

September 17th,
2019

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SHADOWBOX

An innovative
approach for
promoting critical
thinking in the child
welfare workforce

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Adaptation of ShadowBox to child welfare was supported by
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AGENDA

1. Introduction to ShadowBox
2. Interactive demonstration
3. Debrief from demo experience
4. Lessons learned from the field
 - Facilitated panel discussion
5. Future directions

OBJECTIVES

Discover

Discover how ShadowBox addresses critical thinking skills using challenging real-life cases

Experience

Experience a ShadowBox session, including facilitated discussion.

Learn

Learn about the development and use of ShadowBox in different Ohio jurisdictions.

SHADOWBOX REFRESHER

Problem:

- Critical thinking is too often absent in casework
- Training can help staff think critically about real life cases and tough choices
- Training and casework often emphasize procedures over critical thinking
- Skilled practitioners are important for training, but are costly and often unavailable

SHADOWBOX REFRESHER

5 Components of the ShadowBox Method

01

Present complex scenarios based on real cases.

02

Insert decision points with a small set of multiple-choice options.

03

Trainees rank the alternatives and record their rationale.

04

Trainees discuss responses with peers.

05

Trainees compare responses with a panel of skilled practitioners.

SHADOWBOX GOAL

Accelerating expertise = Getting trainees up to speed faster and enhancing skills of current staff

1. Augmenting on-the-job experiences with the virtual experiences
2. Discussing best practice in small groups led by skilled facilitator
3. Promoting critical thinking by reflecting on challenging decisions

EXPERTISE

Explicit Knowledge

- Declarative information
- Rules & procedures

Tacit Knowledge

- Pattern recognition
- Judging typicality
- Perceptual discrimination
- Mental models / mindsets

- Make better decisions by...
 - Detecting and diagnosing problems more quickly and accurately
 - Managing attention: prioritizing goals, cues to monitor, info to seek
 - Managing uncertainty
 - Anticipating future states, consequences of actions, problems



**COGNITIVE
TRAINING
OUTCOMES**

SCENARIO EXERCISE



REACTIONS?

DEBRIEF

Was this scenario realistic?

Directors: did this scenario give a picture of the challenges your workers face?

DEBRIEF

- What challenges would you like to see in ShadowBox scenarios?



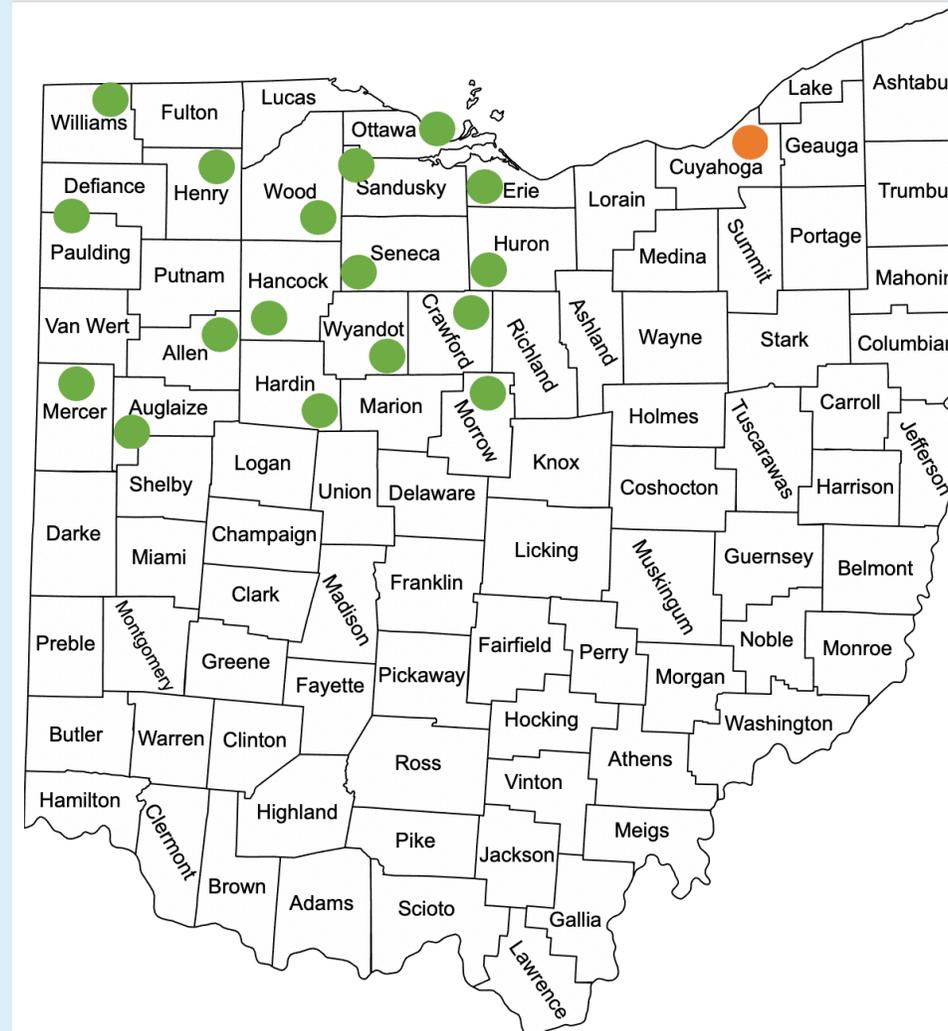
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OHIO COUNTY EXPERIENCES

- Cuyahoga County started 2015
- NW Ohio Coalition (17 counties) began early 2020

PLANNING PHASE: LESSONS LEARNED

Cuyahoga County

- Planning group must be representative of all key levels of agency
- Have a “buy in” plan for staff with the “why” of ShadowBox
- Develop ShadowBox as an integral part of the work
- Pay attention to logistics of running sessions
- Train and nurture facilitators

PLANNING PHASE: MOVING FORWARD

Northwest Ohio Coalition

- Prior experience with collaboration efforts
- One county as lead for organizing & “sole source” contracting
- Multiple agency effort benefits and challenges
- Virtual process used for planning, training and group sessions

TAILORED IMPLEMENTATION

Cuyahoga County

- Pilot Phase-participants were worker and supervisor groups
- Full implementation is mixed groups including managers
- Incorporating ShadowBox into ongoing work:
 - New worker training
 - Regular manager staff meetings

NW Ohio Coalition

- Decisions about the value of single/multi county groups
- Manageable sub-groups among 17 geographically spread out counties
- Software counties subgroup

COVID 19 CONSIDERATIONS

Cuyahoga Experience since March 2020

- New Worker Training
- Ongoing ShadowBox sessions in staff meetings

NW Ohio Planning Process

- Facilitator Training and Start up- virtual and in person sessions
- Plan for virtual implementation groups October 2020



VALUE
ADDED TO
CHILD
WELFARE

- Scenarios present real cases and daily decisions emphasizing practice dilemmas
- Peer-to-peer knowledge exchange
- Sharing among agency units and multi-county collaborative
- Agencies and systems learn about strengths and challenges in practice-consistencies, innovations being used and best practices in child welfare

FUTURE DIRECTIONS



Incorporating a ShadowBox mindset into daily work

Connecting ShadowBox themes to current cases
Applying ShadowBox thinking to emerging issues



Feedback loops for systems issues



Expanding to other human service domains (i.e., APS)

WRAP UP

Domain	ShadowBox	Facilitated	Mode	Percent Improvement
Firefighters	4 scenarios in 1 day	✓	Paper	18%
Warfighters 1	4 scenarios in 1 day	✓	Paper	28%
Warfighters 2	4 scenarios in 1 day		Web-based	20%
Nurses	4 scenarios in 1 day		Paper	27%
Petrochemical Plant Operators	4 scenarios in 1 day	✓	Embedded in simulator	26%

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THANK YOU!

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