

Using Simulation Training to Teach Child Protection Investigators in Illinois- Program Evaluation of the Child Protection Training Academy

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Three Teams with Important Roles

- **Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS),
Office of Learning & Professional Development**
Monico Whittington-Eskridge, Deputy Director
- **Simulation Training Program at Child Protection Training Academy
(CPTA), University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS)**
Betsy Goulet, D.P.A., Principal Investigator
Susan Oppedard Evans, Executive Director
Amy Wheeler, Lead Facilitator
Taylor McCarthy, Coordinator
- **Program Evaluation Team at Children and Family Research Center
(CFRC), School of Social Work, University of Illinois at Urbana-
Champaign**
Theodore Cross, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Yu-Ling Chiu, Ph.D.



Today's Panel

- CPTA at UIS Simulation Training Highlights (20 minutes)
 - Discussion and Questions
- CFRC Evaluation Summary (20 minutes)
 - Discussion and Questions
- DCFS Simulation Expansion and Practice Implications (10 minutes)
 - Discussion and Questions
- Questions and Answers (10 minutes)





Traditional Training of CPS Investigators

- Classroom based
- Focus on procedures, requirements etc.
- Little training simulates actual work experience
- Research across disciplines: only 10-15% of training transfers to the workplace

Value of simulating child protection work in training

- Practicing the behavior
- Getting feedback from debriefs
- Observing other trainees' actions and debriefs
- Trainees are more engaged
 - Sensory – visual, auditory, olfactory
 - Emotional
 - Critical thinking
- Best way to determine the field is not for you





- Dr. Goulet's experience of simulation training at the National Child Protection Training Center in Minnesota.
- DCFS contracted with Dr. Goulet for a year of research and development to advance a simulation training program.
- UIS refurbished one of the structures to serve as a mock house.
- The Child Protection Training Academy Statute (P.A. 99-0348) was passed in August.
- Dr. Goulet and Ms. Evans re-designed classroom training and designed the simulation training.
- Dr. Goulet and Ms. Evans worked with Chief Officer Whittington-Eskridge to prepare additional classroom trainers to work from the new curriculum.
- The first combined classroom and simulation training was conducted in February.
- DCFS expanded a site in Chicago

Child Protection Training Academy (CPTA)

- Developed family residence and courtroom simulation labs at UIS for CPS investigators
- Partnership with Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
- Training all new Illinois investigators since February 2016 (N=645)



CPTA Training Team

- Simulation trainer
 - Former DCFS investigator and long-time classroom trainer
 - Has trained hundreds of DCFS investigators
- Standardized patients
 - “Actors” who play role of family under investigation
 - From Southern Illinois University School of Medicine’s Standardized Patient Program
 - Also trained to provide feedback to professionals (doctors and now child protection investigators)
- Courtroom professionals
 - Current and retired judges and lawyers
 - Play roles resembling their real life experience



Connection to Classroom Training

- New DCFS investigators have six weeks of classroom Foundation Training
- Followed by four days of simulation training at CPTA
- New Foundations Training Curriculum written by sim training developers
- A representative case is discussed throughout classroom and simulation training
- Problem Based Learning (PBL)



A Simulation Training week

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Introduction	Door Knock	Scene Investigation	Fishbowl Interviews	Pre-Hearing Meeting with Parents
Collateral Calls	Interspersed with Individual Debriefs	Interspersed with Individual Debriefs	Court Prep Training	Court Simulation
Debrief	Overall Debrief	Supervision	Overall Debrief	Overall Debrief
		Overall Debrief		

Program Evaluation of CPTA at UIS

- FY2017 Evaluation
 - Stakeholder and trainee interviews
 - Observation of simulation training
 - Post-training satisfaction survey analysis
- FY2018 Evaluation
 - Study of simulation training process
 - Investigator survey
- FY2019 Evaluation
 - Review of the updated training model
 - Daily Experience of Simulation Training (DEST)
 - Updated post-training satisfaction survey analysis
 - Turnover study



Reference: Jacobs, F. H. (2003). Child and family program evaluation: Learning to enjoy complexity. *Applied Developmental Science*, 7, 62–75.

Program Evaluation of CPTA at UIS (cont.)

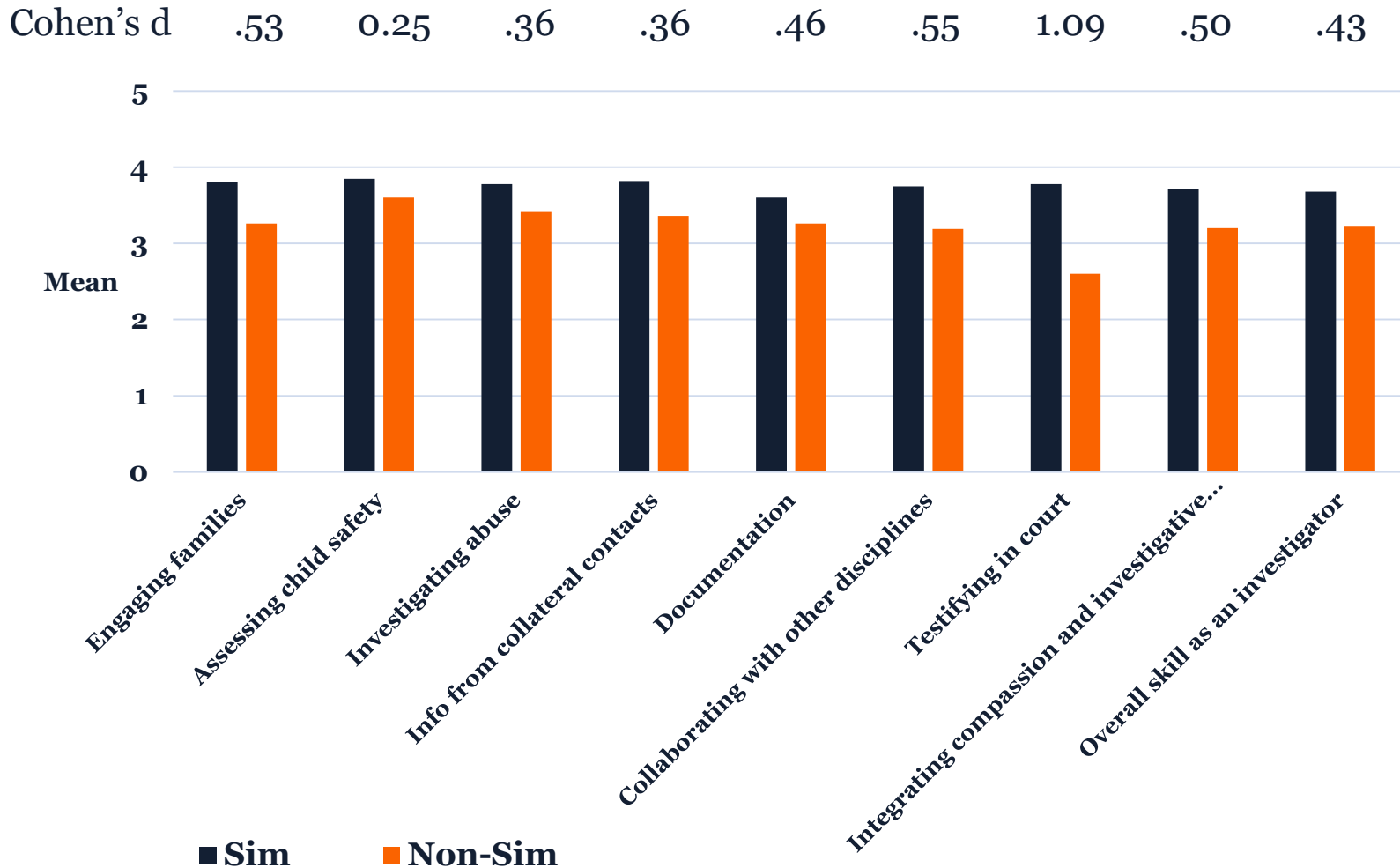


Implementation

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes		
			Short-Term	Intermediate	Distal
<p>Classroom training</p> <p>Simulation Lab Training</p>	<p>Trainees receive in-class and on-line training</p> <p>Trainees participate in simulations of child protection duties</p> <p>Trainees observe others in child protection simulation</p> <p>Trainees receive feedback on their performance in simulations</p> <p>Trainees observe others receiving feedback on their performance in simulations</p> <p>Trainees provide feedback on others' performance in simulations</p> <p>Trainers comment on and provide supplementary information regarding simulation experiences</p> <p>Trainees ask questions in classes and debriefs and receive useful information and support</p>	<p>Trainees acquire content knowledge</p> <p>Trainees demonstrate competence in simulations of child protection duties</p> <p>Trainees develop better understanding of child protection duties</p> <p>Trainees develop child protection decision-making skills</p> <p>Trainees communicate effectively about child protection issues</p> <p>Trainees experience reduced anxiety in their child protection duties</p> <p>Trainees experience greater confidence in their abilities as child protection workers</p>	<p>Investigators are better prepared for practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better assessment of family needs ■ Investigations are more <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strength-based ○ Trauma-informed ○ Family-centered <p>Investigators are better able to integrate compassion and investigative skill</p> <p>Investigators have greater knowledge of and ability to work with allied disciplines</p> <p>Investigators are more empowered to provide feedback on training</p> <p>Investigators are better prepared to work with supervisors</p> <p>Investigators can produce more evidence-based documentation</p> <p>Investigators feel greater confidence and less anxiety in their work</p>	<p>Increased quality of child protection investigations</p> <p>Greater job satisfaction</p> <p>Greater voice in shaping worker training and support</p> <p>Diminished investigator turnover</p> <p>Improved relationship between investigators and supervisors</p> <p>Families have a more positive experience of DCFS investigations</p> <p>Families are more likely to receive services that match their needs</p>	<p>Children are safer</p> <p>Better relationship between families and DCFS</p> <p>Better service delivery to children and families</p> <p>Reduced costs for training new investigators</p>

Appraisal of Certification Training

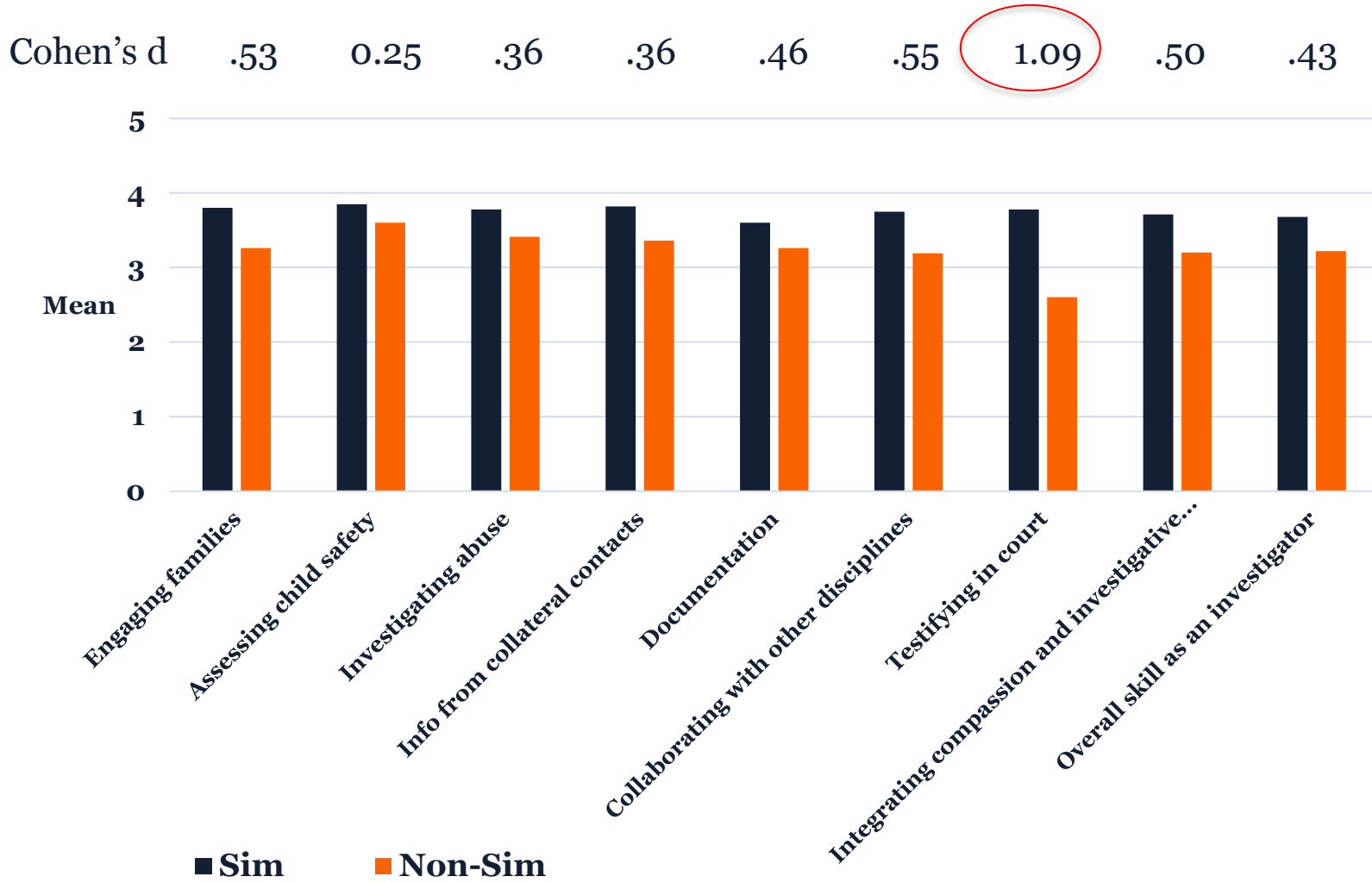
Quality



Data Source: Investigator Survey

Rules of thumb on magnitudes of Cohen's d: 0.2-Small; 0.5-Medium; and 0.8-Large

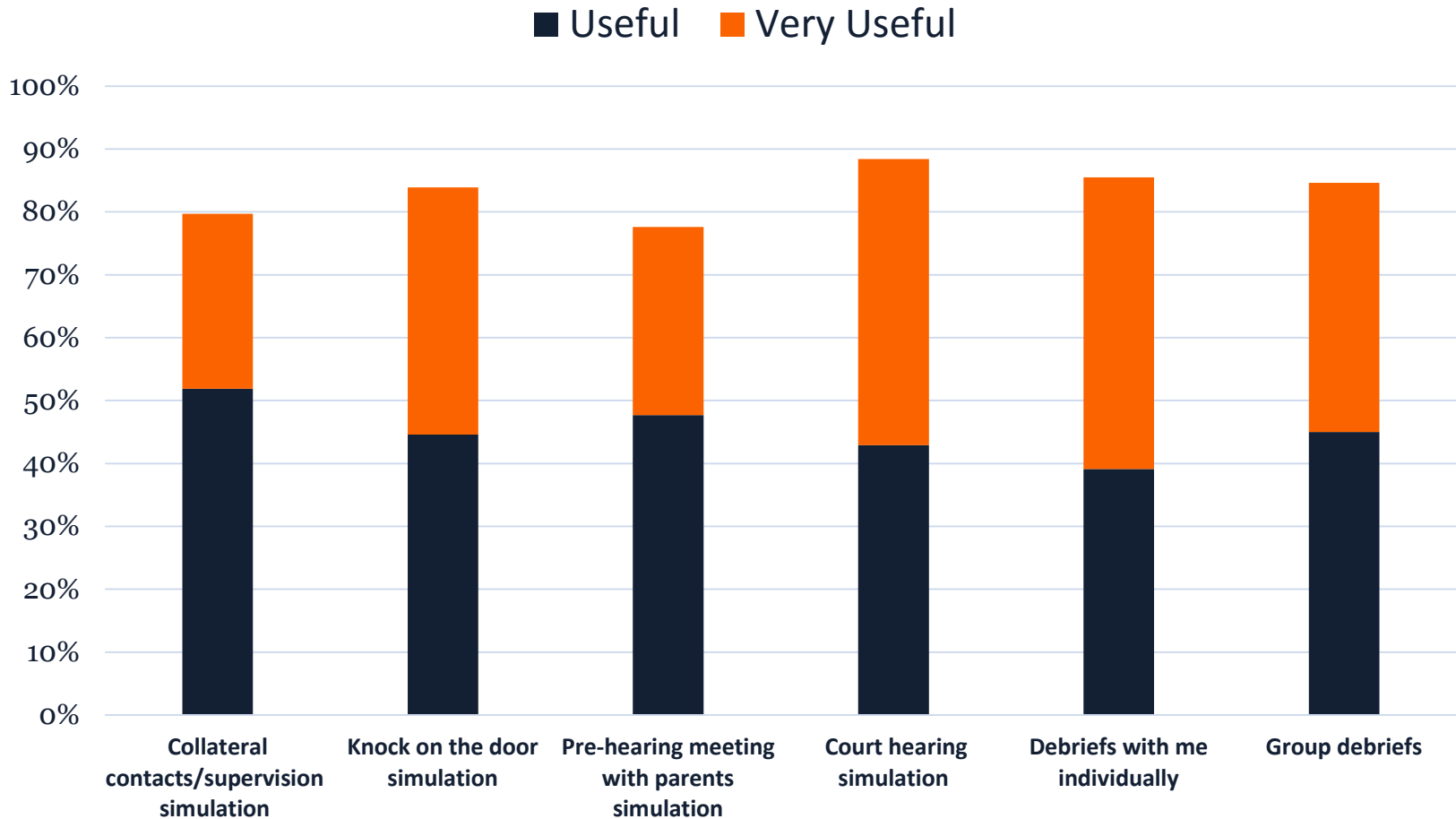
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Data Source: Investigator Survey

Sim group's appraisal of their simulations 1 to 2 years after they received them

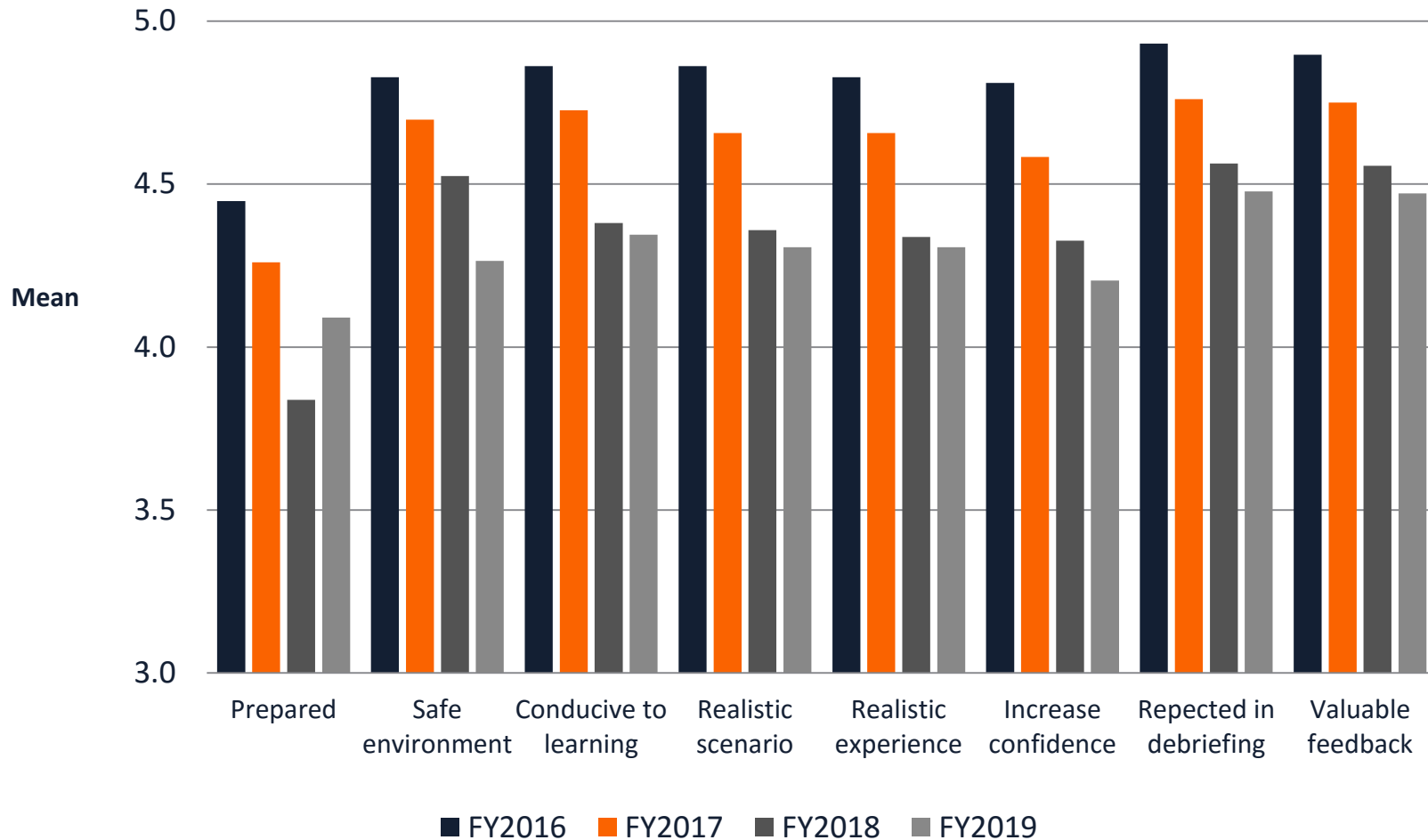
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Data Source: Investigator Survey

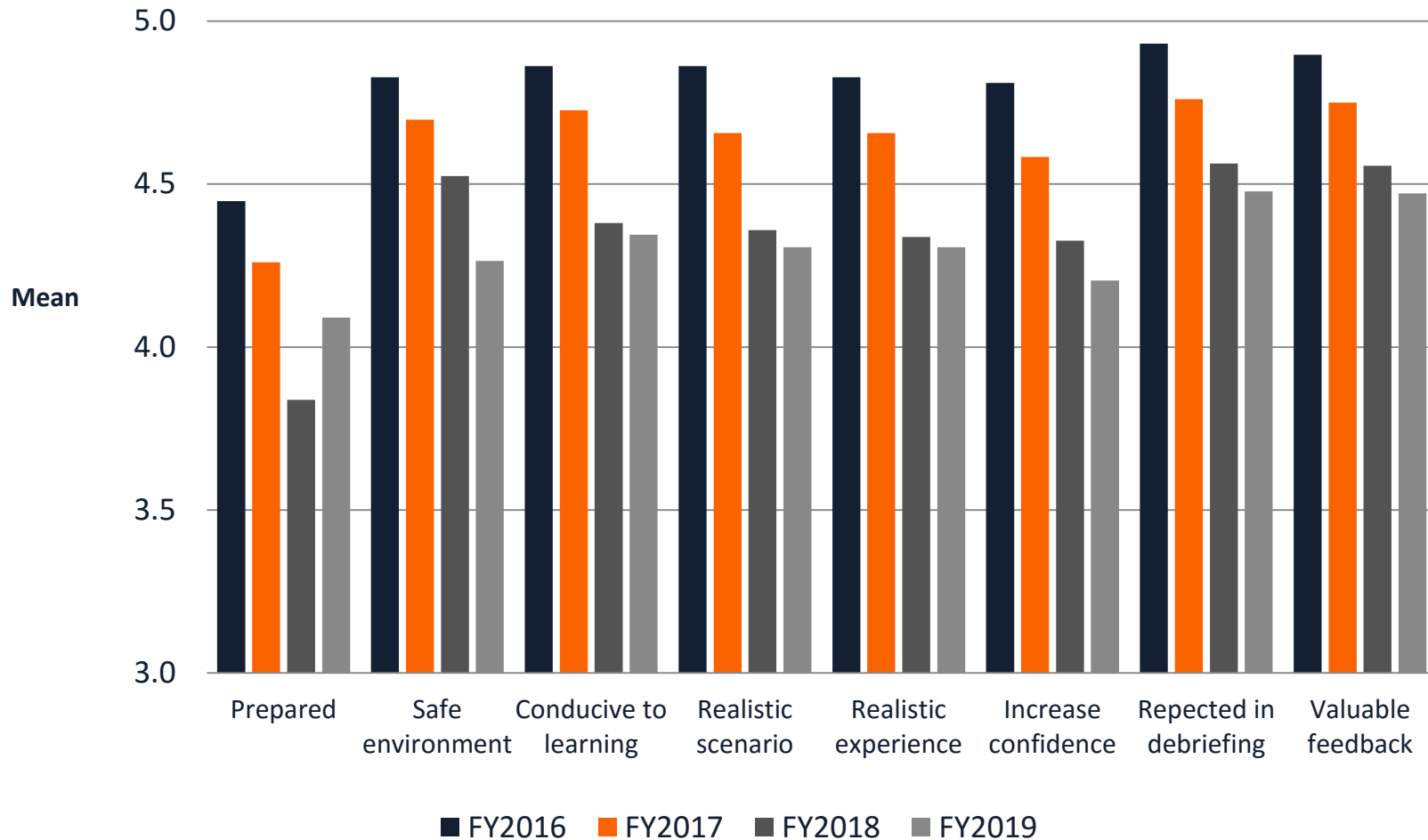
Trainees' Satisfaction with Simulation

Quality



Data Source: Post Training Survey

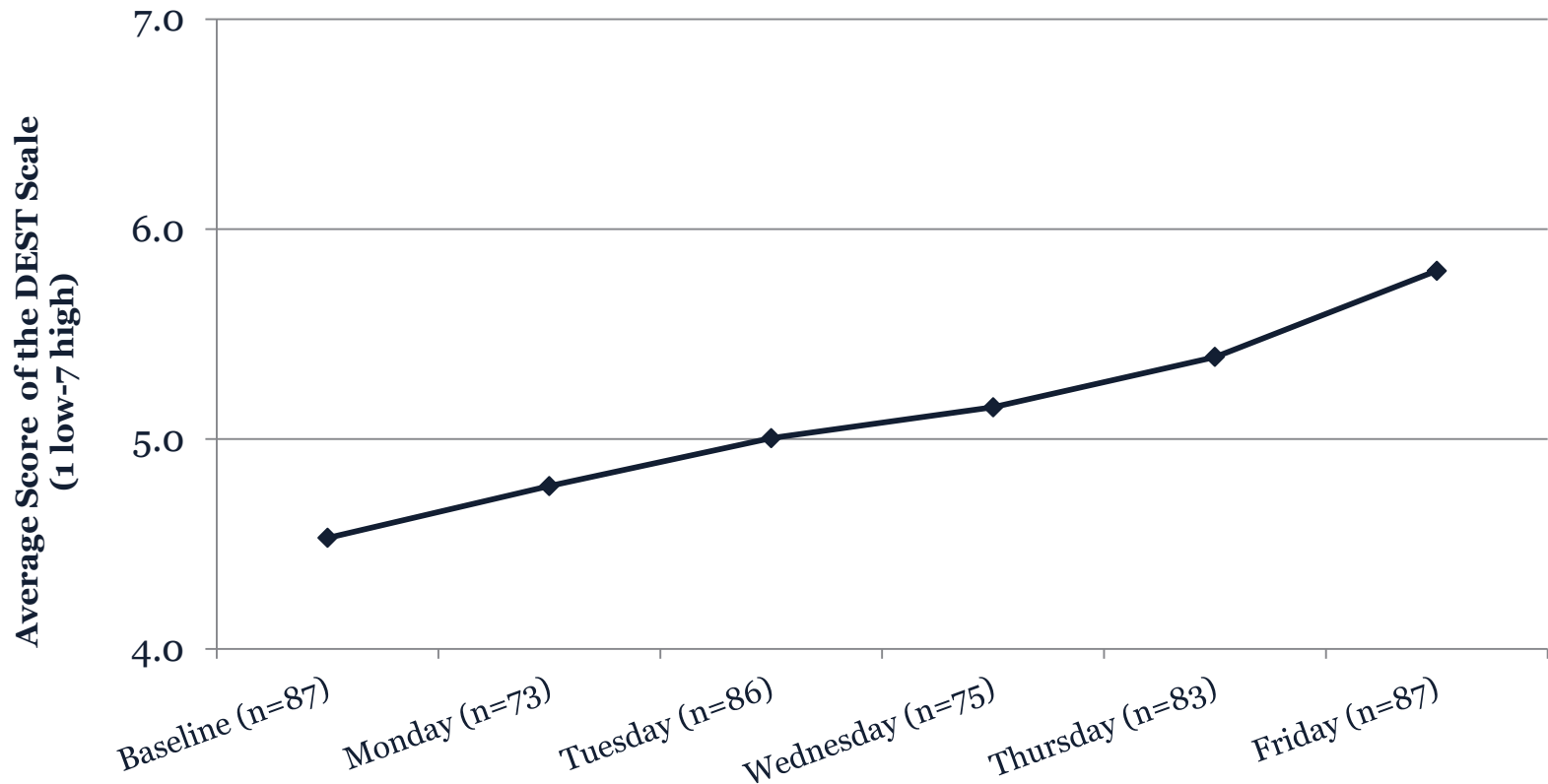
Satisfaction is high throughout but has decreased somewhat over time



Data Source: Post Training Survey

Trainees' Level of Confidence During the Simulation Training Week

Outcome



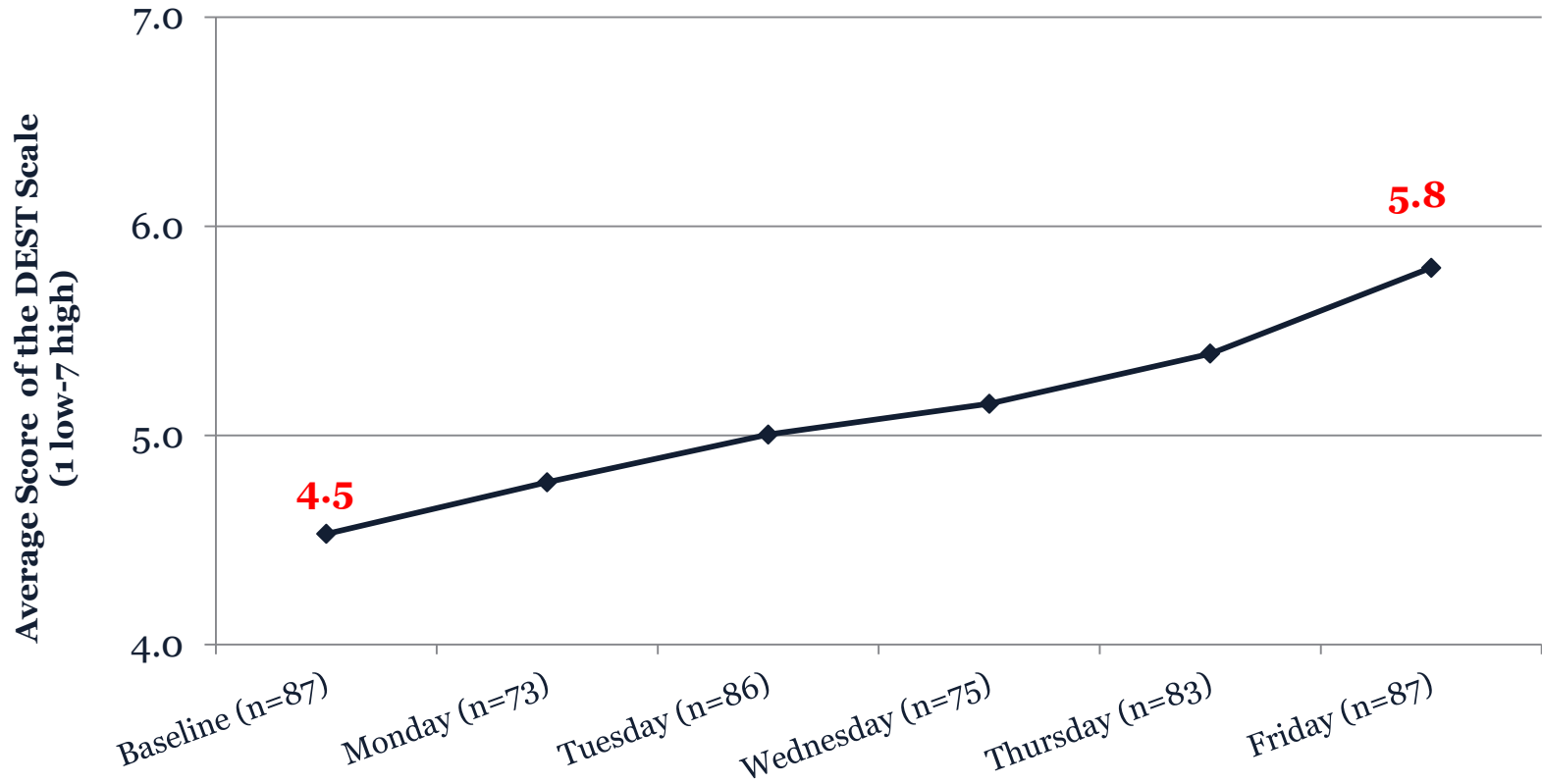
Note: The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the DEST scale (13 items) at each of the six time points were all larger than 0.9, which indicates excellent internal consistency of the scale.



Data Source: Daily Experience of Simulation Training (DEST)

On average, the trainees' level of confidence increased 28% between the baseline and last day.

Outcome



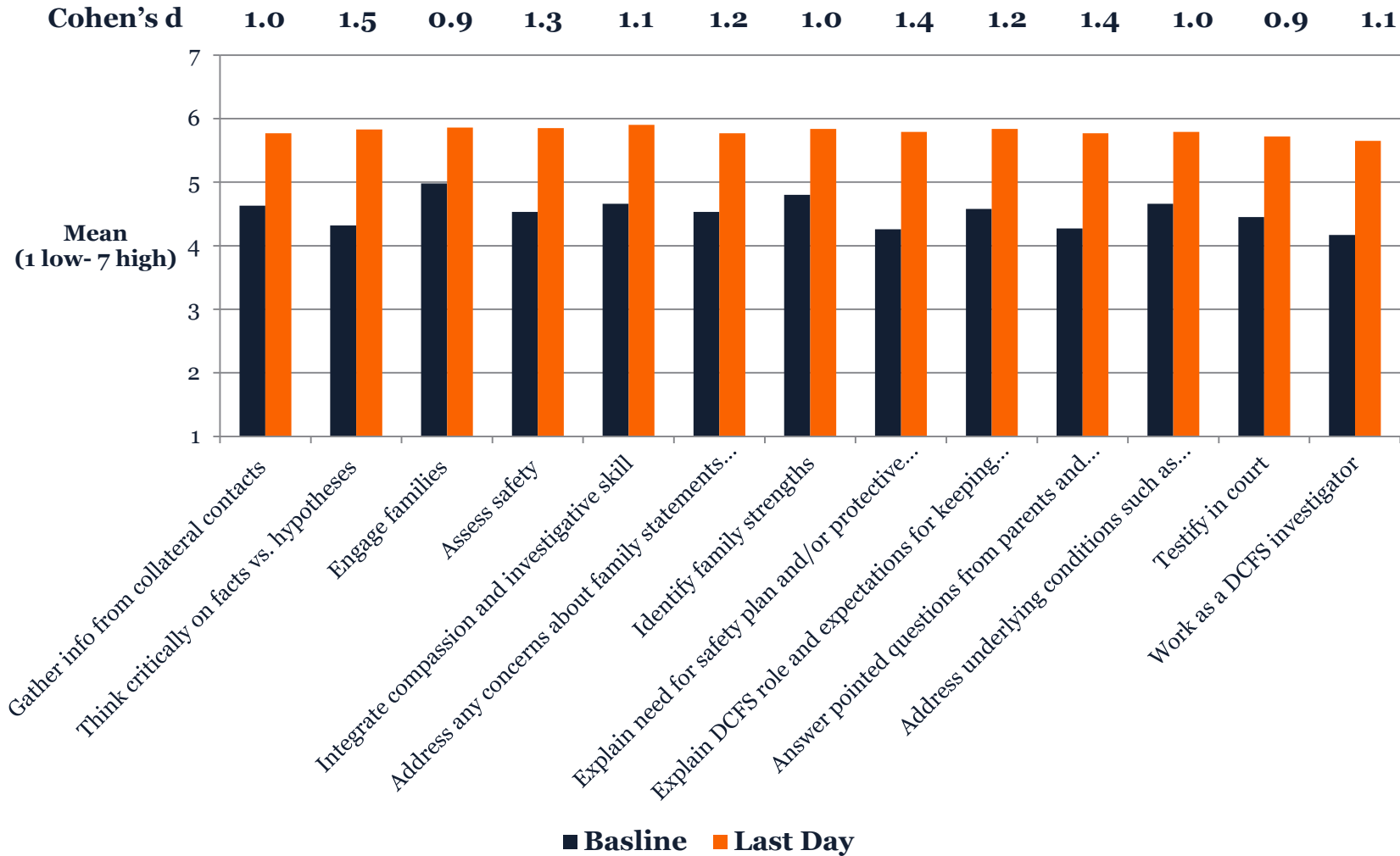
Note: The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the DEST scale (13 items) at each of the six time points were all larger than 0.9, which indicates excellent internal consistency of the scale.



Data Source: Daily Experience of Simulation Training (DEST)

Cohen's d statistic shows large increases in confidence between baseline and Friday

Outcome



Data Source: Daily Experience of Simulation Training (DEST)

Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance

- A repeated measures ANOVA was conducted with the **41** respondents who completed the DEST at **every time point**.
- Differences across time points were statistically significant for all 13 items.
- The mean confidence level of all CPS work skills also differed significantly across 6 time points.
- The confidence level of working as a DCFS investigator increased 48% between the baseline and last day.

Difficulty of Developing Investigation Skills on Job

Outcome

- Investigators rated difficulty of developing nine investigation skills during their time at DCFS (1 very easy to 4 very difficult).
- The greatest difficulty was reported for the skills of testifying in court (30.8%), investigating abuse and neglect allegations (26.5%), and creating evidence-based documentation (26.0%).
- The sim group averaged almost half a point lower ($b=-.44$) on creating evidence-based documentation and on acquiring the skill of testifying in court ($b=-.67$), when other variables were statistically controlled.



Data Source: Investigator Survey

Turnover Intention

Outcome

Comparing Non-Sim and Sim Groups on Intention to Leave their Job

Question	Difference in Odds
Looking for another job within DCFS	4.19 greater odds for non-sim group ($p < .05$).
Leaving DCFS if another job becomes available	3.55 greater odds for non-sim group ($p = .06$).
Control Variables: Age, Race, Education, Social Work degree, Caseload in the past 30 days, Tenure in Child Welfare; Tenure as a DCFS investigator, and Job satisfaction	

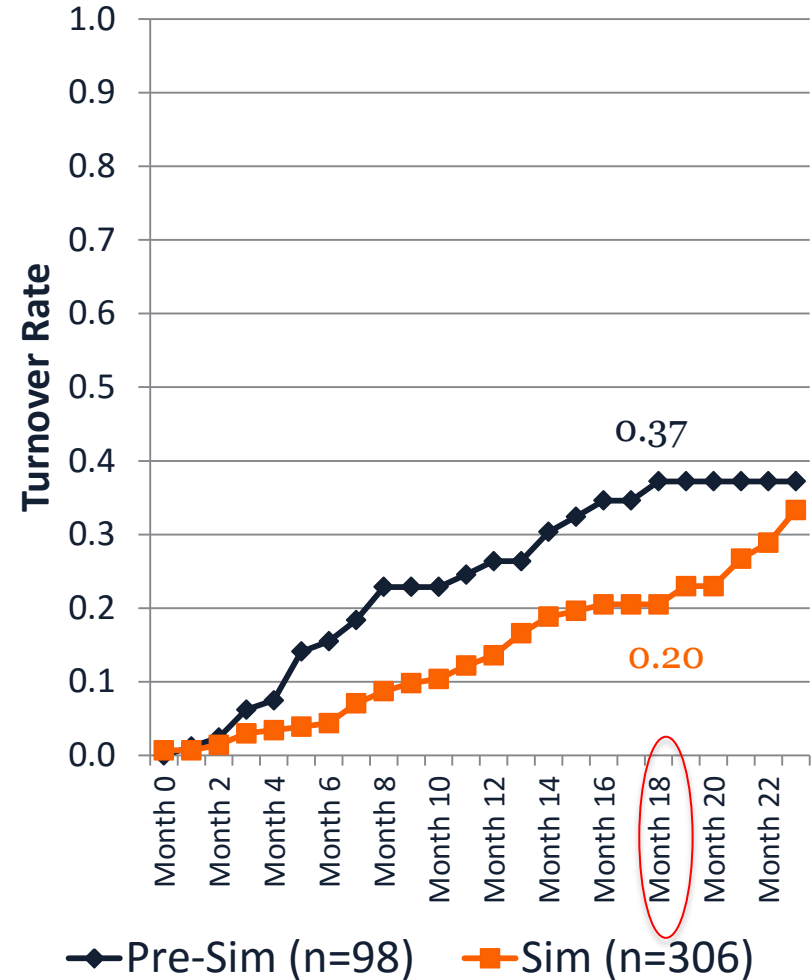


Data Source: Investigator Survey

Job Turnover

Outcome

- Observation period: two years from starting job.
- At Month 18, 37% of pre-sim group had left their job compared to 20% of sim group. At Month 23, the turnover rates for the two groups almost converge.
- The odds of leaving their job for the pre-sim group was 1.8 times greater than those of the sim group.



Data Source: DCFS employment data

Implications

- Many findings suggest positive impact of simulation training
- Trainees appreciate sim training highly and report several positive effects
- Some of the most positive effects concern unique advantages of sim training (e.g., simulation of testifying)
- Sim-trained trainees were less likely to be thinking about leaving their job and stayed longer at the job
 - But we must be cautious because sim-training and non-sim trained eras could differ in numerous ways



Limitations

- Some professionals did not participate in the focus group and interviews.
- We cannot generalize from the CPTA team to all simulation trainers
- Many investigators did not complete surveys
- Comparison of sim-trained and non-sim-trained confounded with history
 - Investigators hired before and after 2016 may differ in many ways in addition to sim-training
 - Classroom training has also been improved since 2016
- We lack objective data about investigators' performances



Current plans

- Evaluate Chicago Site with similar methods:
 - Daily Experience Of Simulation Training (DEST)
 - Analysis of Post-Training Satisfaction Date
 - Implementation Evaluation
- CPTA expanding training to experienced workers and supervisors

Conclusion

Sim training is a promising practice:

- Deserves ongoing support
- Should be tested with various skills and types of trainees
- More research in other states is needed
 - It would be good to compare counties with sim training to counties without sim training

Practice Implications

- Current Implications:
 - Expansion of audience beyond new Investigative hires
 - Supervisors
 - Veteran staff
 - Adding More Specialties
 - DCFS and Private Sector Agency Staff
 - High Risk Intact Staff
 - Foster Care/Permanency Staff
 - Launching of the Chicago Simulation Center
 - Collaborative Partnership with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and UIS
 - South-side of the City in an Urban Setting
 - Addition of a Multi-purpose Room

Chicago Simulation Center



Building Skill and Capacity

- Future Implications:
 - Launching a Simulation and Learning Center in Southern IL
 - Moving Beyond Direct Service:
 - Experiential Learning for Licensing and Legal Staff
 - Foster/Adoptive Parents
 - Incorporation of Youth and Parent Voice in the Development of Scenarios
 - Partnerships with Community Partners and Key Stakeholders

Thank you

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