

# Evidence-Based Budgeting

Evidence-based budgeting is a new and targeted focus to facilitate the use of research and evidence to inform programmatic funding decisions. Tennessee is working alongside the Pew-MacArthur Results First Initiative so that agencies can demonstrate the evidence of both new and existing programs. The goal is to further invest in what works to improve outcomes for the citizens of Tennessee.

## What is considered “evidence-based”?

For purposes of evidence-based budgeting, evidence-based programs are those with one or more evaluations (in Tennessee or elsewhere) which use high-quality experimental or quasi-experimental designs.

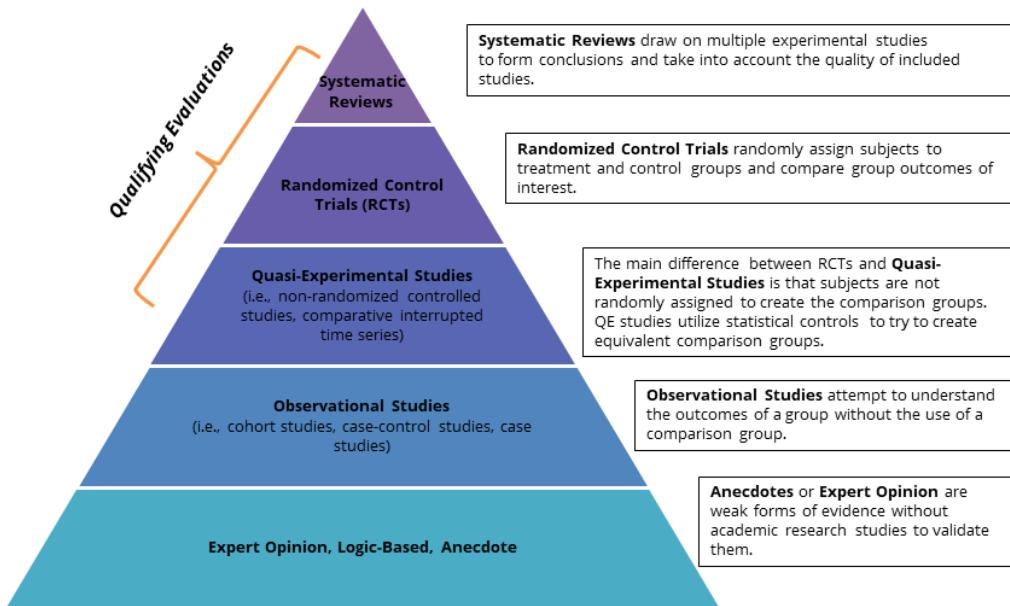
## How do I know if a program or service is evidence-based?

Determining whether a program is evidence-based involves examining both the quality of evidence and the demonstrated impact on outcomes (i.e., positive, negative, no impact). The tiers of evidence below capture both components and are ordered with positive impact at the top and negative at the bottom. Programs that are **evidenced-based** are considered to be **“Proven Effective”** or **“Promising”**.

| Tiers of Evidence       | Definition   |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>Proven Effective</b> | A program or service that is proven effective has a high level of research on effectiveness for at least one outcome of interest, determined through multiple <u>qualifying evaluations</u> —high-quality experimental or quasi-experimental studies—outside of Tennessee or one or more qualifying Tennessee-based evaluations. |
| <b>Promising</b>        | A program or service that is promising has some research demonstrating effectiveness for at least one outcome of interest, such as a single <u>qualifying evaluation</u> that is not contradicted by other such studies but does not meet the full criteria for the proven effective designation.                                |
| <b>Theory-Based</b>     | A program or service that is theory-based has no <u>qualifying evaluations</u> on effectiveness. These programs typically have a well-constructed theory of change and may have other evidence but do not meet the above criteria.   |
| <b>Mixed Effects</b>    | A program or service that has mixed effects has a high level of research on the effectiveness of multiple outcomes; however, the outcomes have contradictory effects, determined through multiple <u>qualifying evaluations</u> outside of Tennessee or one or more qualifying Tennessee-based evaluation.                       |
| <b>No Effect</b>        | A program or service that has no evidence of effect has no impact on the measured outcome.   |
| <b>Proven Harmful</b>   | A program or service that is proven harmful has a high level of research that shows participation negatively impacts outcomes of interest, determined through multiple qualifying evaluations outside of Tennessee or one or more qualifying Tennessee-based evaluation.   |

## What is considered a qualifying evaluation?

For the purposes of evidence-based budgeting, qualifying evaluations are those that use high-quality experimental or quasi-experimental designs. The graphic below provides further information.



## Where can I find quality research and evaluations?

The [Results First Clearinghouse Database](#) identifies thousands of programs that have been rigorously evaluated by one or more of nine national clearinghouses.

If you have additional questions, please reach out to Jayme Simmons ([Jayme.Simmons@tn.gov](mailto:Jayme.Simmons@tn.gov)), Director of the Office of Evidence and Impact.