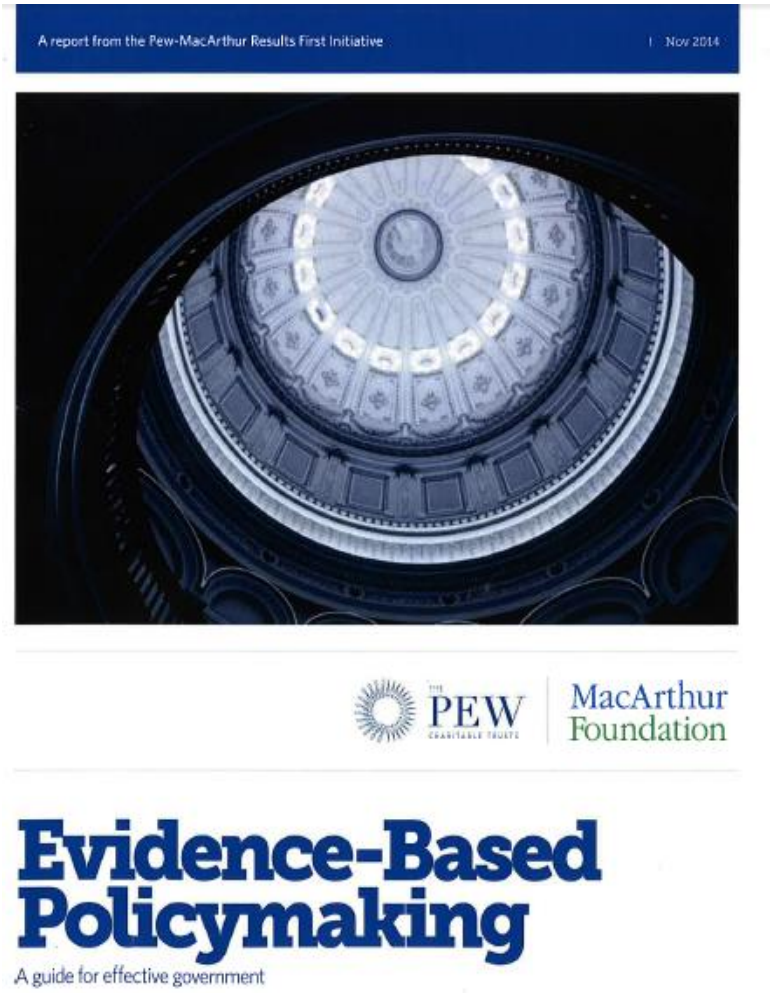
- Replaced ineffective domestic violence treatment program with state developed program
- Expanding *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy* (CBT) and vocational education programs
- Using program inventory process to gauge how programs perform by examining recidivism outcomes.

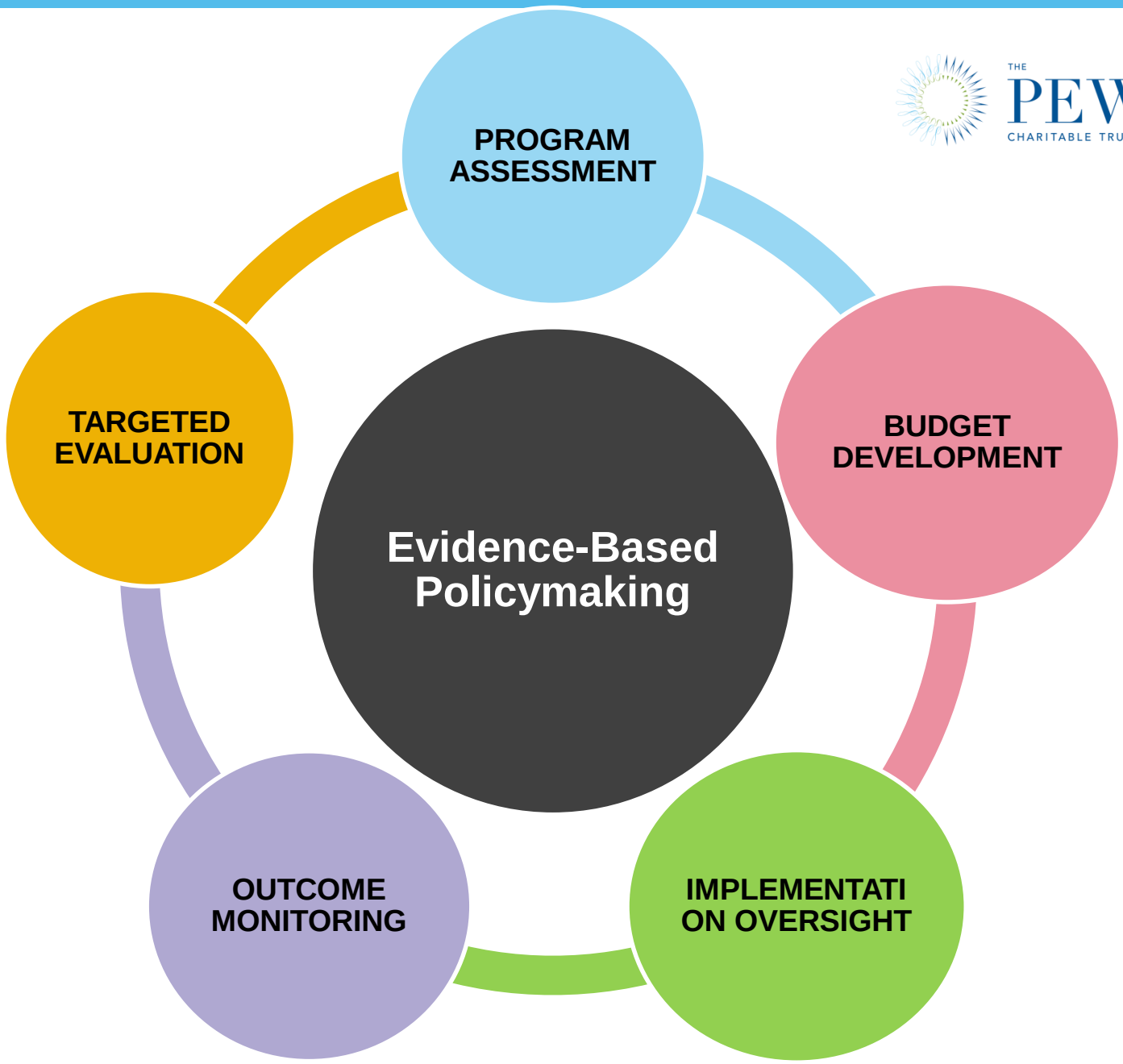
Mississippi



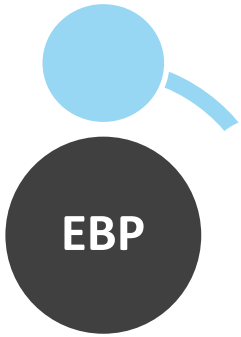
- Developed comprehensive inventory of all correctional programs at state institutions
- Eliminating and replacing programs in adult corrections
- Enacted law that:
  - Requires comprehensive program inventories in 4 agencies
  - Defines evidence-based, research based, and promising programs
  - Eliminated a shock incarceration program shown to be ineffective

2014 Report on Evidence-Based Policymaking




PROGRAM ASSESSMENT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
IMPLEMENTATION OVERSIGHT
OUTCOME MONITORING
TARGETED EVALUATION
Evidence-Based Policymaking

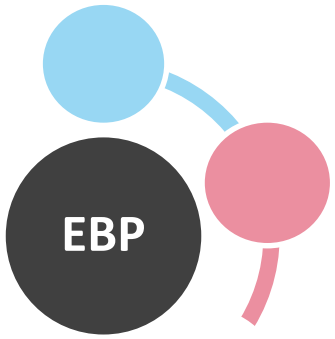
Program Assessment



Systematically review available evidence on the effectiveness of public programs

- Develop an inventory of funded programs
- Categorize programs by their evidence of effectiveness
- Compare program costs and benefits

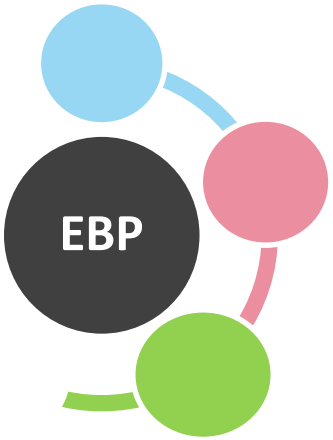
Budget Development



Incorporate evidence of program effectiveness into budget and policy decisions, prioritizing funding to those that deliver a high return on investment

- Require agencies to incorporate evidence into budget requests.
- Enact legislation requiring agencies to prioritize funding to evidence-based programs.
- Give preference in competitive grant programs to proposals that demonstrate evidence of effectiveness

Implementation Oversight



Ensure that programs are effectively delivered and are faithful to their intended design

- Require agencies to assess community needs and identify appropriate evidence-based interventions
- Create policies and processes that support effective implementation and monitoring
- Support service providers and staff through training and technical assistance
- Create systems to monitor program implementation and improve performance

Outcome Monitoring

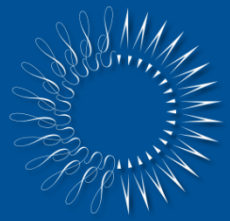
Routinely measure and report outcome data to determine whether interventions are achieving desired results

- Use research to identify appropriate outcome measures
- Track outcome data at multiple levels, including for individual programs (localities, providers) to identify what is driving trends
- Set performance benchmarks, using research to guide target setting when feasible

Targeted Evaluation

Conduct rigorous evaluations of new and untested programs to ensure that they warrant continued funding

- Identify available resources to conduct rigorous evaluations and prioritize programs based on need and readiness
- Partner with research universities, colleges, or other organizations
- Identify opportunities for low cost evaluations using existing administrative data



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