

# INPLASY PROTOCOL

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**Review Stage at time of this  
submission:** Preliminary  
searches.

**Conflicts of interest:**  
None declared.

## INTRODUCTION

**Review question / Objective:** This systematic review and meta-analysis will assess studies of the effects of Social Stories Intervention for children and

## Effects of Social Stories Intervention for children and adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorders: protocol for a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

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**Review question / Objective:** This systematic review and meta-analysis will assess studies of the effects of Social Stories Intervention for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders.

**Condition being studied:** Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) refers to a heterogeneous neurodevelopmental condition characterized by impairment in reciprocal social interaction and communication, together with repetitive and restrictive behaviors. The increased risk for somatic and psychiatric illness, reduced quality of life and premature mortality suggest that ASD affects many families and represents a serious public health problem.

**INPLASY registration number:** This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 11 February 2021 and was last updated on 11 February 2021 (registration number INPLASY202120040).

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## METHODS

**Participant or population:** Diagnosis of ASD patients (< 18 years of age) will be included in the analysis, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, and background, according to ICD 11 or (DSM)-V research diagnostic criteria.

**Intervention:** Social stories.

**Comparator:** There will be no restrictions with respect to the type of comparator.

**Study designs to be included:** This paper only reviewed the randomized controlled trial (RCT).

**Eligibility criteria:** Literature that meet the requirements of study type, participant, intervention will be included in this systematic review and meta-analysis.

**Information sources:** The electronic databases including PubMed, EMBASE, Cochrane Library, Web of Science, Google Scholar and trials registers will be searched from inception to January 2021. Grey literature, such as Conference proceedings and academic degree dissertations will be manually searched.

**Main outcome(s):** The primary outcome will be the effect of improvements in target behaviors, which include restricted and repetitive behaviors, impairment in social communication, and appropriate life skills.

**Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis:** Two reviewers will independently assess the risk of bias for each included study with version 2 of the Cochrane risk-of bias tool for randomized trials, RoB 2. The third

reviewer will arbitrate in the case of any disagreement.

**Strategy of data synthesis:** Statistical analyses will be performed using STATA 13.0 software (Stata Corp, College Station, TX). We will synthesize primary studies to explore heterogeneity descriptively rather than statistically. The statistical heterogeneity among studies was assessed with the Q-test and I<sup>2</sup> statistics. If significant heterogeneity is found, the random-effects model will be used to estimate the data, otherwise, the fixed-effects model will be used. Funnel plot and egger's test will be used to detect the potential reporting biases if at least 10 studies are included.

**Subgroup analysis:** If appropriate data are available, subgroup analyses will be exploratory based on geographical location, age, control interventions and different outcomes.

**Sensitivity analysis:** To check the robustness of pooled outcome results, sensitivity analyses will be conducted to assess how including and excluding studies influences the results, when studies are adequate. We will repeat the analysis after excluding cross-over trials and trials with a high risk of bias.

**Country(ies) involved:** China.

**Keywords:** Children, adolescent, autism spectrum disorders, Social Stories.

### Contributions of each author:

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Author 3 - Wenxu Yang.

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