

THE INCREDIBLE YEARS PARENT PROGRAM FOR CHINESE PRESCHOOLERS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

a: Maureen Mo-yeet Kong, PsyD, Clinical Psychologist, Private Practitioner (mkongwork@gmail.com)
b: Terry Kit-fong Au, PhD, Chair Professor, Department of Psychology, The University of Hong Kong (terryau@hku.hk)

INTRODUCTION

Children with developmental disabilities, such as children who are diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), acquiring communication, empathy, social function, and expression can be a lifelong struggle.

Children's developmental deficits often mean that more effort is required for homework and less time spent on parent-child bonding activities. This can undermine children's opportunity to develop age-appropriate language, emotional regulation, and social skills. Failure to learn age-appropriate skills further increases parent's frustration.



Research Question: Will parents' stress decrease if they learn constructive strategies to improve their child's psychosocial aspects such as social, emotional, and academic functioning?

The parenting program selected: The Incredible Years Basic Parent Program (Basic IYPT; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010; (<http://www.incredibleyears.com>).

- Blueprints Model Program (<http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/modelprograms.html>)

- Recommended by the American Psychological Association Task Force and The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines in the U.K.

AIM

Evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of IYPT Basic Program in coaching parents of preschool children with developmental disabilities.

METHOD

Participants

Randomised Control Trial: Parents of 52 preschool children with different developmental disabilities.

Diagnoses (Based on DSM-IV):

Diagnosis Categories	Number of Children	
	Treatment (n = 25)	Waitlist (n = 22)
Developmental Delay	14	10
Autism Spectrum Disorder	6	4
Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	2	2
Asperger's syndrome	1	3
Pervasive Developmental Disorder	2	3

Procedures

- Parents were assessed before and after the 12 weekly treatment sessions.
- Clinical site: The Child Development Centre—a community clinic subsidized by the Social Welfare Department of the local government.
- Sessions were outside office hours to accommodate the schedules of working parents

Multi-method and Multi-informant Assessment

Blinded Observations of Parent-Child Interaction

- Parents played with their child for 15 minutes
- Their interactions were coded by blinded observers using the Dyadic Parent-child Interaction Coding System: Abbreviated Version (3rd Edition, DPIC-III; Eyberg, Nelson, Duke & Boggs, 2004)

Questionnaires by parents AND kin/spouse

- Parenting Practices: HOME-Life Interview (Leventhal, Selner O'Hagan et al. 2004)
- Chinese Parenting Stress Index—Short Form (PSI-SF; (Abidin 1995; Tam, Chan & Wong 1994)
- Chinese Child Behavior Checklist (Chinese CBCL; oppositional defiant disorder subscale (Achenbach and Rescorla, 2001; Leung et al., 2006)

- Consumer Satisfaction Ratings (Weekly and Final)

PROGRAM CONTENT

Program Aim: Provide parents with strategies to coach their children in academics, attention, social skills, emotional regulation, behaviours and problem-solving skills.

Format: in groups of 8-12 parents

Multi-method Learning Approach: role-play practices; watching videos; group discussions, readings; completing handouts; buddy calls and leader's call.

Session	Topics
1	Child-directed Play Strengthens Parent-child Relationships
2	Child-directed Play Academic and Persistence Coaching
3	Academic and Persistence Coaching
4	Emotion Coaching
5	Social Coaching
6	Praise and Encouragement
7 & 8	Reward
9	Establishing Rules and Routine
10	Ignore
11	Time-out
12	Problem Solving Skills & Preparation for Future



Rationale

- Bottom-up approach
- Foundation: building a positive attachment and bonding between the parents and child using consistent play time, incorporate coaching strategies into play, setting consistent and clear and predictable rules and managing misbehaviours in a calm and non-violent way instead of being emotional.

RESULTS

Program Acceptance

Attendance: In the experimental group, 15 mothers (79%) and 3 fathers (50%) completed more than 80% of the 12 intervention sessions.

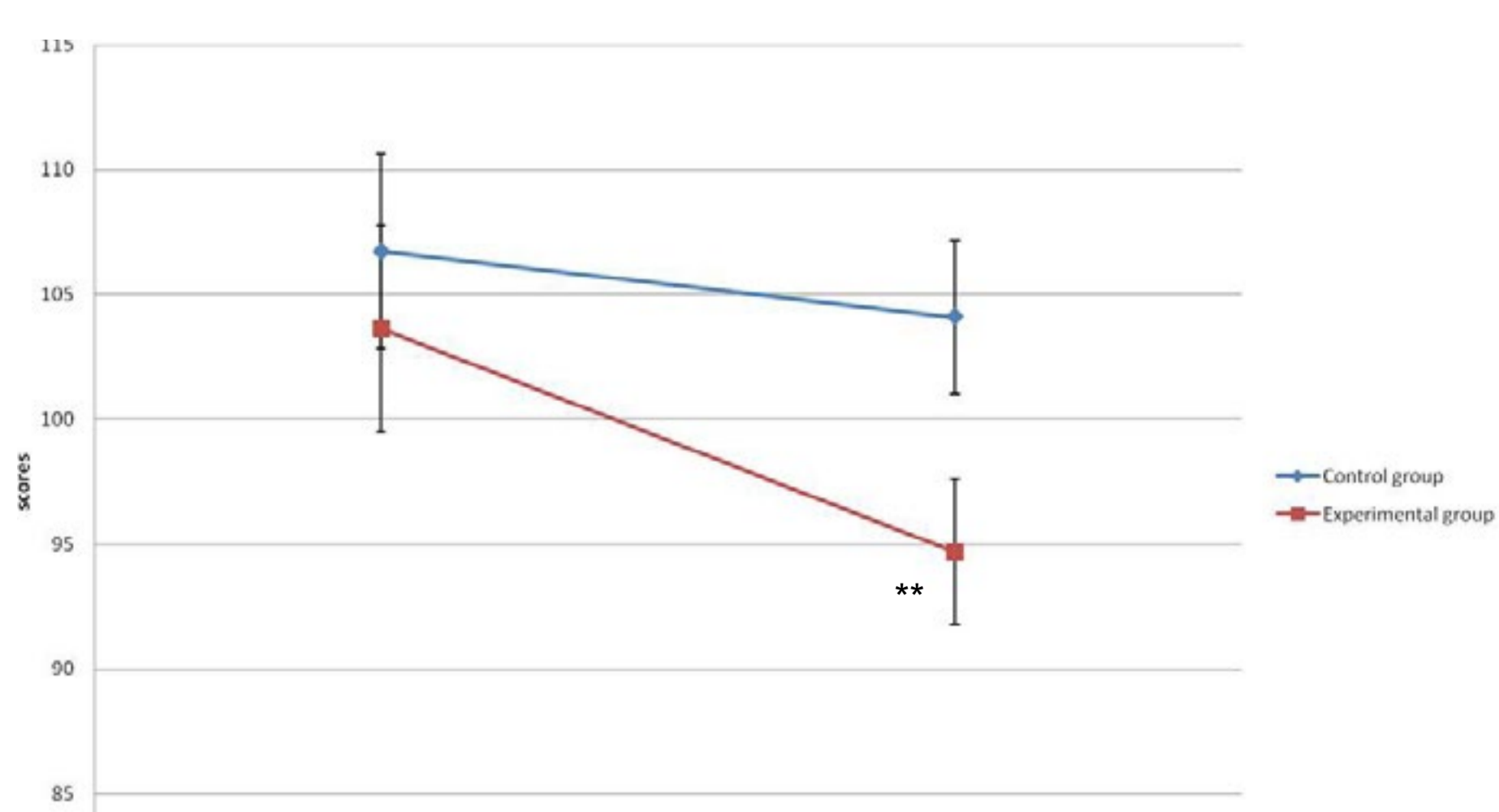
Dropout: 0

Weekly Satisfaction Ratings: A vast majority of the parents (ranging from 88% to 100%) rated each of the 12 sessions as "Satisfactory" or "Very Satisfactory" (i.e., 3 or 4 on a 4-point scale).

Final Satisfaction Ratings: The average score across all 40 items on a 7 point Likert scale was 6.03 (SD = .22, range = 5.21-6.32), indicating general satisfaction.

Program Effectiveness

Parents' self report ratings of their parenting stress showed a significant reduction ($p < 0.01$) for the treatment group after 12 sessions, as compared to parents on the waiting list ($F(1, 39) = 7.690, p = .008, \eta^2 = .165$).

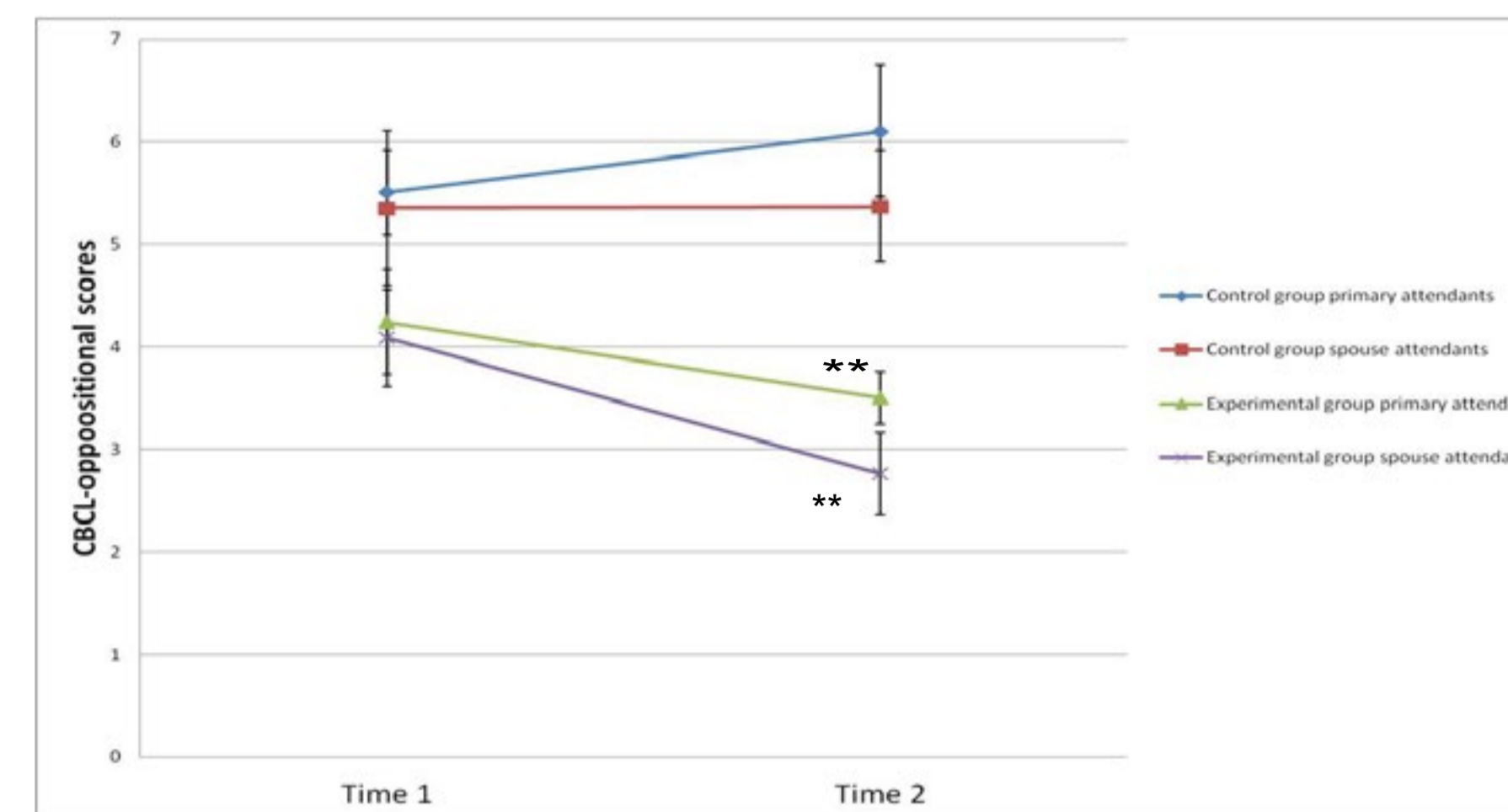


Note. PSI-SF scores = participants' mean total scores on Parenting Stress Index—Short Form (Abidin, 1995); Time 1 = Pre-intervention; Time 2 = Post-intervention.

RESULTS

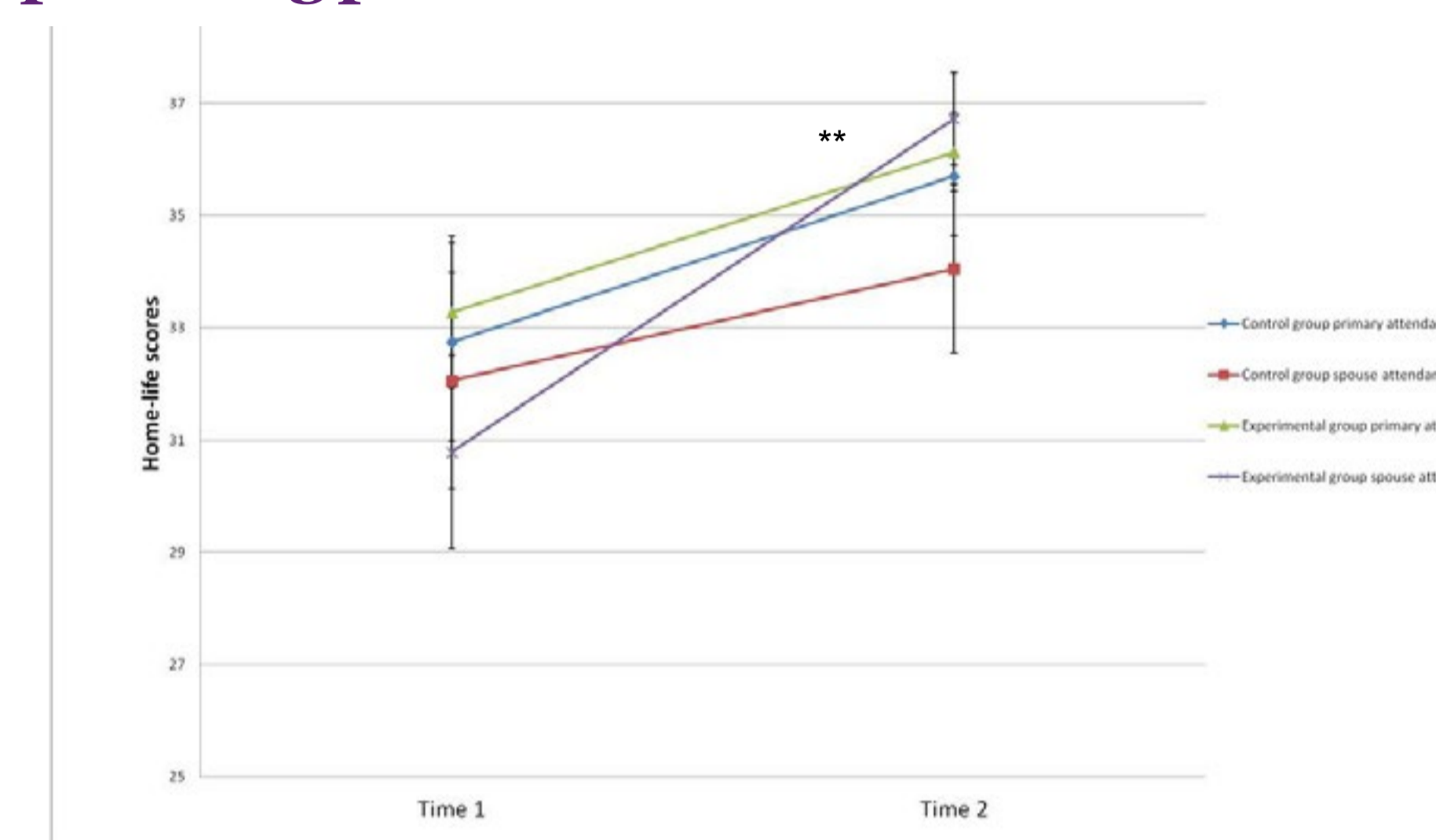
Child behavior ratings by participants reduced after the 12-week program, as compared to waiting list controls ($F(1, 38) = 11.051, p < 0.01, \eta^2 = .225$).

Spouse/kin agreed with this reduction in oppositional behaviors ($F(1, 31) = 16.219, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = .343$).



Note. CBCL-oppositional scores = participants' mean total scores on oppositional defiant disorder subscale of the Child Behavior Checklist (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001; Leung et al., 2006); Time 1 = Pre-intervention; Time 2 = Post-intervention.

Spouse/kins noticed participants' change in parenting practices



Note. HOME scores = participants' mean total scores on Home-life Interview (Leventhal et al., 2004); Time 1 = Pre-intervention; Time 2 = Post-intervention.

Participating parents did not notice they had improved in their parenting practices ($F(1, 38) = 0.049, p > 0.05, \eta^2 = .001$), but their kin/spouse noticed big improvements in their parenting practices ($F(1, 30) = 6.762, p < 0.05, \eta^2 = .184$).

Changes in Observed Behavior in Parent-child Interaction for the Intervention versus Controls

- PARENTS**
 - ↓ negative talk
 - ↑ specific praise
 - ↑ general praise
- CHILDREN**
 - ↑ responsive joint attention.

Coding of Parent-child interactions were performed by three blinded and statistically reliable independent coders, with intraclass Rs for the behavioral codes ranging from .72 to .96.

CONCLUSION

Main finding: Basic IYPT was effective for parents with children with developmental disabilities in reducing parent's stress and child's misbehaviours and improving the quality and sensitivity of parent-child interaction in the community setting in HK.

Even busy and stressed working parents were willing to devote time to attend parent coaching workshops improve their child's prospects.

Children showed improvements in behaviours and social skills even though they did not participate in the intervention directly.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The authors would like to thank the IYPT program developer, Prof. Carolyn Webster-Stratton for allowing us to use the program, the Child Development Centre and the participating families for their trust and support.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, R. (1995). *Manual for the parenting stress index*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Achenbach, T., & Rescorla, L. (2001). *Manual for the ASEBA school-age forms & profiles: an integrated system of multi-informant assessment*. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont. Research Center for Children, Youth, & Families.
- Eyberg, S. M., Nelson, M. M., Duke, M., & Boggs, S. R. (2004). *Manual for the dyadic parent-child interaction coding system* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Leung, P.W.L., Kwong, S.L., Tang, C.P., Ho, T.P., Hung, S.F., Lee, C.C., Hong, S.L., Chiu, C.M., & Liu, W.S. (2006). Test-retest reliability and criterion validity of the Chinese version of CBCL, TRF, and YSR. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 47, 970-973.
- Tam, K. K., Chan, Y. C., & Wong, C. K. M. (1994). Validation of the parenting stress index among Chinese mothers in Hong Kong. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 22(3), 211-223.
- Webster-Stratton, C., & Reid, M. J. (2010). *The Incredible Years parents, teachers, and children training series: A multifaceted treatment approach for young children with conduct disorders. Evidence-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents* (2nd ed.). New York, NY, US: Guilford Press, New York, NY.