

# Evidence-Based Public Policy in the Criminal Justice System

—*Washington State's (Evolving) Approach*—

A Presentation to  
The Local Public Safety Coordinating Council  
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## Washington State Institute for Public Policy

### Created by Legislature (1983)

Mission: Non-partisan research on projects assigned by the Legislature or the Institute's Board of Directors

### Recent Specific Directions to WSIPP from the WA Legislature

What works? What are the costs & benefits of policies to improve these outcomes?

- ✓ Crime 1994, 1999, 2003, 2005, 2009
- ✓ Education, Early Ed. 2003, 2006, 2009
- ✓ Child Abuse & Neglect 2003, 2007, 2009
- ✓ Substance Abuse 2003, 2005, 2009
- ✓ Mental Health 2005, 2009
- ✓ Developmental Disabilities 2008
- ✓ Teen Births 1994, 2009
- ✓ Employment 2009
- ✓ Public Assistance 2009
- ✓ Public Health 2009
- ✓ Housing 2009

**Washington legislature has asked WSIPP this question:  
Are There Evidence-Based Policy Options That Improve Public Outcomes,  
but at Less Cost?**

**Exhibit 4**  
**Reducing Crime With Evidence-Based Options: What Works, and Benefits & Costs**

Washington State Institute for Public Policy Estimates as of October, 2006

	Effect on Crime Outcomes Percent change in crime outcomes, & the number of evidence-based studies on which the estimate is based (in parentheses)	Benefits and Costs (Per Participant, Net Present Value, 2006 Dollars)			
		Benefits to Crime Victims (of the reduction in crime)	Benefits to Taxpayers (of the reduction in crime)	Costs (marginal program cost, compared to the cost of alternative)	Benefits (total) Minus Costs (per participant)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<b>Programs for People in the Adult Offender System</b>					
Vocational education in prison	-9.0% (4)	\$8,114	\$6,806	\$1,182	\$13,738
Intensive supervision: treatment-oriented programs	-16.7% (11)	\$9,318	\$9,369	\$7,124	\$11,563
General education in prison (basic education or post-secondary)	-7.0% (17)	\$9,325	\$5,396	\$962	\$10,669
Cognitive-behavioral therapy in prison or community	-6.3% (25)	\$6,658	\$4,746	\$105	\$10,299
Drug treatment in community	-5.3% (6)	\$5,133	\$5,495	\$574	\$10,054
Correctional industries in prison	-5.0% (4)	\$5,360	\$4,496	\$417	\$9,439
Drug treatment in prison (therapeutic communities or outpatient)	-5.7% (20)	\$5,133	\$4,306	\$1,604	\$7,835
Adult drug courts	-8.0% (57)	\$4,295	\$4,705	\$4,333	\$4,767
Employment and job training in the community	-4.3% (16)	\$2,373	\$2,386	\$400	\$4,359
Electronic monitoring to offset jail time	0% (9)	\$0	\$0	-\$870	-\$870
Sex offender treatment in prison with aftercare	-7.0% (6)	\$6,442	\$2,895	\$12,295	-\$3,058
Intensive supervision: surveillance-oriented programs	0% (23)	\$0	\$0	\$3,747	-\$3,747
Washington's Dangerously Mentally Ill Offender program	-20.0% (1)	\$18,020	\$15,116	n/e	n/e
Drug treatment in jail	-4.5% (9)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
Adult boot camps	0% (22)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
Domestic violence education/cognitive-behavioral treatment	0% (8)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
Jail diversion for mentally ill offenders	0% (11)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
Life skills education programs for adults	0% (4)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
<b>Programs for Youth in the Juvenile Offender System</b>					
Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care (v. regular group care)	-22.0% (3)	\$51,828	\$32,915	\$6,945	\$77,798
Adolescent Diversion Project (for lower risk offenders)	-19.9% (9)	\$24,328	\$18,208	\$1,913	\$40,623
Family Integrated Transitions	-13.0% (1)	\$30,708	\$19,502	\$9,665	\$40,545
Functional Family Therapy on probation	-15.9% (7)	\$19,529	\$14,617	\$2,325	\$31,821
Multisystemic Therapy	-10.5% (10)	\$12,855	\$9,622	\$4,264	\$18,213
Aggression Replacement Training	-7.3% (4)	\$8,897	\$6,659	\$897	\$14,660
Teen courts	-11.1% (5)	\$5,907	\$4,238	\$936	\$9,208
Juvenile boot camp to offset institution time	0% (14)	\$0	\$0	-\$8,077	\$8,077
Sex offender cognitive-behavioral treatment	-10.2% (5)	\$33,215	\$8,377	\$33,364	\$7,329
Restorative justice for low-risk offenders	-8.7% (21)	\$4,628	\$3,320	\$880	\$7,067
Intrajury coordination programs	-2.5% (16)	\$3,084	\$2,308	\$205	\$5,186
Juvenile drug courts	-3.5% (15)	\$4,232	\$3,167	\$2,777	\$4,622
Regular surveillance-oriented parole (v. no parole supervision)	0% (2)	\$0	\$0	\$1,201	-\$1,201
Juvenile intensive probation supervision programs	0% (3)	\$0	\$0	\$1,598	-\$1,598
Juvenile wilderness challenge	0% (9)	\$0	\$0	\$3,085	-\$3,085
Juvenile intensive parole supervision	0% (10)	\$0	\$0	\$6,460	-\$6,460
Scared Straight	+8.8% (10)	-\$8,355	-\$6,253	\$98	-\$14,667
Counseling/psychotherapy for juvenile offenders	-18.9% (6)	\$23,126	\$17,309	n/e	n/e
Juvenile education programs	-17.5% (3)	\$41,151	\$26,153	n/e	n/e
Other family-based therapy programs	-12.2% (12)	\$15,006	\$11,231	n/e	n/e
Team Child	-10.9% (2)	\$5,759	\$4,131	n/e	n/e
Juvenile behavior modification	-8.2% (4)	\$19,271	\$12,258	n/e	n/e
Life skills education programs for juvenile offenders	-2.7% (3)	\$6,441	\$4,091	n/e	n/e
Diversion progs. with services (v. regular juvenile court)	-2.7% (20)	\$1,441	\$1,034	n/e	n/e
Juvenile cognitive-behavioral treatment	-2.5% (8)	\$3,123	\$2,337	n/e	n/e
Court supervision vs. simple release without services	0% (8)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
Diversion programs with services (v. simple release)	0% (7)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
Juvenile intensive probation (as alternative to incarceration)	0% (5)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
Guided Group Interaction	0% (4)	\$0	\$0	n/e	n/e
<b>Prevention Programs (crime reduction effects only)</b>					
Nurse Family Partnership-Mothers	-56.2% (1)	\$11,531	\$8,161	\$5,409	\$14,283
Nurse Family Partnership-Children	-16.4% (1)	\$8,632	\$4,922	\$733	\$12,622
Pre-K education for low income 3 & 4 year olds	-14.2% (8)	\$8,145	\$4,644	\$593	\$12,196
Seattle Social Development Project	-16.8% (1)	\$1,605	\$4,341	n/e	n/e
High school graduation	-10.4% (1)	\$1,738	\$2,851	n/e	n/e
Guiding Good Choices	-9.1% (1)	\$570	\$2,082	n/e	n/e
Parent-Child Interaction Therapy	-3.7% (1)	\$268	\$794	n/e	n/e
<b>Program types in need of additional research &amp; development before we can conclude they do or do not reduce crime outcomes:</b>					
<b>Programs needing more research for people in the adult offender system</b>					
Case management in the community for drug offenders	0% (13)				Findings are mixed for this broad grouping of programs.
CCSA (Faith-based supervision of sex offenders)	-22.3% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Day fines (compared to standard probation)	0% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Domestic violence courts	0% (2)				Too few evaluations to date.
Faith-based programs	0% (5)				Too few evaluations to date.
Intensive supervision of sex offenders in the community	0% (4)				Findings are mixed for this broad grouping of programs.
Medical treatment of sex offenders	-21.4% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Mixed treatment of sex offenders in the community	0% (2)				Too few evaluations to date.
Regular parole supervision vs. no parole supervision	0% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Restorative justice programs for lower risk adult offenders	0% (6)				Findings are mixed for this broad grouping of programs.
Therapeutic community programs for mentally ill offenders	-20.8% (2)				Too few evaluations to date.
Work release programs (from prison)	-4.3% (4)				Too few recent evaluations.
<b>Programs needing more research for youth in the juvenile offender system</b>					
Dialectical Behavior Therapy	0% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Increased drug testing (on parole) vs. minimal drug testing	0% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Juvenile curfews	0% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Juvenile day reporting	0% (2)				Too few evaluations to date.
Juvenile jobs programs	0% (3)				Too few recent evaluations.
Juvenile therapeutic communities	0% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.
Mentoring in juvenile justice	0% (1)				Too few evaluations to date.

WSIPP

“Consumer Reports” Lists:

What Works?

What Doesn't?

What Can Give Washington

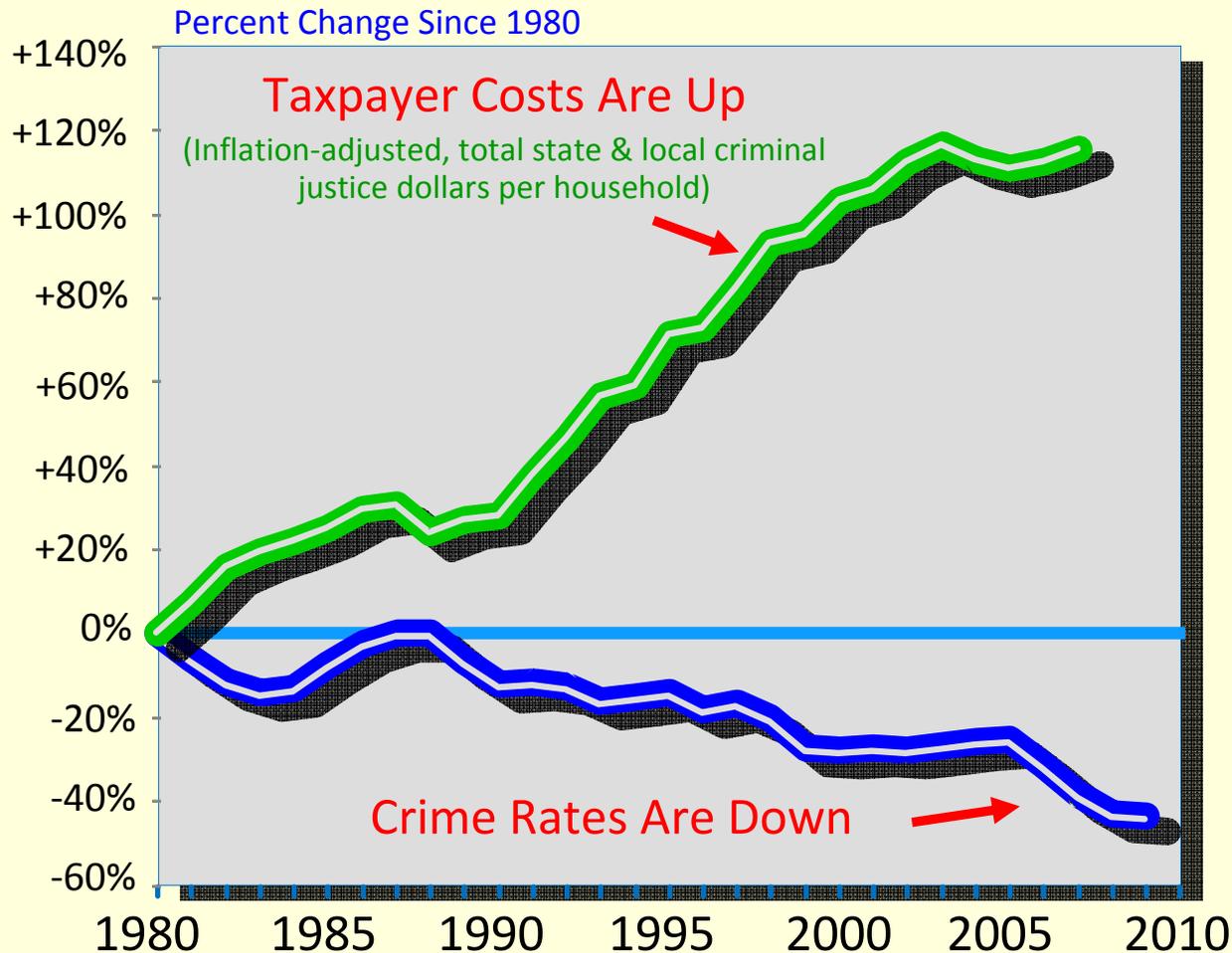
Taxpayers a Good Return

(Better Outcomes) for Their Money?

Given the Current Level of  
Credible Research, What Don't  
We Know?

## Crime: The Big Picture

### Keeping Track of Crime Rates & Taxpayer Costs in Washington: 1980 to 2010



In 1980, taxpayers spent \$575 per household on the criminal justice system in WA.

Today they spend \$1,250 per year.

A 117% increase.

In 2010, crime rates were 49% lower than they were in 1980.

Source: Washington State Institute for Public Policy. Data are for Washington State. Monetary values in 2008 dollars. Crime rates cover major felony crimes as reported to police.

*Identify Evidence-Based Programs*  
*3-Step Research Approach*

1. What works (to improve outcomes); what doesn't?  
We analyze ALL, RIGOROUS evaluations of REAL WORLD ways to improve the key public outcomes.
2. What are the economics?  
We compute benefits, costs, and risk (return on investment) to the people of Washington for each policy option.
3. How would a “portfolio” of options affect statewide outcomes? How much risk of failure?

## *Functional Family Therapy: Return on Investment (2010 Dollars)*

<u>Benefits Per Family (PV)</u>		<u>Main Source of Benefits</u>
Reduced crime	\$31,745	Lower CJ & victim costs
Increased high school grad	\$5,686	Increased earnings
Reduced health care costs	\$307	Lower public costs
<b>Total Benefits Per Family</b>	<b>\$37,739</b>	
<b>Cost Per Family (PV)</b>	<b>\$3,190</b>	
<b>Net Present Value</b>	<b>\$34,549</b>	
<b>Benefits Per Dollar of Cost</b>	<b>\$11.86</b>	<b>(= 641% ROI)</b>

## What Works to Reduce Crime?

### Adult Offenders

(July 2011 Results)

	Change In Crime (# of EB Studies)	Benefits Minus Costs, per-person, life cycle (Probability: you lose \$)
Cog-Behavioral Treatment	-6% (36)	\$10,524 (1%)
Education Prgs., Prison	-12% (17)	\$18,821 (<1%)
ISP: surveillance	+1% (23)	-\$4,606 (90%)
ISP: treatment	-10% (11)	\$9,809 (4%)

### Juvenile Offenders

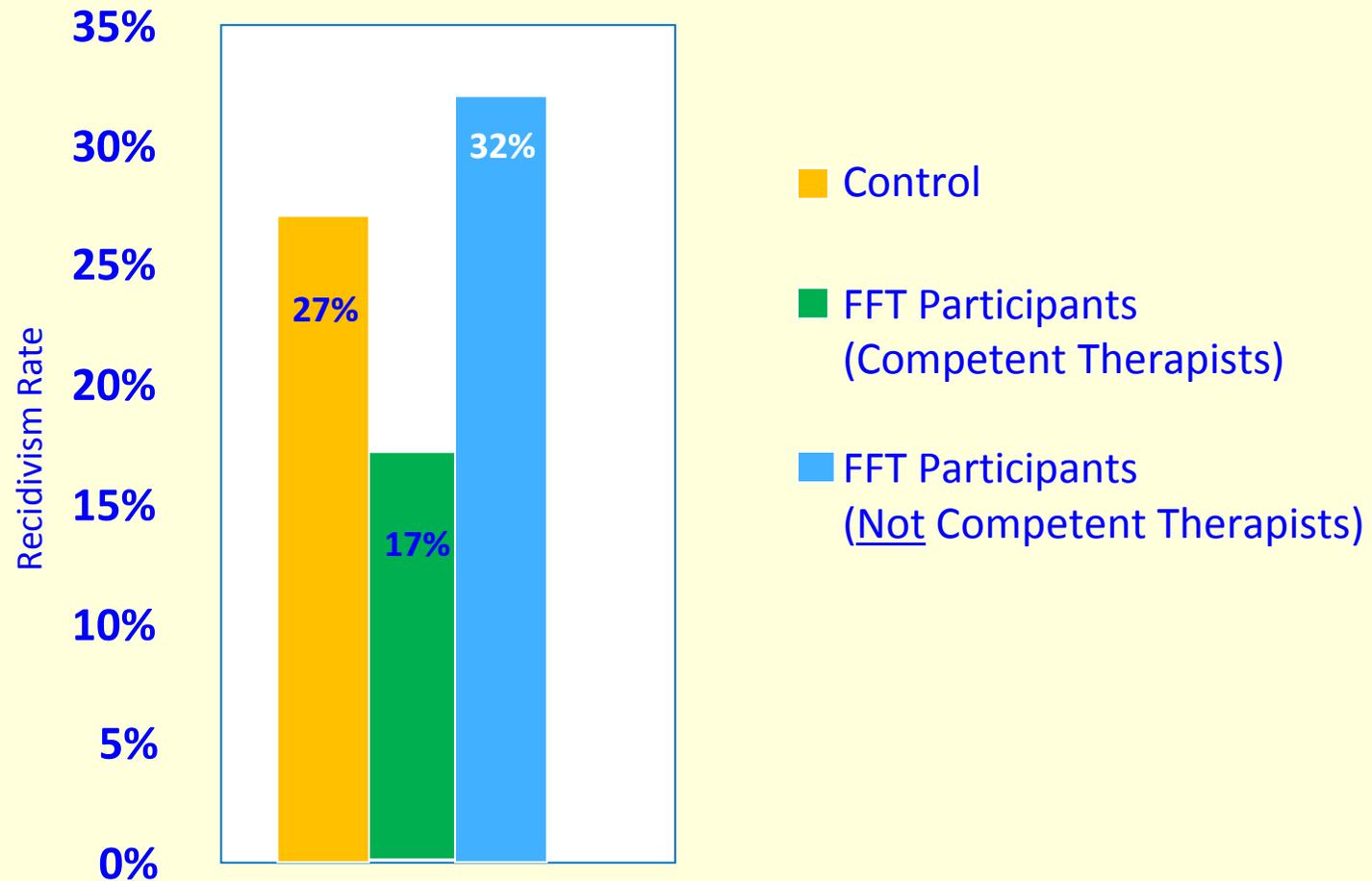
Functional Family Thpy (wf)	-22% (7)	\$34,549 (<1%)
Multisystemic Therapy (wf)	-12% (10)	\$22,096 (9%)
Aggression Repl. Trng (wf)	-20% (4)	\$34,566 (7%)
Family Int. Transitions (wf)	-6% (1)	\$16,052 (14%)
MDT Foster Care (wf)	-9% (3)	\$33,047 (15%)

### Prevention\*

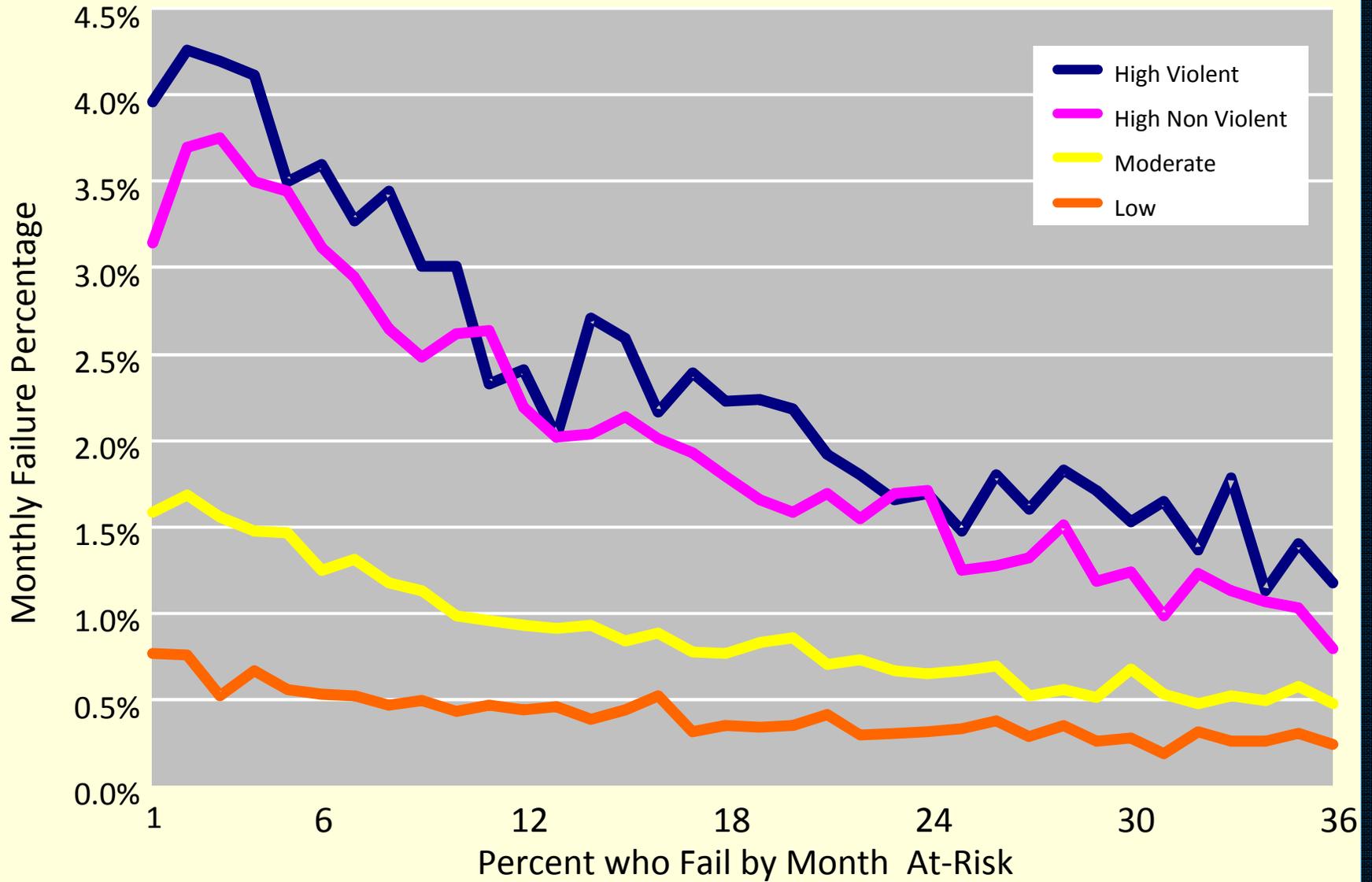
Pre-School* (low income)	-17% (8)	\$19,060 (<1%)
Nurse Family Partnership*	-12% (2)	\$20,905 (11%)

\* Programs have a number of other non-crime benefits; all benefits reported here.

## *Functional Family Therapy: WA's Outcome Evaluation*



## Risk of Failure for Felony Recidivism by Month & Risk Classification



## *A Cheat Sheet on Six Evidence-Based Principles:*

### 1. Evidence

*Focus on research-proven prevention and intervention.*

### 2. Economics

*Compute benefits and costs: not all options have sound economics.*

### 3. Quality assurance

*Re-visit the EBP path periodically to ensure expected results.*

### 4. Risk (for re-offense)

*Follow the risk principle and align offenders with the right EBPs.*

### 5. Funding

*Encourage interest in EBPs and monitor the results. WA now ties the official state prison forecast to the expected effects of the funded portfolio.*

### 6. Punishment

*Focus on certainty of punishment (strong deterrence evidence for certainty, but not for severity of punishment).*

Thank you!

•“Return on Investment:  
Evidence-Based Options to  
Improve Statewide Outcomes  
”

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July 2011

Return on Investment:  
Evidence-Based Options to Improve Statewide Outcomes  
—July 2011 Update—

The Washington State Legislature directed the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (Institute) to “calculate the return on investment to taxpayers from evidence-based prevention and intervention programs and policies.”<sup>1</sup>

In this update, we identify public policies that have been shown to improve the following outcomes:

- ✓ Child maltreatment
- ✓ Crime
- ✓ Education
- ✓ Labor earnings
- ✓ Mental health
- ✓ Public assistance
- ✓ Public health
- ✓ Substance abuse

This report presents our findings as of July 2011. Prior to the 2012 Washington legislative session, we will update and extend these results. The Legislature authorized the Institute to receive outside funding for this project; the MacArthur Foundation supported 80 percent of the work and the Legislature funded the other 20 percent.

The “big picture” purpose of this research is to help policy makers in Washington identify evidence-based strategies that can deliver better outcomes per dollar of taxpayer spending. In a time of fiscal constraint, this goal seems especially important.

This short report summarizes our current findings. Readers can download detailed results in two accompanying technical appendices.<sup>2</sup>

#### Background

In the mid-1990s, the legislature began to direct the Institute to undertake comprehensive reviews of “evidence-based” policy strategies. The initial efforts were in juvenile and adult criminal justice. We identified several juvenile justice and adult corrections programs—not then operating in Washington—that had the potential to reduce crime and save Washington taxpayers money.<sup>3</sup>

#### Summary

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy was created by the 1983 Washington Legislature to carry out non-partisan research assignments.

The 2009 Legislature directed the Institute to “calculate the return on investment to taxpayers from evidence-based prevention and intervention programs and policies.” The Legislature instructed the Institute to produce “a comprehensive list of programs and policies that improve . . . outcomes for children and adults in Washington and result in more cost-efficient use of public resources.”

The current project continues a long-term effort in Washington to identify evidence-based ways to deliver better outcomes per taxpayer dollar. This short report summarizes our findings as of July 2011. Readers can download detailed results in two technical appendices.

In subsequent sessions, the legislature used the information to begin a series of policy reforms.<sup>4</sup> Many “real world” lessons were learned about implementing these programs statewide.<sup>5</sup>

Today, the results of these crime-focused efforts appear to be paying off. Relative to national rates, juvenile crime has dropped in Washington, adult criminal recidivism has declined, total crime is down, and taxpayer criminal justice costs are lower than alternative strategies would have required.<sup>6</sup>

Suggested citation: Aox, S., Lee, S., Drake, E., Pennucci, A., Kilma, T., Miller, M., Anderson, L., Mayfield, J., & Burke, M. (2011). *Return on Investment: Evidence-based options to improve statewide outcomes* (Document No. 11-07-1201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

<sup>1</sup> Laws of 2009, ch. 564, § 610 (4), ESHB 1244.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/pub.asp?docid=11-07-1201>

<sup>3</sup> Aox, S., Barnoski, R., & Lieb, R. (1998). *Watching the bottom line: cost-effective interventions for reducing crime in Washington* (Document No. 98-01-1201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

<sup>4</sup> Barnoski, R. (2004). *Outcome evaluation of Washington State's research-based programs for juvenile offenders* (Document No. 04-01-1201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

<sup>5</sup> Barnoski, R. (2006). *Providing evidence-based programs with fidelity in Washington State juvenile courts: Cost analysis* (Document No. 06-12-1201). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/video\\_fw21JAN2011.asp](http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/video_fw21JAN2011.asp)