



# Policy and the Policy Process

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*In theory there is no difference between  
research and practice. In practice, there is....*

*Yogi Berra*



# What is a Policy?

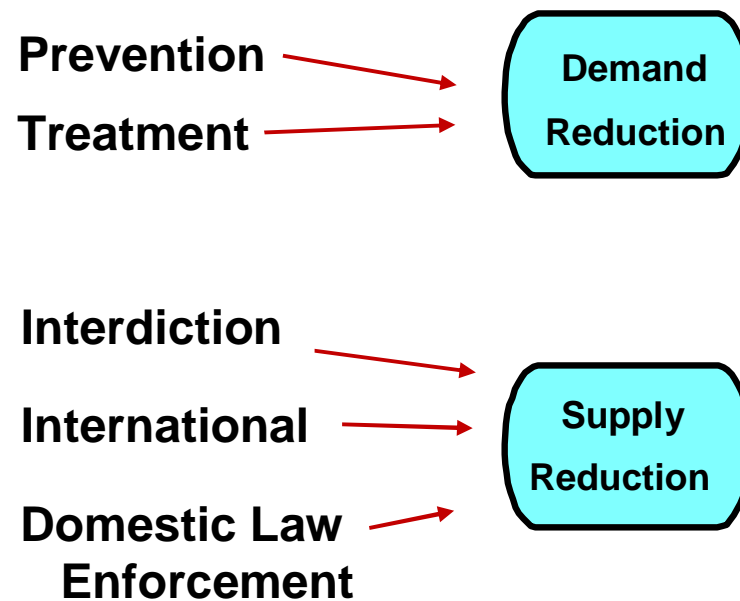
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- n A policy is nothing more than a course of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions.
- n The policy process describes the means by which the course or method of action—in other words, the policy—is chosen.



# Ingredients of a National Drug Control Policy

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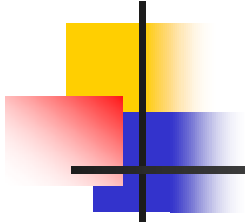
# The Policy Problem

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**Drug Policy** has always been about determining the “correct” mix of ingredients to achieve at least one of three outcomes: reducing drug use, availability, and drug use consequences.

n *Ongoing policy debate about mix of ingredients.*

n *Ongoing policy debate about which outcomes are most important.*



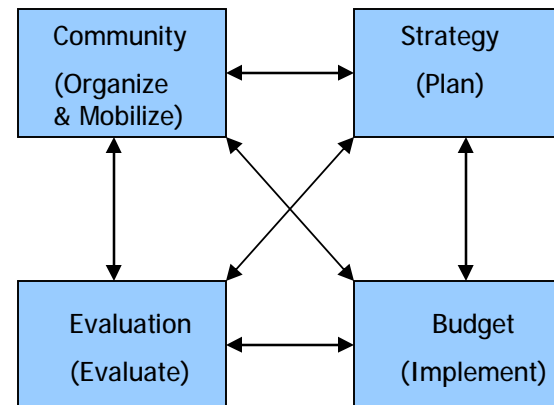
# A Policy Process

*"You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there."*

*Yogi Berra*

# Elements of a Policy Process

- n **Community:** The Constituent elements that have a stake in the pursuit
- n **Strategy:** Mechanism that allows Goals to be pursued
- n **Evaluation:** Mechanism that guides the pursuit; research and evaluation; feedback loop provided through Performance Measurement
- n **Budget:** Mechanism that allows resources to be used for the pursuit of goals and objectives





# The Need for Infrastructure

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- n For research to influence policy, you must at least have an infrastructure that can create or take research results and translate them into practical programs, policies, and practices that resonate with the community of stakeholders.



# The MEM & Infrastructure

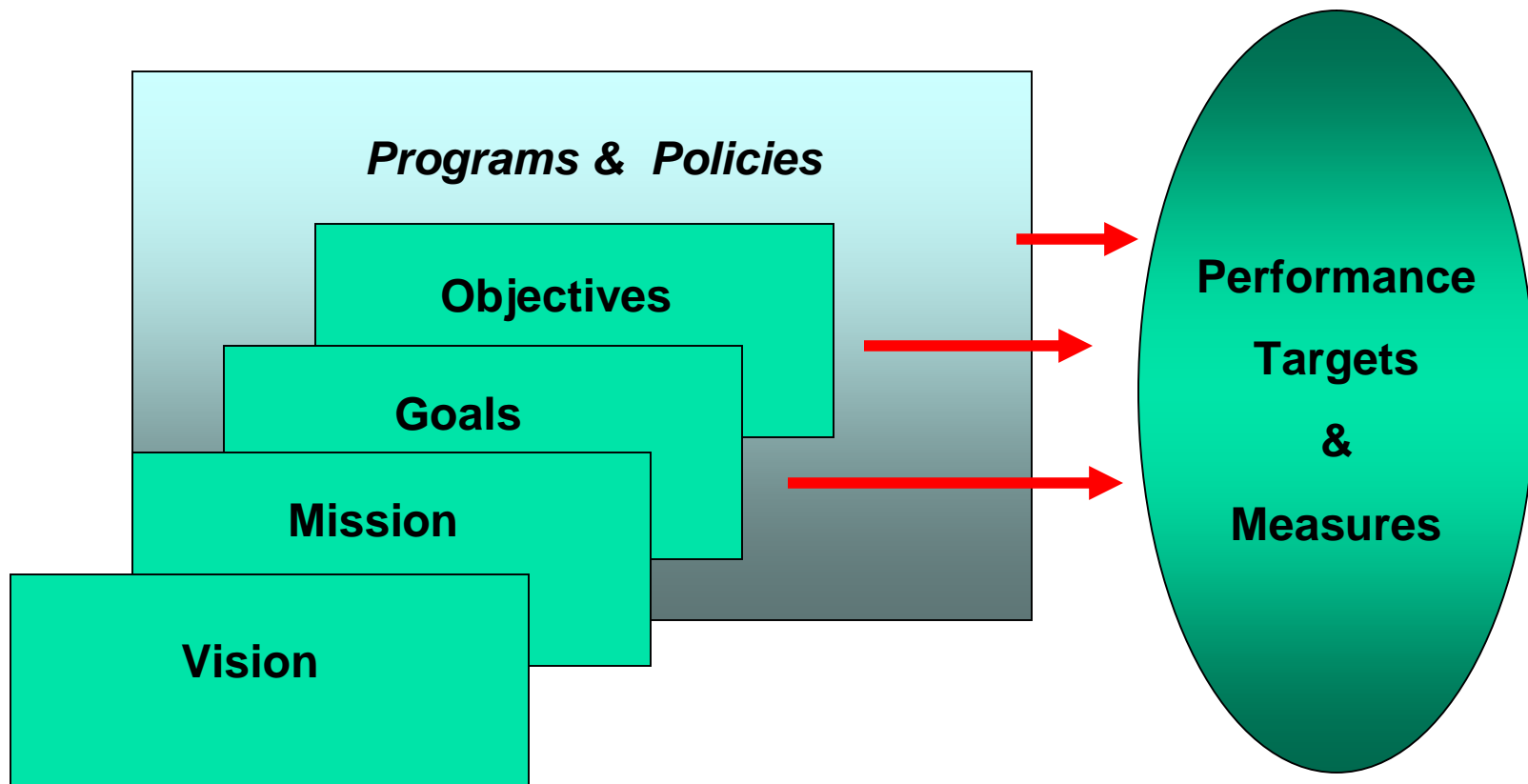
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- n The MEM initially included measures related to infrastructure (e.g.,)
  - n Do you have a national drug budget?
  - n Do you have a central coordinating body to work the policy and budget process?
  - n Do you have certain data systems and research that can inform the policy process?
  - n Do you have a feedback mechanism to improve performance and produce quality programs, policies, and practices?



# A Policy Framework

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# The Language of *Policy*

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- n Vision defines the desired end-state. It is an inspirational description of the ultimate goal.
- n Mission defines an organization's role or task in support of the Vision.
- n Goals define the major directives or directions in support of the Mission.
- n Objectives define major lines of action to achieve each strategic goal.
- n Targets (performance targets) define desired measurable end states/results against which to compare actual performance.
- n Measures (performance measures) are the data, variables and events used to track progress toward the Targets.



# Strategy: Start by Developing a Vision Statement for Your Policy

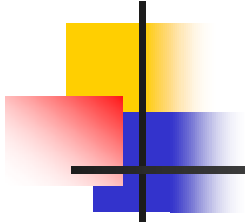
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## n Vision Statement:

- n Explains what you are striving to achieve
- n “Ultimate” end state
- n Inspirational
- n The big picture

## n Examples

- n *Make America Drug Free*
- n *Make our community crime and violence free*



# Moving from Research to Policy to Practice?

*"If you don't know where you are going, you  
will wind up somewhere else."*

*Yogi Berra*



# Some Observations

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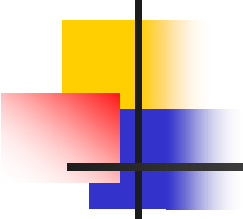
- Expect that research alone will never drive policy:
  - A drug policy will never be solely determined by the results of research or studies, no matter what their level of quality and importance.
  - Other factors, such as ideology and politics, always play into the formulation of drug policy.
- Can research influence policy, programs and practices? Yes, even bad research!



# Research to Practice: Tools

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- n Expert Group to define evidence-based policies and programs.
- n Policy Process model to develop a five-step process to move evidence-based research to practice that SAMHSA later adapted into its State Incentive Grants program.
- n Both efforts constitute useful tools to move from research to policy to practice.



## The Expert Group: Evidence-Based Program, Policies, and Practices

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- n The Expert Workgroup recognized that evidence provided as support for community-based interventions must reflect certain characteristics to be credible and persuasive
- n These characteristics are captured in three guidelines for evidence *all of which must be met to demonstrate “documented effectiveness”*



# Research to Policy: Guidelines to be Met

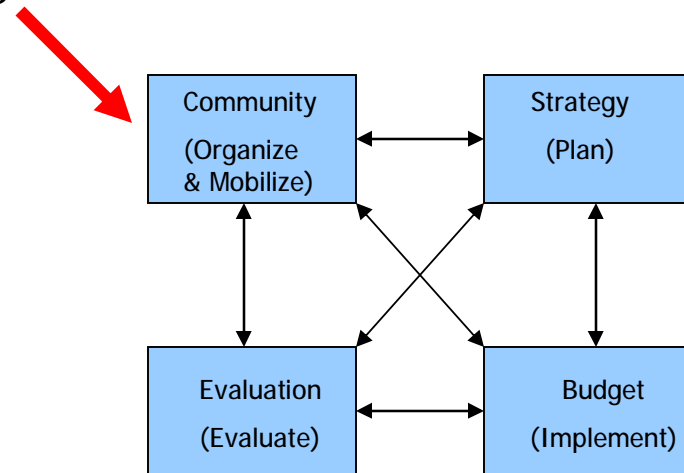
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- n **Guideline 1:** The intervention is based on a *solid theory or theoretical perspective* that has been validated by research;
- n **Guideline 2:** The intervention is supported by a documented body of knowledge—a converging accumulation of empirical evidence of *effectiveness—generated from similar or related interventions that indicate effectiveness*; and,
- n **Guideline 3:** The intervention is judged by a *consensus* among informed experts *to be effective* based on a combination of theory, research, and practice experience. Informed experts may include key community prevention leaders, and elders or other respected leaders within indigenous cultures."



# Policy to Practice, Step 1

*Step 1. Assess nature of the substance abuse problem, where it occurs, whom it affects, how it is manifested, the resources required to address the problem, and the readiness to act;*

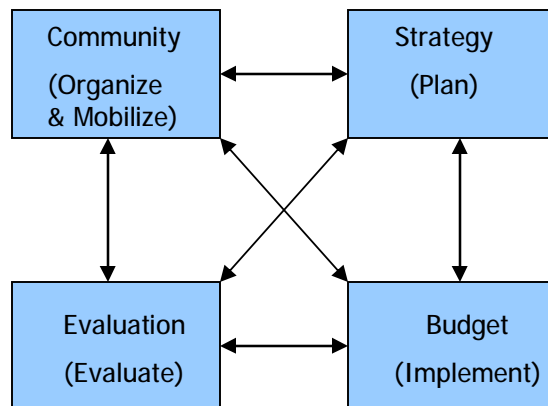


Note: these steps are as they were originally proposed by Carnevale Associates, LLC to SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. SAMHSA modified the five steps by switching the order of steps 2 and 3, i.e., what is represented here as Step 2 is Step 3 in what became known as SAMHSA's strategic prevention framework. The five steps proposed by Carnevale Associates, LLC were intended to be applied to any drug policy intervention (treatment, prevention, law enforcement, international programs, and interdiction).



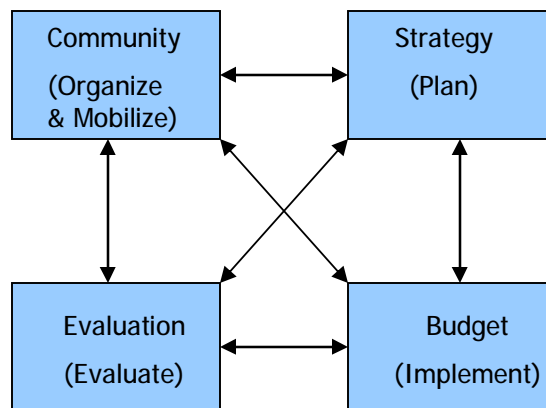
# Policy to Practice, Step 2

*Step 2. Develop a comprehensive strategic plan that articulates a vision for organizing specific prevention programs, policies, and practices to address substance abuse problems locally;*



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# Policy to Practice, Step 3

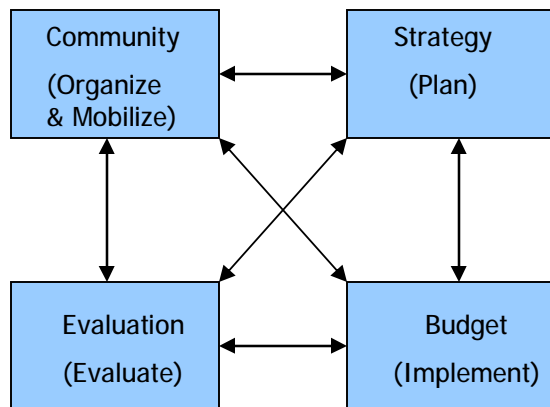


**Step 3. Build capacity to address needs and problems identified in Step 1;**

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# Policy to Practice, Step 4

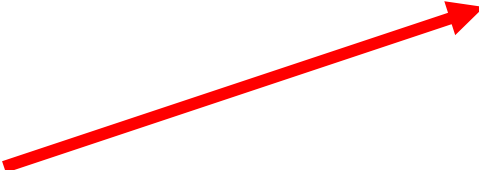
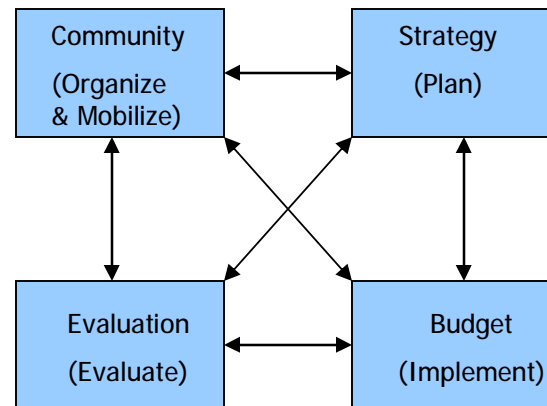


**Step 4. *Implement the evidence-based programs, practices, and policies required by the Strategy;***

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# Policy to Practice, Step 5

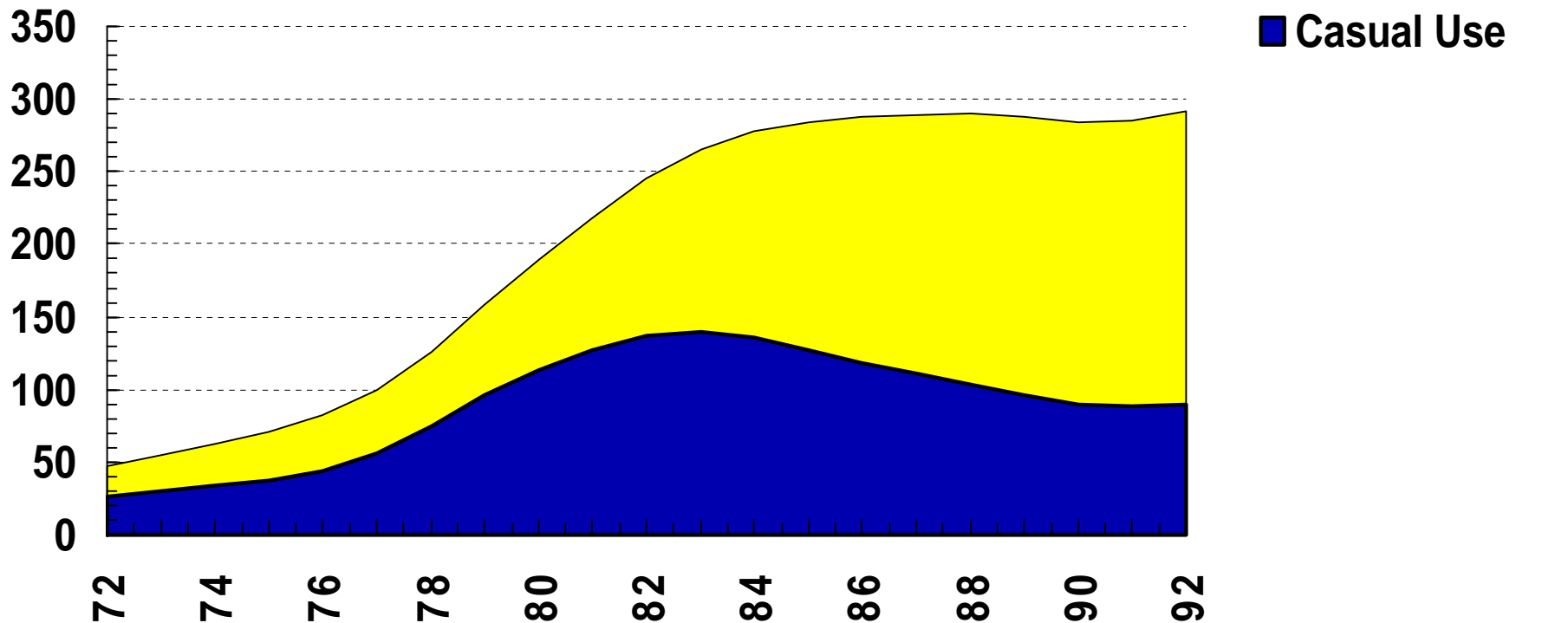


**Step 5.** *Monitor implementation, evaluate effectiveness, sustain effective activities, and improve or replace those that fail.*

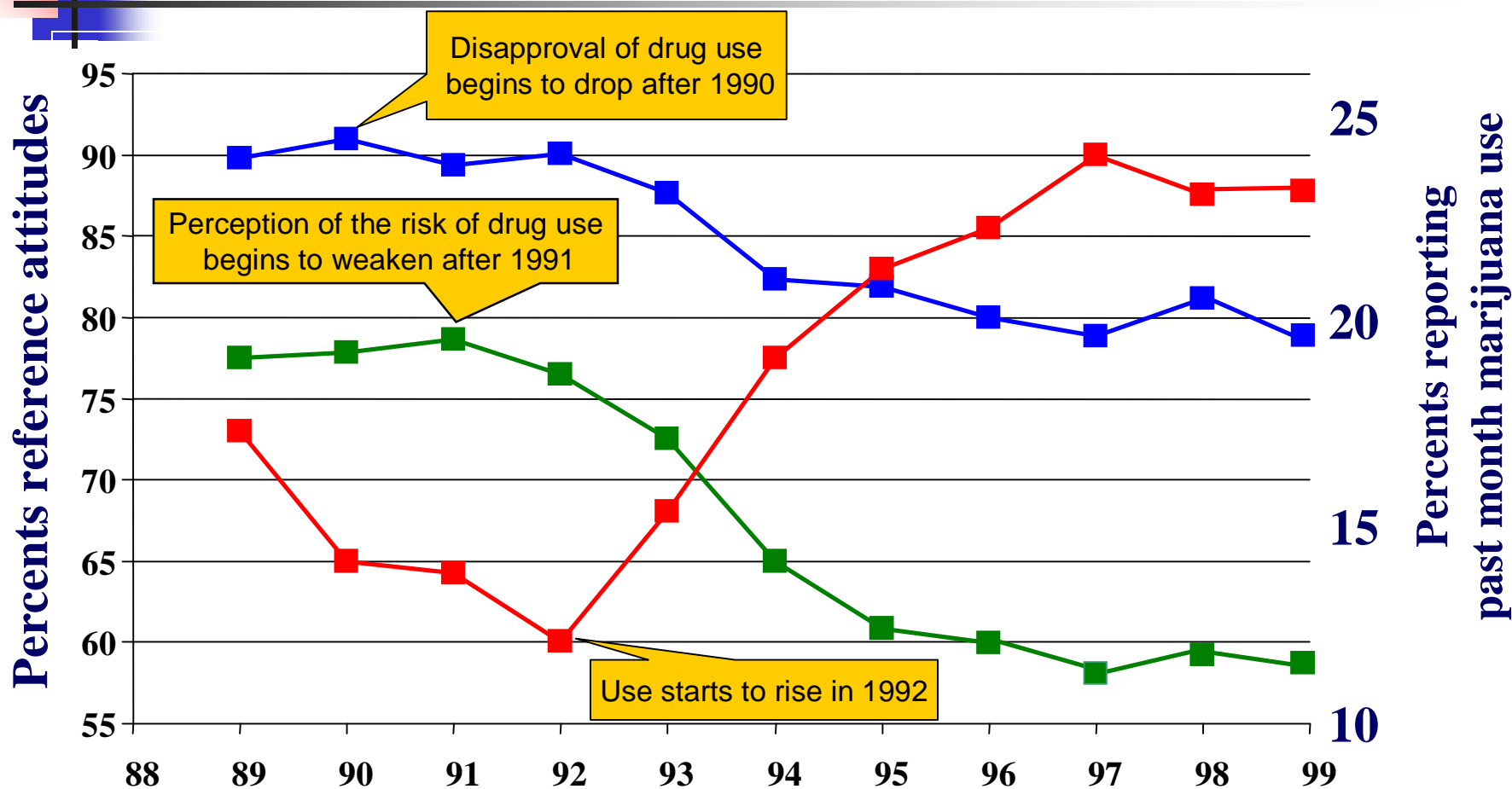
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# RAND Casual/Hardcore Users

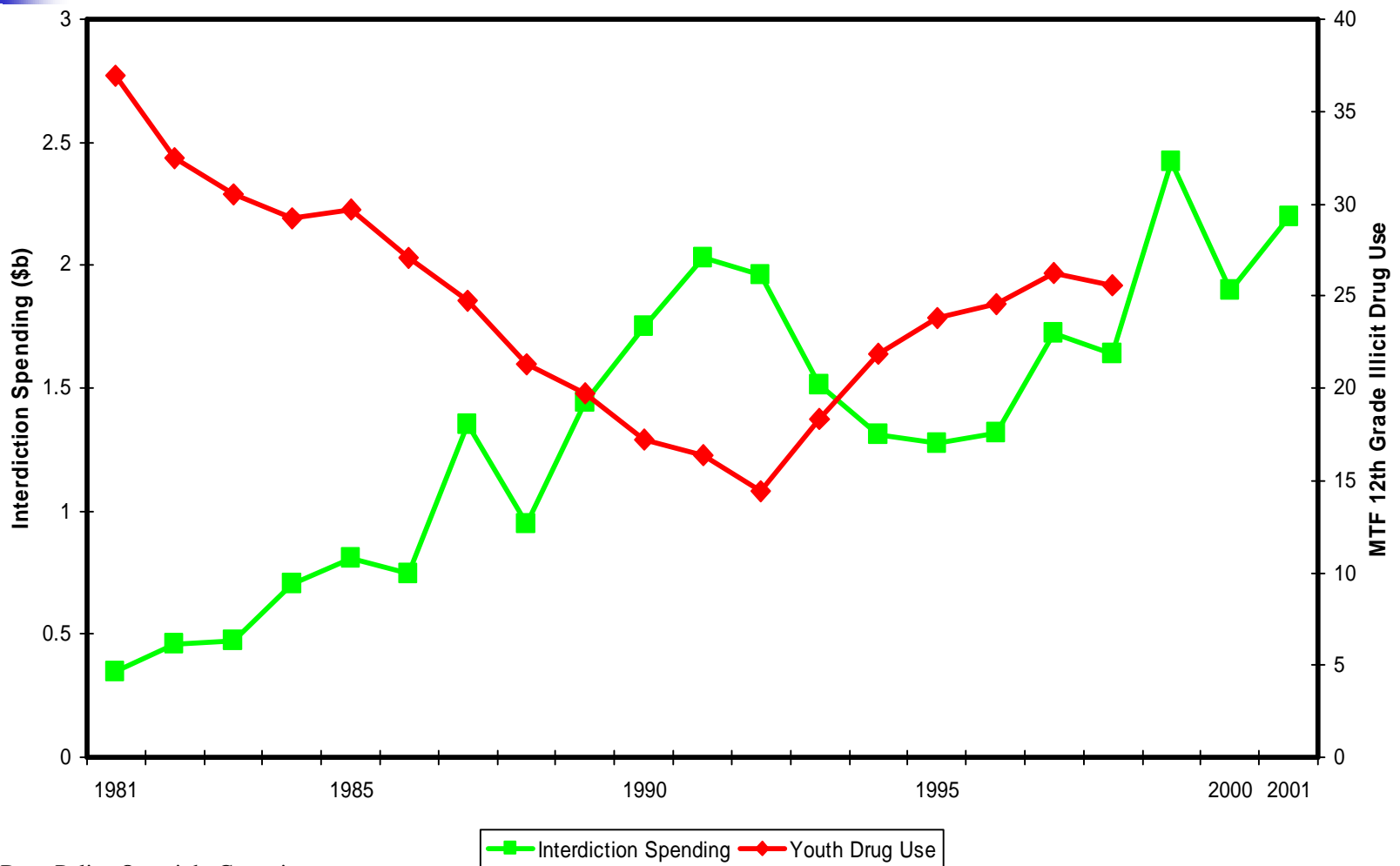
Annual Consumption  
(Metric Tons of Pure Cocaine)



# Use versus Attitudes



# Interdiction Spending versus Drug Use



Source: House Drug Policy Oversight Committee.



# Contact Information

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