

# Baltimore's Story: Increasing Access to Drug Treatment

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June 8, 2006



# Overview

- A brief history of the expansion of drug treatment in Baltimore City
- Outcomes
- Conclusions & the future



**Drug Treatment  
Expansion  
in Baltimore**

- “[T]here are some alarming signs that substance abuse in Baltimore is escalating dangerously.”

– *Baltimore Sun*, November 7, 1993

# A City in Crisis

- Heroin-related emergency visits increase by 8% nationally 1990 to 1991
  - **134% rise in Baltimore**
- Cocaine-related visits increase 28% nationally
  - **121% rise in Baltimore**
- In 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 1992, Baltimore had more cases of mixed drug overdoses than any other city in the country.

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 11/7/1993

# Consequences: Crime

- In 1993
  - 353 Murders in Baltimore City\*
  - 21,945 Violent Crimes\*
  - 69,975 Property Crimes
  - Estimated 75% related to drugs

\*Record highs to this day. Sources: CDC, UCR

## Consequences: Health

- HIV in early 1990s: Fastest rising cause of death in Baltimore
  - #1 cause among African-American men
  - #2 cause among African-American women
- Sexually transmitted diseases
  - Syphilis, gonorrhea, hepatitis

## Consequences for the City

“[A] less tangible but equally debilitating impact of substance abuse ... [is] the psychological fear it spreads across Baltimore.”

– Abell Foundation Report, October 1993

## Consensus Emerges: Drug Treatment Is the Answer

- September 1993: Mayoral panel
- October 1993: Abell report asks for \$30 million in additional funding
- November 1993: International conference

1994-1998:  
Growing Local Commitment



## Mid-1990s: Frustrated Search for Funding

- \$30 million request to Clinton Administration
- \$26 million request to city business leaders
  - Health Commissioner Dr. Peter Beilenson: “This is as important as the convention center. To have economic viability, we have to do something about the drug problem.”
- Both requests unsuccessful

Source: Baltimore Sun 4/21/1996, 1/14/1997

## Fall 1996: Undercover Advocacy

- Health Commissioner Dr. Beilenson seeks treatment as heroin addict “Todd Jackson”
- Visited 3 drug treatment centers, called 22
- Only 1 scheduled an appointment.
- “What I found was that you have to be the most dedicated addict, with a phone, car and a calendar, to get yourself into a Baltimore treatment center.”

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 11/16/1996

## January 1997: A Step Forward

- Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke gives Housing Commissioner, Police Commissioner, and Health Commissioner 60 days to “come up with at least \$5 million” for drug treatment
- Money comes from other non-drug programs ... causing layoffs.
- Dr. Beilenson: “Before anyone is going to help, we have to help ourselves.”

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 1/14/1997

## August 1997: Mr. Soros Invests

- “Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke’s advocacy of drug treatment on demand has caught the attention of a major philanthropist who plans to spend at least \$25 million in Baltimore over the next five years to promote economic development and social service programs.”

– *Baltimore Sun*, 8/3/1997

## Urgency Grows ...

- Syphilis Outbreak in 1997
  - Spike to >1 case per 1000 residents
- 1996 data released showing Baltimore has more drug-related ER visits than any other U.S. city

Sources: CDC, *Baltimore Sun* 3/22/1998

## ... And Is Answered

- By 1998, spending on drug treatment doubles to approximately \$32 million
  - Abell, Weinberg Foundations, OSI Spend for drug treatment
  - One treatment provider:
    - “I’ve been in this field 20 years, and for 20 years we had to rob Peter to pay Paul to buy toilet paper...Now all of a sudden we can get tutoring, we can get housing, we can get medical care. I’ve never seen so many people continue in treatment.”

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 4/30/1998

1999: Transition



# Unfavorable National Attention

- *Time*, 9/6/1999
  - “Baltimore, which has a population of 630,000, has sunk under the depressing triple crown of urban degradation: middle-income residents are fleeing at a rate of 1,000 a month; the murder rate has been more than three times as high as New York City's; and 1 of every 10 citizens is a drug addict.”

# Criticism

- *Sun*: “[S]lots must be in programs that truly work. If not, the promise of treatment amounts to little more than a hoax on addicts and taxpayers.”
- Soon after, Housing Commissioner threatens to withdraw \$2.5 million from drug treatment.

*Baltimore Sun* 6/28/1999, 7/7/1999, 7/11/1999, 9/2/1999

## A Campaign ... and a New Mayor

- Drug treatment is key issue for business and faith communities
- Martin O'Malley elected after pledging to support drug treatment.

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 12/15/1999

2000-2002:

Advocacy, Accountability, and Expansion



# Advocacy...

- Mayor O'Malley's "top priority" for state is \$25 million for drug treatment
  - "This is the crisis that's killing our city...Eighty percent of our homicides are drug-related. Too many people are wasting their lives on drugs."

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 2/15/2000

## ... More advocacy ...

- Health Commissioner:
  - “If Baltimore’s crime rate is not cut in half within three years of obtaining \$40 million in additional funding for drug treatment, I will resign.”
  - Congressman Elijah Cummings: Drug treatment a “cornerstone” of rebuilding the city

## ... And More Advocacy.

- State's Attorney: "If we really want to reduce crime, then we must make treatment available."
- Advocacy organizations energized
- Rallies with hundreds of people in Annapolis and Baltimore
- 12,000 e-mail messages to legislators

Sources: *Baltimore Sun* 3/6/2000, 3/14/2000, 4/25/2000, 8/10/2000, 12/19/2000, 3/16/2001, 2/23/2002

# Accountability

- DrugStat: weekly review of program data on outcomes\*
  - State Senator: “This has provided more confidence in the program.”
- Training improvements\*
- Scientific Advisory Committee\*

\*OSI support

Source: *Baltimore Sun* 12/7/2000, 10/29/2001

# Data

- *Smart Steps* released 2000
- *Steps to Success* released January 2002
  - “Largest and most rigorously conducted drug treatment outcomes study that focuses on a single city.”
  - Followed 991 residents for one, six, and 12 months

# Results

- Treatment associated with:
  - 69% reduction in heroin use at 1 year
  - 48% reduction in cocaine use at 1 year
  - 19% reduction in alcohol to intoxication at 1 year
  - 69% reduction in illegal income at 1 year
  - 38% reduction in imprisonment, comparing year prior to year after start of treatment

Source: *Steps to Success: BSAS, 2002*

## Negotiation with State

- Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend takes lead for state, council established at state level
- Agreement made to set aside 35% of drug treatment spots for referrals from criminal justice system

Source: Dr. Peter Beilenson

# The State Responds

- 2000: \$8 million increase for treatment
- 2001: \$8 million increase
- 2002: \$7 million increase

Source: *Baltimore Sun* 4/1/2000, 4/11/2001

2003-2006: Plateau



# 2003: Fiscal Crisis

- From 2003, new governor with different relationship to city
- 2003: Dispute over \$600,000
- 2003-2005: State supports dips about 10%
- Governor's advisor: "Before we go charging down the road [of more funding], we want to be sure we're getting good results for the dear resources we have."

Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 8/7/2003

# 2005: Budget Surpluses

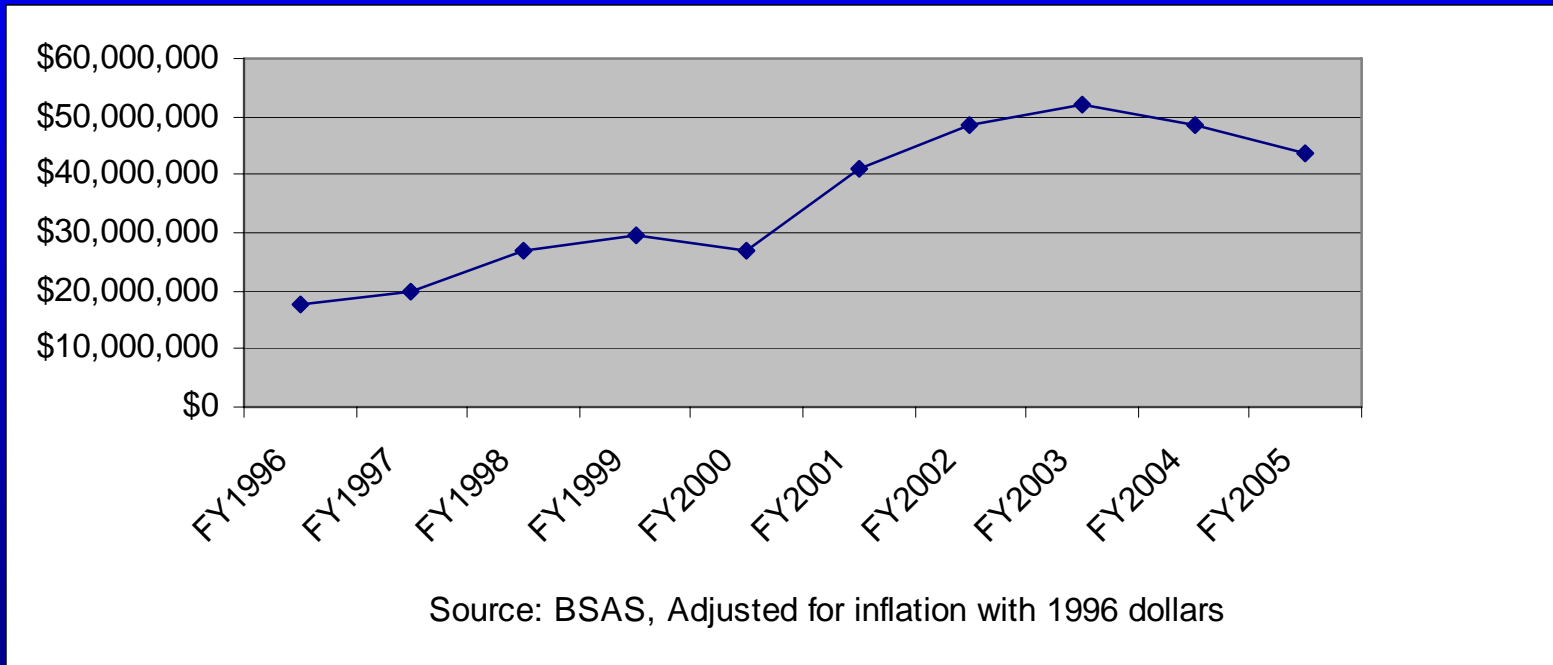
- Increases in drug treatment support
  - State: Drug courts, other funding
  - City: Buprenorphine, unrestricted funds
- Foundations: innovative investments, capital funds
  - New residential treatment center to open

## A Dozen Years Later

- 1993: \$15 million budget, Abell report asks for additional \$30 million
- 2005: \$52.9 million budget ... about \$30 million more in real dollars
  - Approximately 28,000 treatment episodes/year

Source: BSAS

# Publicly Funded Drug Treatment FY1996-2005



Since FY1996 → 145% increase in real budget

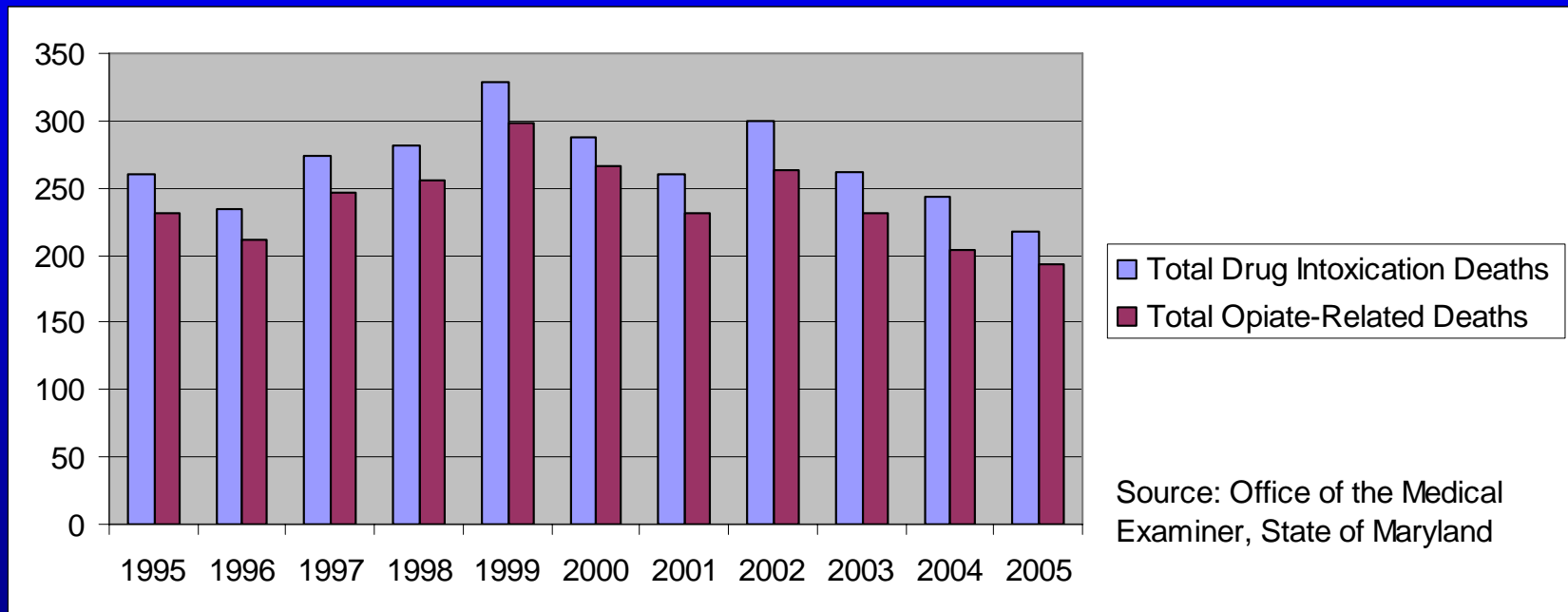


**Outcomes**

# Measures of Drug Use

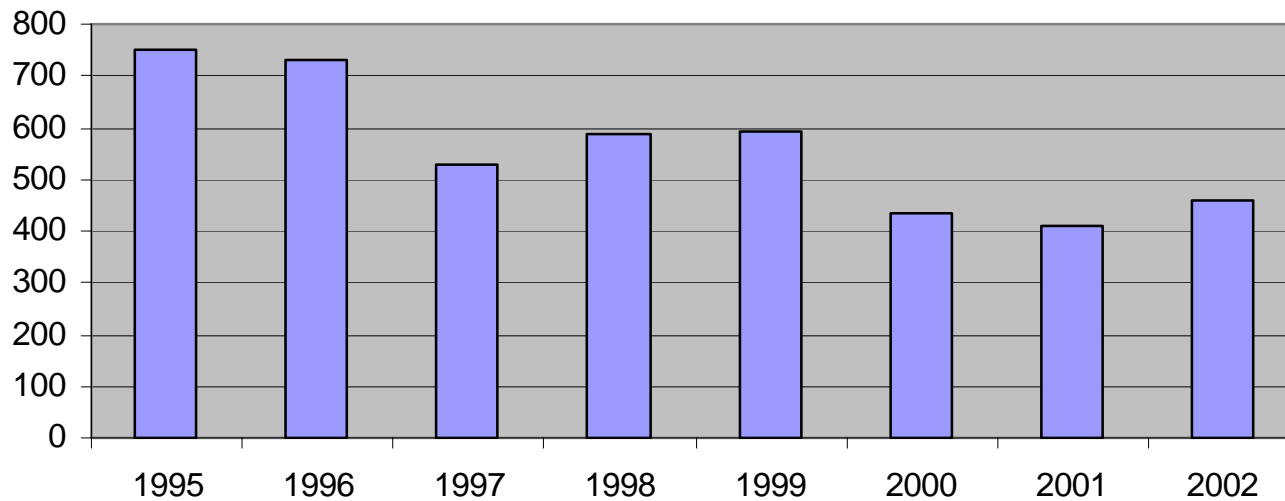


# Deaths Caused by Drug Intoxication and Intoxication Deaths Related to Opiates of Baltimore City Residents, 1995-2005



Since peak in 1999 → 34% decrease

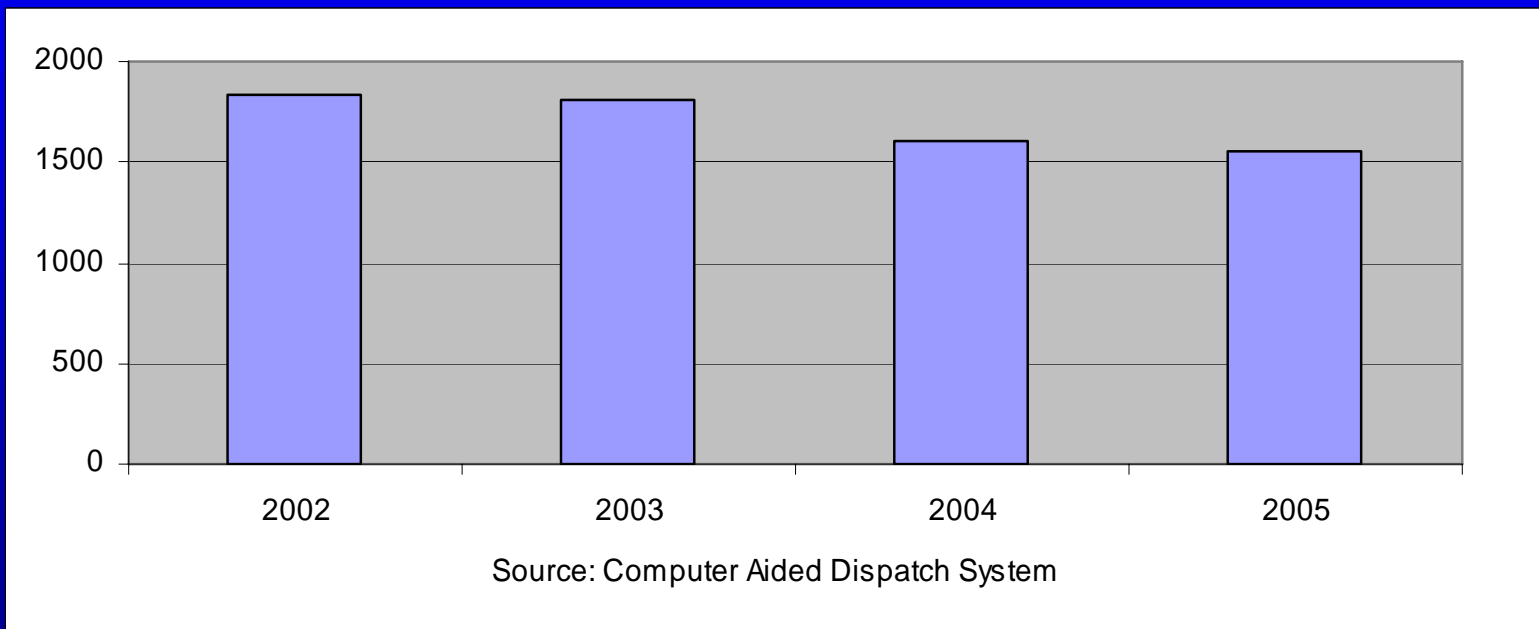
# ER Visits Related to Cocaine or Heroin in Baltimore City, 1995-2002 (est. rate per 100,000)



Source; DAWN

From 1995-2002 → 39% decrease

# 911 Overdose Calls in Baltimore City, 2002-2005

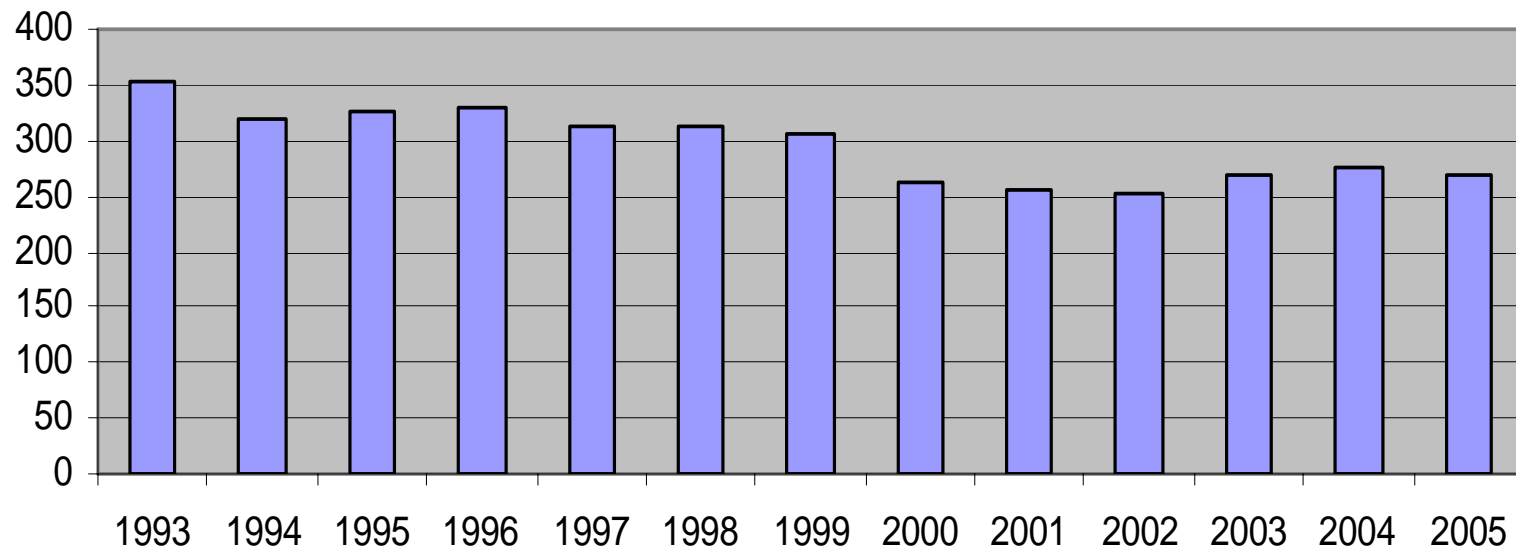


Since 2002 → 16% decrease

# Measures of Crime



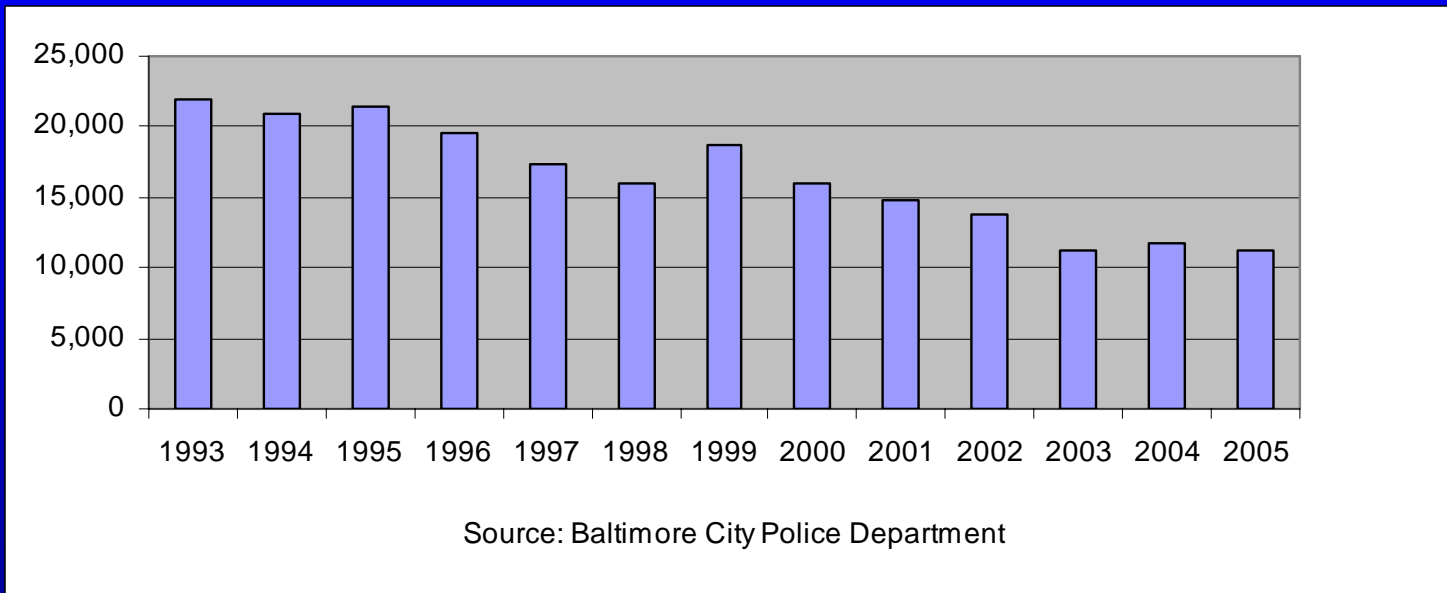
# Homicides in Baltimore City, 1993-2005



Source: Baltimore City Police Department

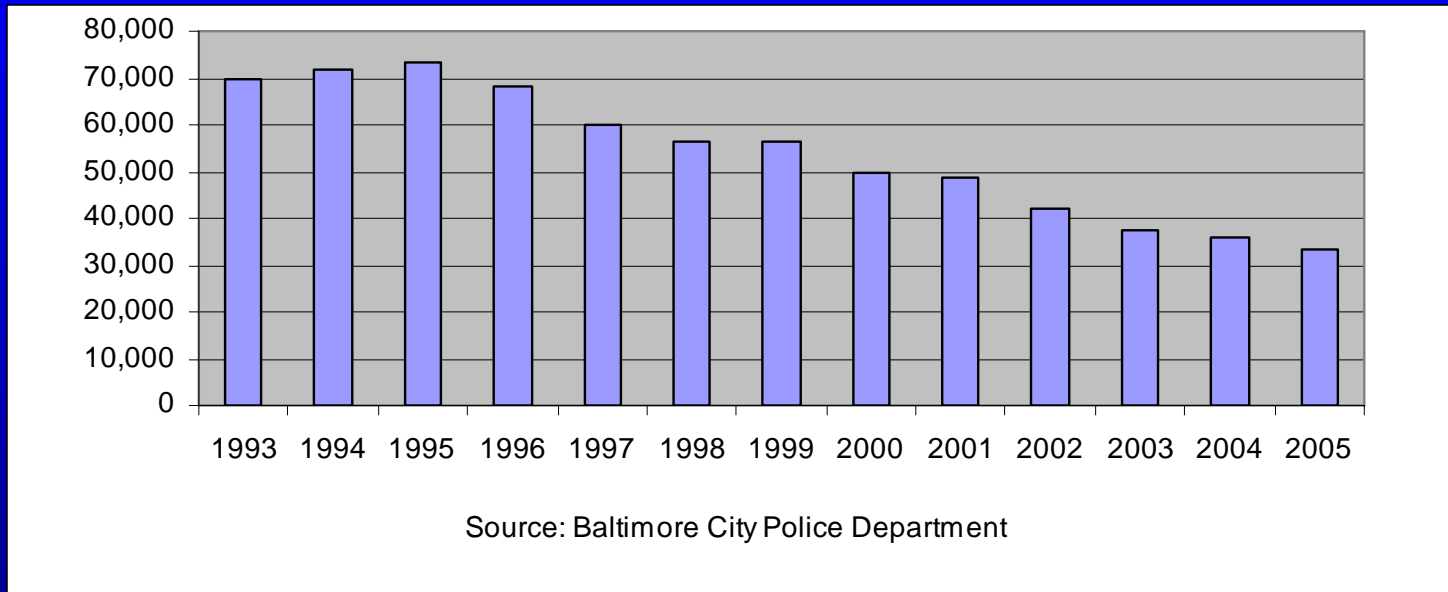
Since 1993 → 24% decrease

# Violent Crime in Baltimore City, 1993-2005



Since 1993 → 49% decrease

# Property Crime in Baltimore City, 1993-2005

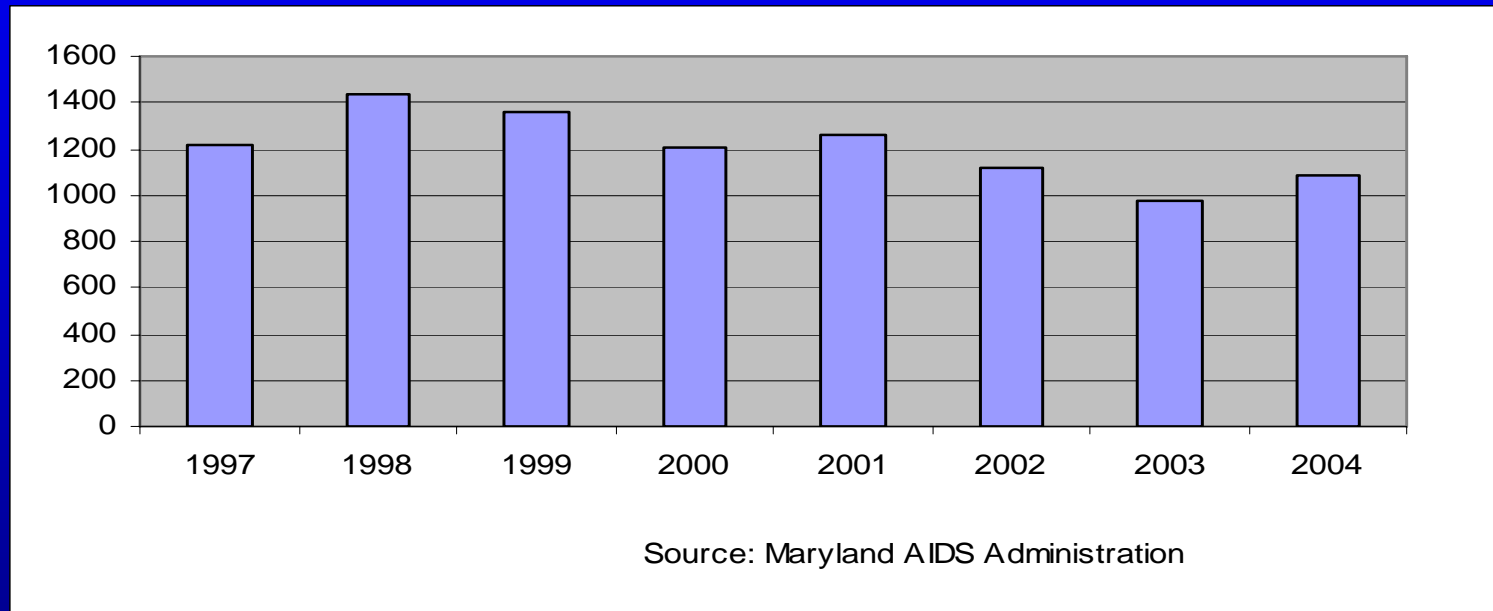


Since 1993 → 52% decrease

# Measures of Health

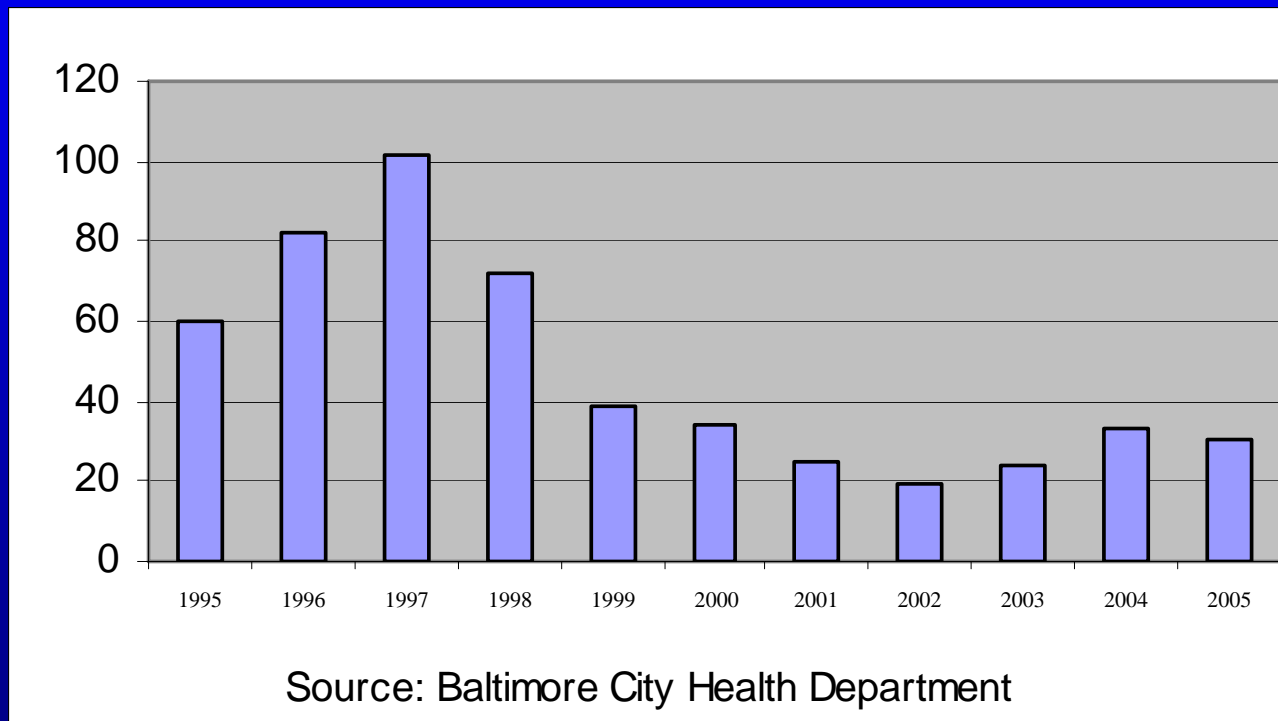


# New HIV Diagnoses in Baltimore City, 1997-2004



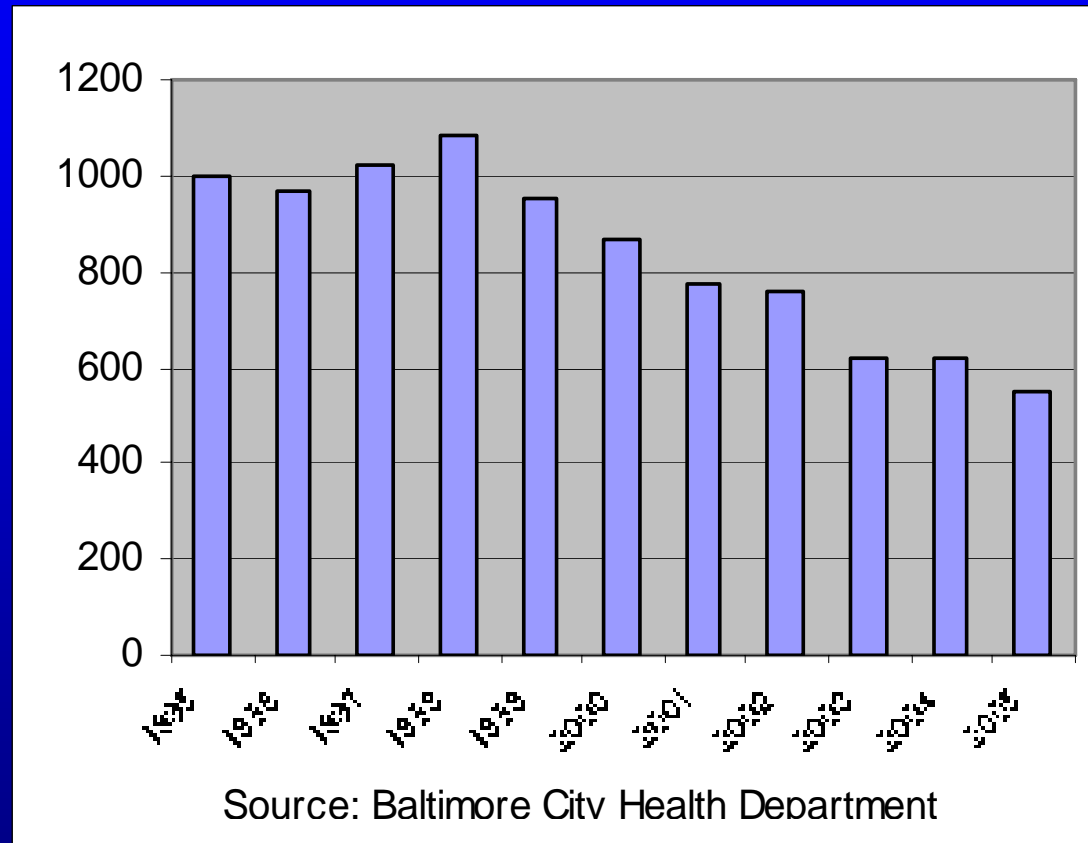
Since peak in 1998 → 25% decrease

# Primary and Secondary Syphilis in Baltimore City, 1995-2005 (Rate per 100,000)



Since peak in 1997 → 70% decrease

# Gonorrhea in Baltimore City, 1995-2005 (Rate per 100,000)



Since peak in 1998 → 49% reduction

# Limitations

- All overall outcomes presented were affected by factors other than access to treatment
- Other innovative drug-related efforts in the city are part of the story
  - Including syringe exchange, overdose prevention, interim methadone



# Conclusions & The Future

# Conclusions

- Major public and private investment in substance abuse treatment in Baltimore, 1993-2006
- Increase in funding not inevitable
- Key factors:
  - political support, support from foundations, support from media
  - accountability, data
- Wide range of evidence showing vast improvement in Baltimore
- Still much more to do

# The Future

- Enhanced performance measurement and assessment
- Changes to zoning rules to expand access to care
- Integration with the medical system:  
Buprenorphine
- Concern over meth
- Advocacy for additional funding...

# Where Credit Is Due

- Mayors Kurt L. Schmoke and Martin O'Malley
- Health Commissioner Dr. Peter Beilenson
- Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems, Inc.
- Foundations
- Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and state legislature
- ADAA – Dr. Peter Luongo
- Community agencies and partners
- Treatment providers in Baltimore City