**Title**: Checklist for the Cultural Adaptation of JASPER Training Materials for Chinese Caregivers of Children with Autism

**Authors**: Wenjing Bao1, Stephanie Shire1, Yitong Jiang1, Eunji Kong1, Marina Crain1

**Introduction**: Joint Attention, Symbolic Play, Engagement, and Regulation (JASPER: Kasari et al., 2021) is an evidence-based intervention developed and tested for efficacy and effectiveness in North America. JASPER caregiver training materials have yet to be tested for their suitability for specific cultural groups such as Chinese caregivers. This study partnered with Chinese caregivers of children with autism, autism intervention practitioners, as well as JASPER and cultural adaptation consultants to identify adaptations needed to improve the fit of these materials for Chinese communities. Based on feedback from community partners and refined with input from consultants, a checklist was developed to guide these adaptations. The following research question was addressed in this study: framed within the Ecological Validity Model (EVM: Bernal et al., 1995), what adaptations do Chinese community partners recommend making to the translated caregiver-mediated JASPER training materials?

**Method**: Two focus groups with caregivers and two with autism practitioners (six participants per group) were conducted following a focus group guide (Krueger & Casey, 2015) to gather feedback on the translated JASPER training materials. The focus groups were recorded, transcribed, and translated. The translated transcripts were then analyzed using both inductive and deductive methods. Trained coders used a coding form, informed by the EVM, which outlined initial themes and codes with corresponding definitions, to code the transcripts. After each transcript was coded by two coders, codes from different focus groups were aggregated into a summary form to highlight common and differing feedback across groups and participants. Codes indicating necessary adjustments to the translated JASPER materials were grouped and rephrased into specific, actionable, and observable checklist items to guide adaptations to the JASPER caregiver training materials. The checklist was then presented in a group meeting with JASPER and cultural adaptation consultants for feedback, and modifications were made accordingly.

**Results**: The feedback from the community partners included themes describing positive features of the materials and themes describing constructive suggestions for modifications. Positive themes indicated that participants appreciated the materials for being beneficial, incorporating visuals, and addressing important concepts and strategies. Constructive themes focused mainly on the need to make language more family-friendly and regionally appropriate, clarify specific content through various methods (e.g., videos, examples, case scenarios), as well as individualize the materials to match families’ unique conditions and needs. There was also some divergent feedback. For instance, some participants liked the materials being brief and found them clear and easy to understand while others wanted more detailed information. Based on the feedback, the cultural adaptation checklist for the JASPER caregiver training materials emphasized making the materials responsive to caregivers’ individual learning needs by creating interactive content that allows caregivers to select meaningful information for review, thereby maximizing flexibility and caregiver options.

**Discussion:** Even within a population that shares the same cultural background, individuals’ needs can vary significantly. Therefore, it is essential to maximize the flexibility and responsiveness of the training materials. The checklist developed in this study could be modified and used by researchers and practitioners to adapt training materials for other cultural groups or other caregiver-mediated interventions before disseminating them to diverse populations.

**References:**

Bernal, G., Bonilla, J., & Bellido, C. (1995). Ecological validity and cultural sensitivity for outcome research: Issues for cultural adaptation and development of psychosocial treatments with Hispanics. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, *23*, 67–82. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01447045

Kasari, C., Gulsrud, A. C., Shire, S. Y., & Strawbridge, C. (2021). *The JASPER model for children with autism: promoting joint attention, symbolic play, engagement, and regulation*. The Guilford Press.

Krueger, R., & Casey, Mary Anne. (2014). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

University of Oregon