

Using Performance Measures to Assist Legislators

NCSL Legislative Summit

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Why should legislators care?

Many organizations (including state and local governments) use some form of performance measurement systems to answer the questions:

- “Are we doing things right?” (efficiency)
- “Are we doing the right thing?” (effectiveness)

Why should legislators care?

Performance measures:

- Enhances policy-making
- Improves internal accountability
- Enhances public accountability
- Supports strategic planning and goal setting

Legislative staff role

- Assist management
 - Developing measures
- Assist management and policymakers
 - Using measures
 - Interpreting measures
- Evaluate existing measurement systems

How are measures developed?

Within a program:

- Identify program goals
- Identify key variables/interventions
- Develop measures that assess key variables/interventions
 - inputs, outputs, efficiency, outcomes

Program goals

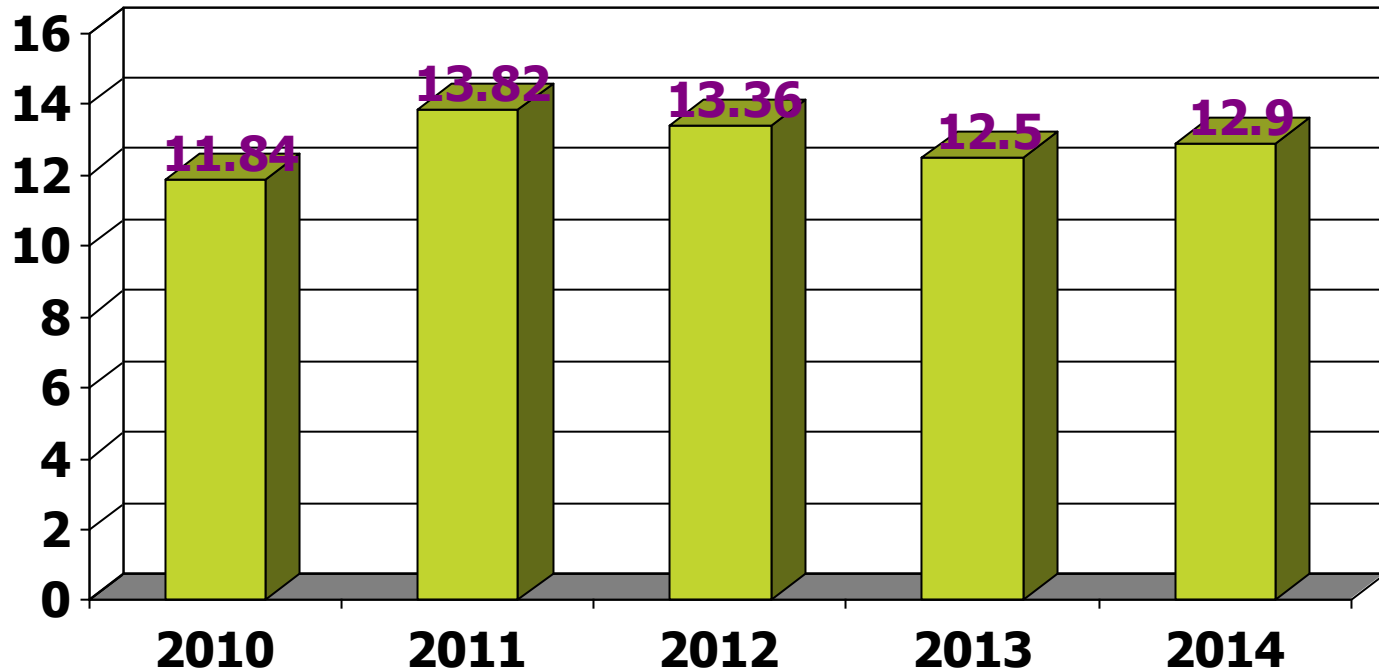
- Foster care program goals:
 - Reunification efforts
 - Adoption
- Key interventions facilitates moving program activities toward meeting desired goals

Key intervention measure

From the time of removal, children should not remain in foster care longer than 12 months.

Performance measures assess key interventions

Average Number of Months Children Stay in Custody



Measurement qualification

Types of measures

- Input
- Output
- Efficiency
- Outcome

Level of measures

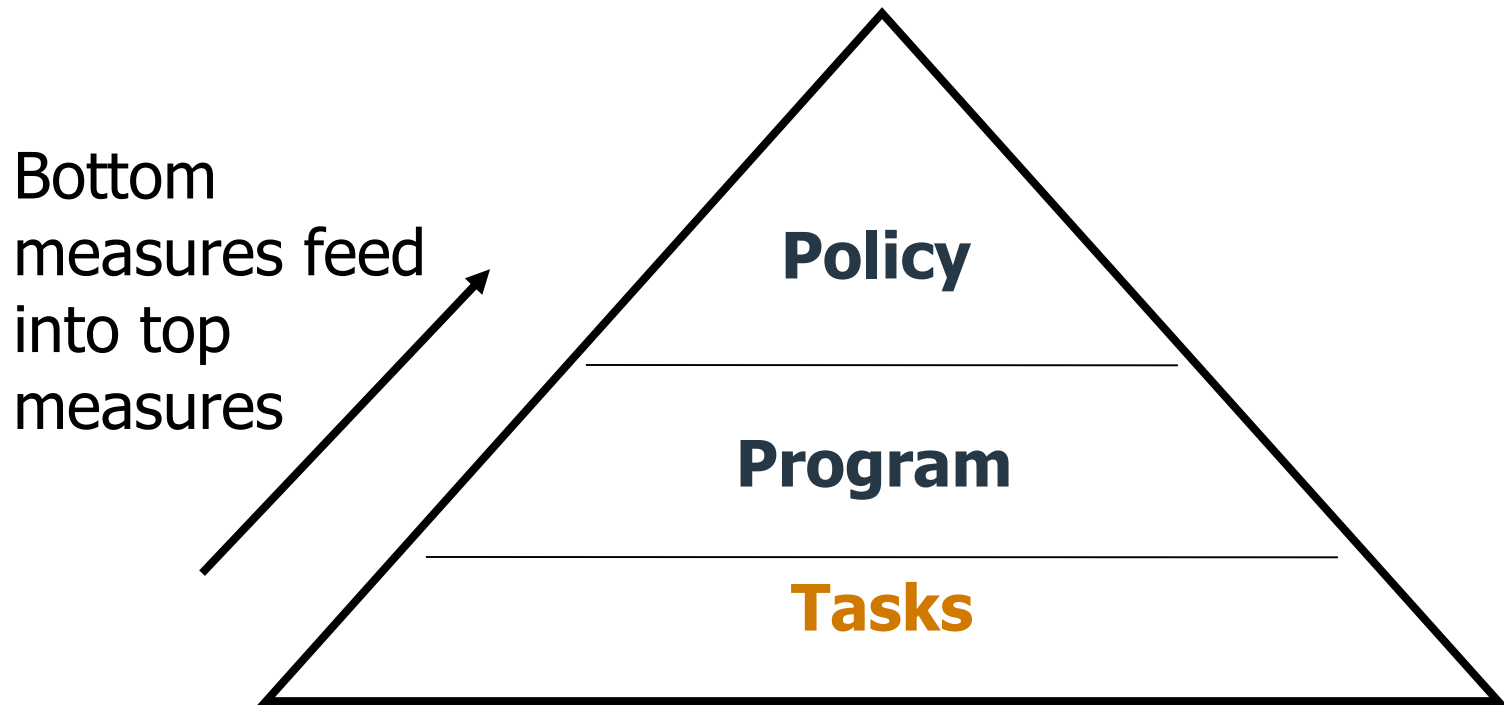
- Task
- Program
- Policy

Policy-level outcome measures

Example – Teenage Smoking Reduction

- Program goals are to reduce % of teens who use tobacco products through media campaign, and education
- Bottom-line – are fewer kids smoking?

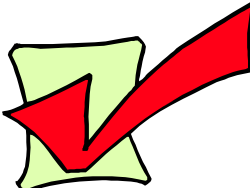
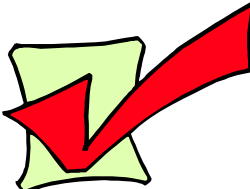
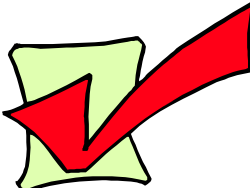
Performance measures should be layered



Using measures involves three questions

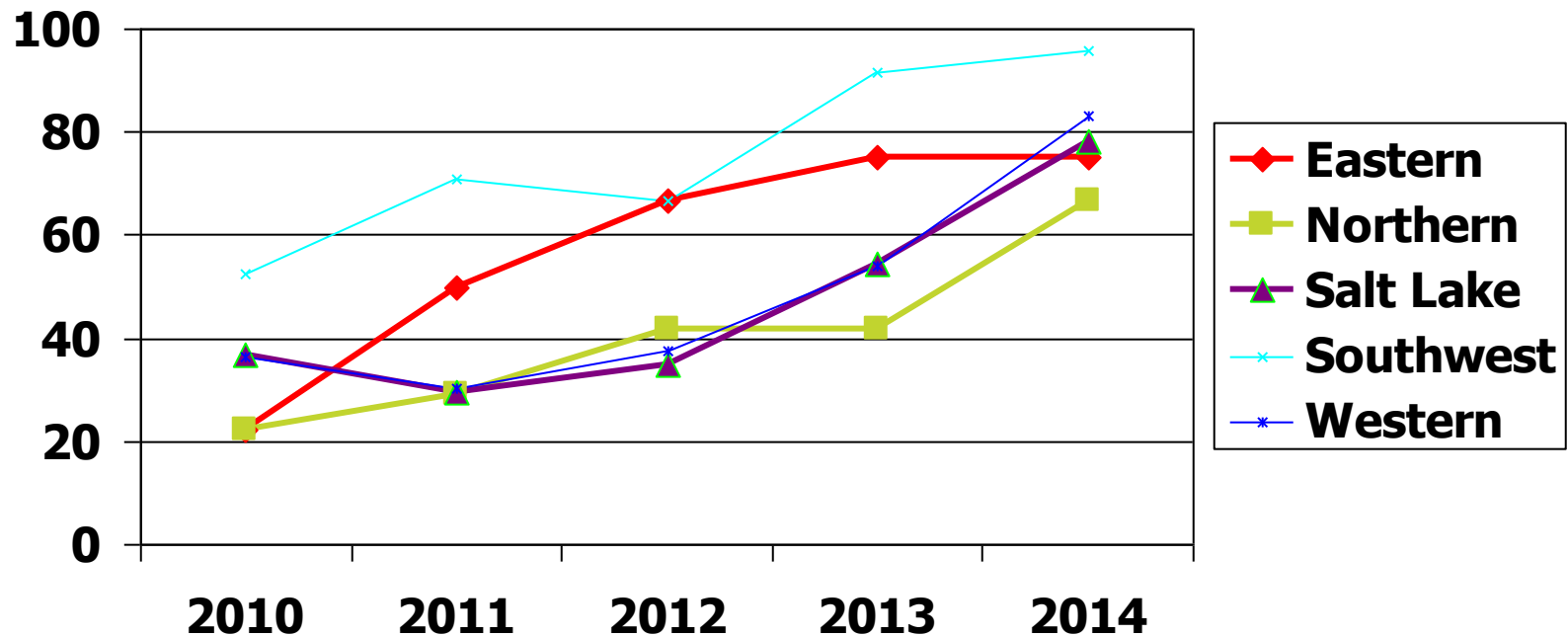
- What do the measures tell us about a program's performance?
- What don't the measures tell us that we have to find out by ourselves?
- How can the measures be improved to provide better accountability – information for managers, evaluators, and policy makers?

Measures can show whether organizations meet expectations

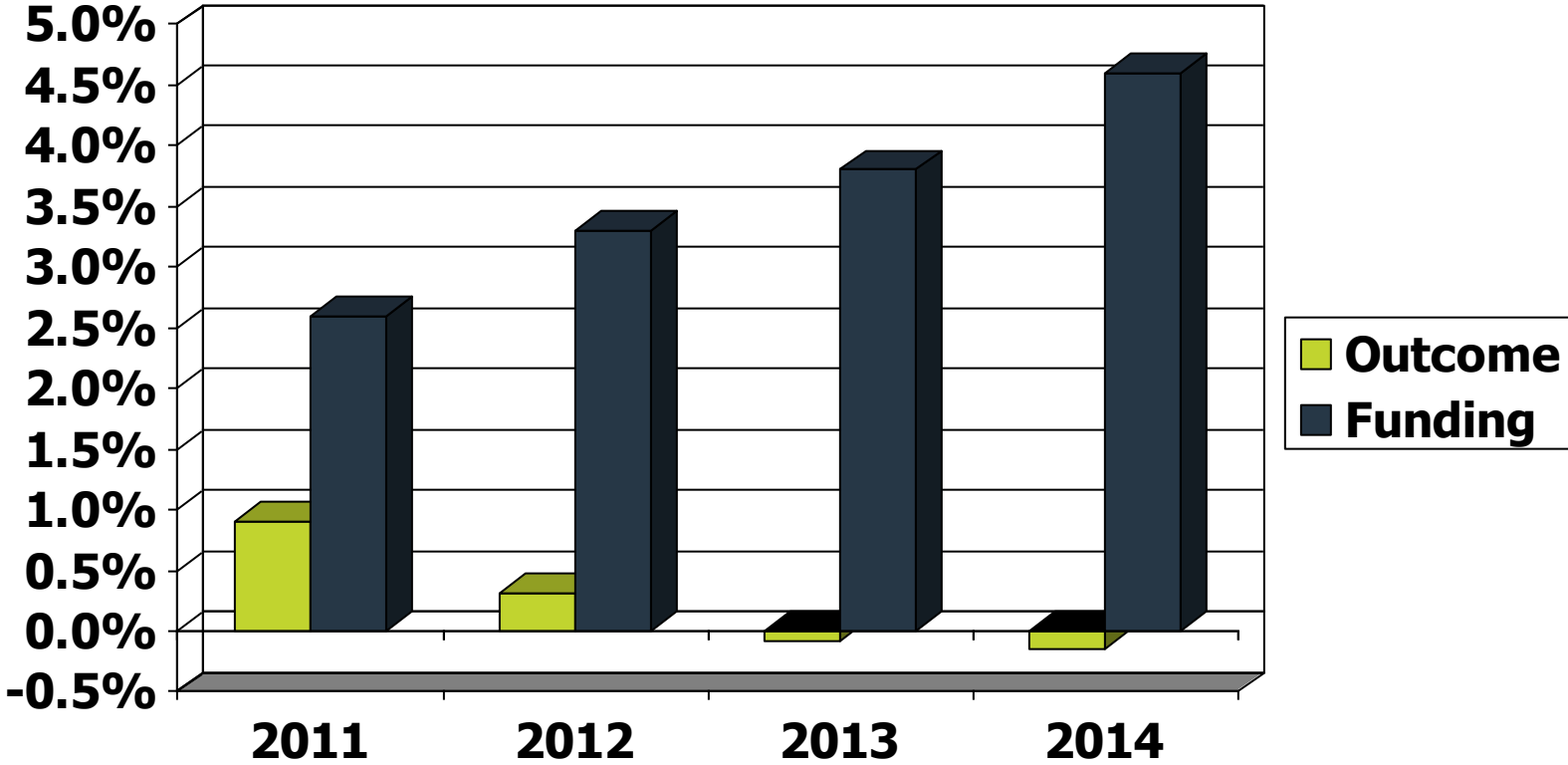
Review Question	Year	Performance	Achieved goal of 85 percent
During the CPS investigation, were reasonable efforts made to locate possible kinship placements?	2012	90%	
	2013	85%	
	2014	93%	

Performance measures can help show trends

Child and Family Team Coordination

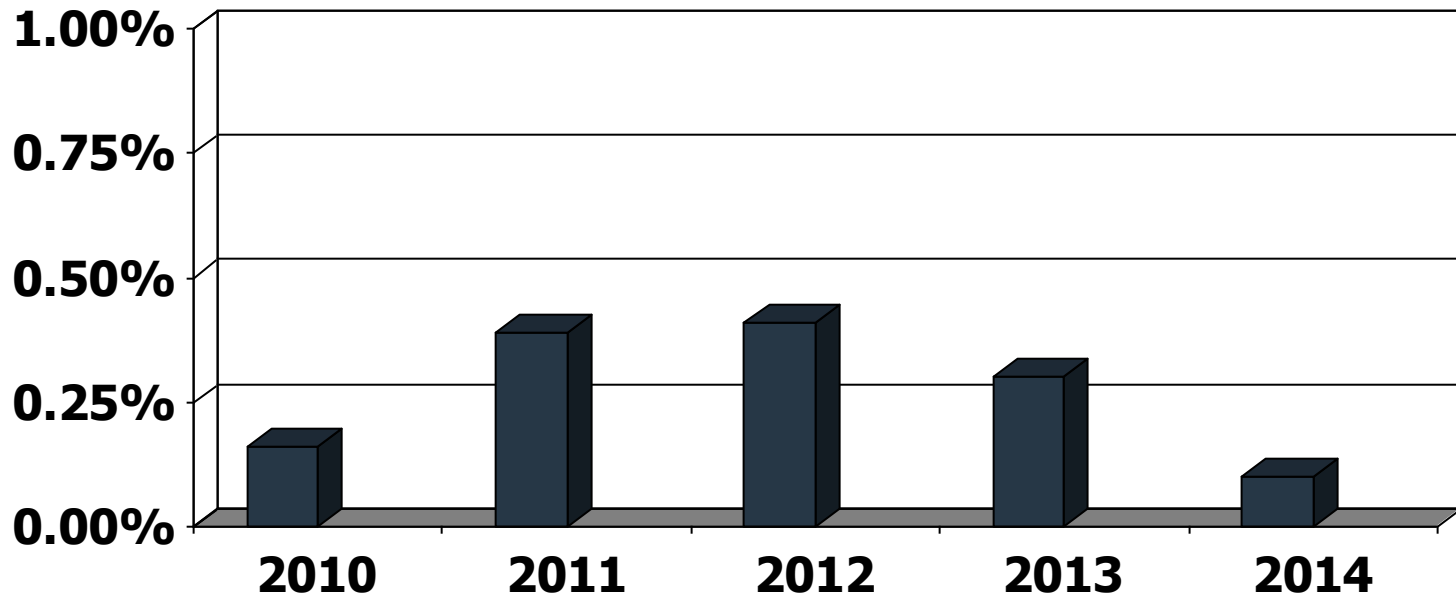


Measures can help link funding and performance trends



Performance measures can help assess risk

**Percent of Children in Foster Care that were Abused
and/or Neglected by a Foster Parent or Facility Staff**



Does a program's measures need to be revitalized?

- Do the measures answer the critical question of whether the program is working?
- Are the measures comprehensive and measure critical efficiencies?
- Is there linkage between inputs, outputs, and outcomes? Do the measures provide a way to link to performance costs?



Measuring Performance in the Age of Big Data

Technology has enhanced ability to measure performance

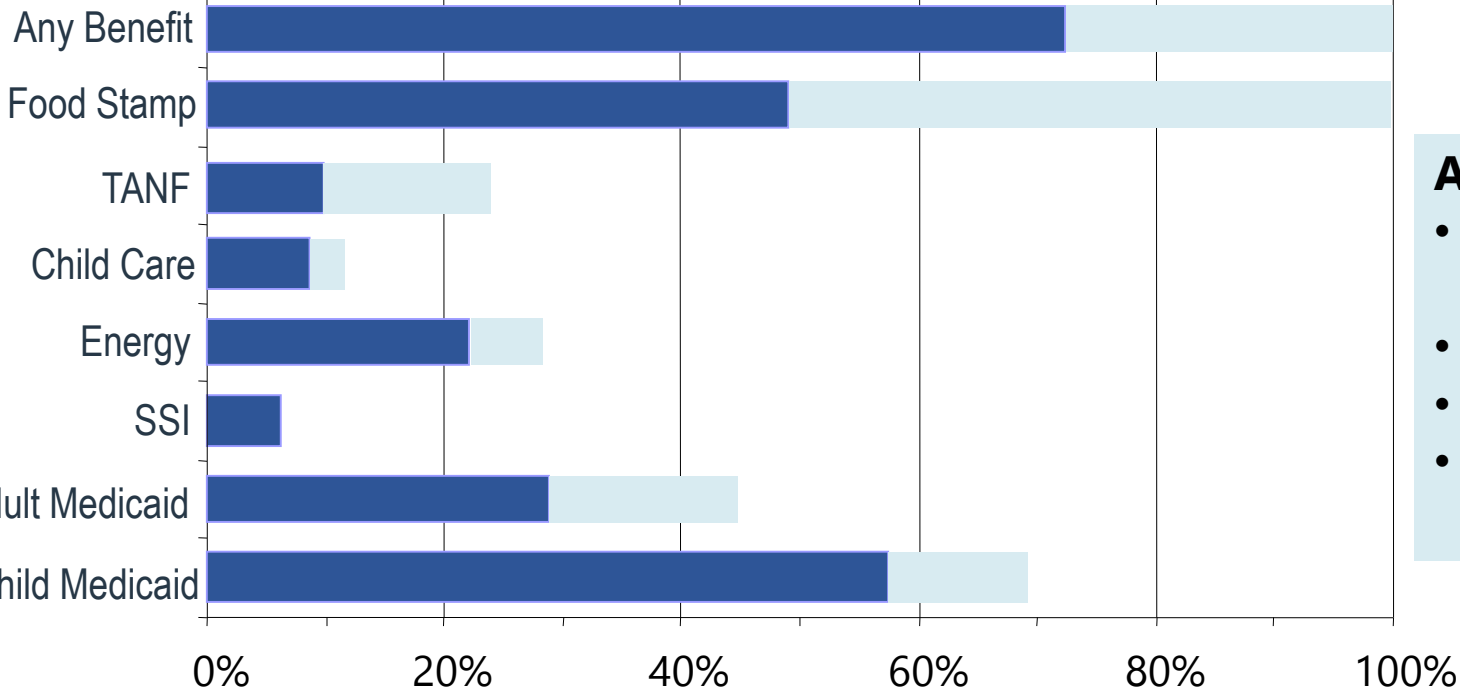
- Wealth of data has become available
 - More data captured by state agencies and programs
 - “Big data” from public and private sources
- Better technology to transform data into information
 - Link data across programs or agencies to assess outcomes
 - Perform complex analysis

Example: Assessing outcomes of benefit program recipients

Families Receiving Benefit in 2002

Families Receiving Benefit in 2004

Families NOT Receiving Benefit in 2004



Analyzed data for

- **14,500 families**
- **2 years**
- **5 agencies**
- **7 benefit programs**

Many agencies and programs still lack robust performance measures

- Agencies tend to focus on process and output measures rather than outcomes
 - Responding to federal reporting requirements
 - Extracting information can be challenging
- Missing opportunity to show legislature that programs are effective

Example: Performance of Virginia's workforce development programs

- 4 out of 19 programs have no performance goals
- Remaining 15 programs collectively track 55 performance measures, but
 - None measure state's top priority: whether meeting employers' needs
 - Measures differ across programs
 - Majority focus on outputs rather than outcomes

Program evaluators must develop outcome measures

- How to develop appropriate measures:
 - Interviews with program administrators and other experts
 - State programs with similar goals or clients
 - Similar agencies/programs in other states
 - National best practices (national associations, federal regulatory agency)
 - Research literature
- Limitation: one-time assessment



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Revitalizing Performance Budgeting in Mississippi

3 Key Elements of Revitalization Effort

- Statewide Strategic Plan
 - over 300 benchmarks in 8 key policy areas
- Comprehensive Program Inventory
 - over 1,000 programs in Corrections, Education, Health, and Transportation
- Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative
 - invest public dollars in programs and policies proven to work

Challenges to Revitalization Effort

- Defining “program” at the appropriate level for accountability: not too broad or too narrow; e.g.,
 - Health Protection, or
 - Bottled Water Plant Regulation, or
 - Bottled Water Plant Permits
 - Bottled Water Plant Inspections
 - Bottled Water Plant Complaints and Investigations
 - Bottled Water Plant Technical Assistance
 - Bottled Water Plant Regulation Training
- Translating large quantities of data into useful information

Translating Large Quantities of Data into Useful Information

Measuring Mississippi

Vision: A lean and effective government that empowers people to live healthy, productive lives through quality, appropriate services and strategic investment in the state's human capital.

Health

Statewide Goal: Protect Mississippians from risks to public health and provide them with the health-related information and access to quality healthcare necessary to increase the length and quality of their lives.

Previous	Current	1-2 yr. change
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Lacking Access to Dental Care

36.1% (2013)	38.5% (2014)	↓
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Immunization (Aged 19-35 mo.)

71.3% (2011)	77.5% (2012)	↑
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Diabetes (Adults)

12.4% (2010)	12.5% (2012)	↓
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Key

↑	Improved	↓	Worsened
◇	No update	⇒	Maintained

- The years for which data is available varies by indicator.
- For indicators in red, Mississippi ranked worst among the states for the most recent fiscal year for which data was available.

Translating Large Quantities of Data into Useful Information

Program	Cost	Benefit *	Benefits Minus Costs (Net Present Value)	Benefit to Cost Ratio
Correctional Education in Prison	(\$829)	\$13,051	\$12,222	\$15.74
Vocational Education in Prison	(\$1,258)	\$12,467	\$11,209	\$9.91
Alcohol and Drug Treatment in Prison	(\$223)	\$9,825	\$9,602	\$44.06
Correctional Industries in Prison	(\$3,613)	\$4,657	\$1,044	\$1.29
Mental Health Courts	(\$1,189)	\$2,355	\$1,166	\$1.98
Domestic Violence Perpetrator Treatment	(\$530)	(\$886)	(\$1,416)	(\$1.67)
Drug Courts	(\$6,905)	\$2,622	(\$4,283)	\$0.38

* Dollar value of "Benefit" is derived from the estimated costs avoided as a result of the program's effect on reducing recidivism.

Translating Large Quantities of Data into Useful Information

- Need to develop a system for grading programs in the inventory:
 - Linkage to statewide benchmarks
 - Evidence-based
 - Fidelity to program design
 - Positive benefit-cost ratio
 - Fully accountable and transparent