



# Cultural adaptation process of an evidence based program: a challenging Brazilian pilot study

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DR. CRISTIANA MERCADANTE ESPER BERTHOUD  
TREMEMBÉ CITY COUNCIL  
INSTITUTO NATURA  
BRAZIL



# What is FAST – Families and Schools Together – Program

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FAST® is an internationally acclaimed program that helps children thrive by building strong relationships at home.

Based on family systems theory, neuroscience and family stress theory, FAST brings families together in multi-families groups sessions to build supportive relationships among family, school and community.

Since 1988, FAST® has been rigorously tested and proven effective and was recognized by UN as a model prevention and early intervention program.



# FAST Structure



## **PROGRAM FIDELITY**

Each program needs to be run as it was designed, according to evidence-based practices



## **DIVERSE GROUP of TEAM MEMBERS**

FAST is run by trained 4- to 8-person Teams comprised of parents, teachers, other school representatives, and community-based professionals



## **LEARN, PLAN, DO, REVIEW**

FAST process involves these four systematic phases



# FAST Values



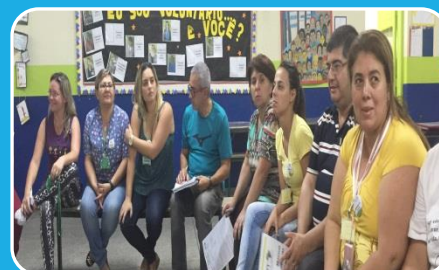
## **EMPOWERMENT**

All technics aim to empower parents as well as team members



## **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

All team members and equally responsible for delivering the program



## **CULTURAL REPRESENTATION**

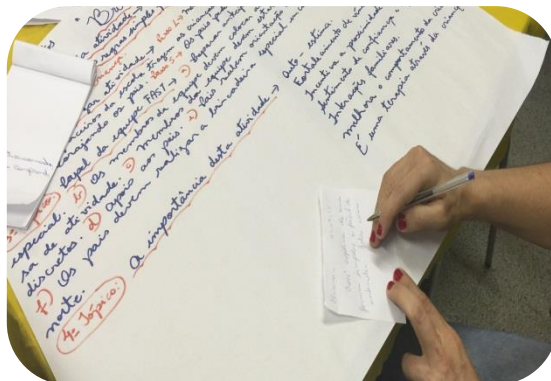
The team must be culturally representative of the families being served in the groups.



# FAST OUTCOMES



INCREASES PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL



IMPROVES PARENT/CHILDREN RELATIONSHIPS



BUILDS SOCIAL CAPITAL



EMPOWER PARENTS



# FAST was implemented in Brazil through a partnership between

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Tremembé CITY  
HALL



A Brazilian Non Profit  
Organization



An English  
Research Institute





# FAST implementation

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The PILOT was coordinated by Dr. Berthoud who is also Secretary of Education in the City of Tremembé and supervised by Dr. Lynn McDonald the founder of FAST.

Dr Berthoud is a certified FAST trainer and supervisor and the implementation Team was composed also by trainers from the UK





The FAST founder went to Brazil to present the Program to the Minister of Education who approved the initiative and After being implemented in more than 18 countries around the world FAST was launched in Brazil in 2014







FAST – Families and Schools Together  
Program in Tremembé

## AFTER 3 YEARS OF IMPLEMENTATION:

NUMBER OF  
GRADUATED  
FAMILIES:

**663**

**364**

VOLUNTEERS

NUMBER OF  
SCHOOLS:

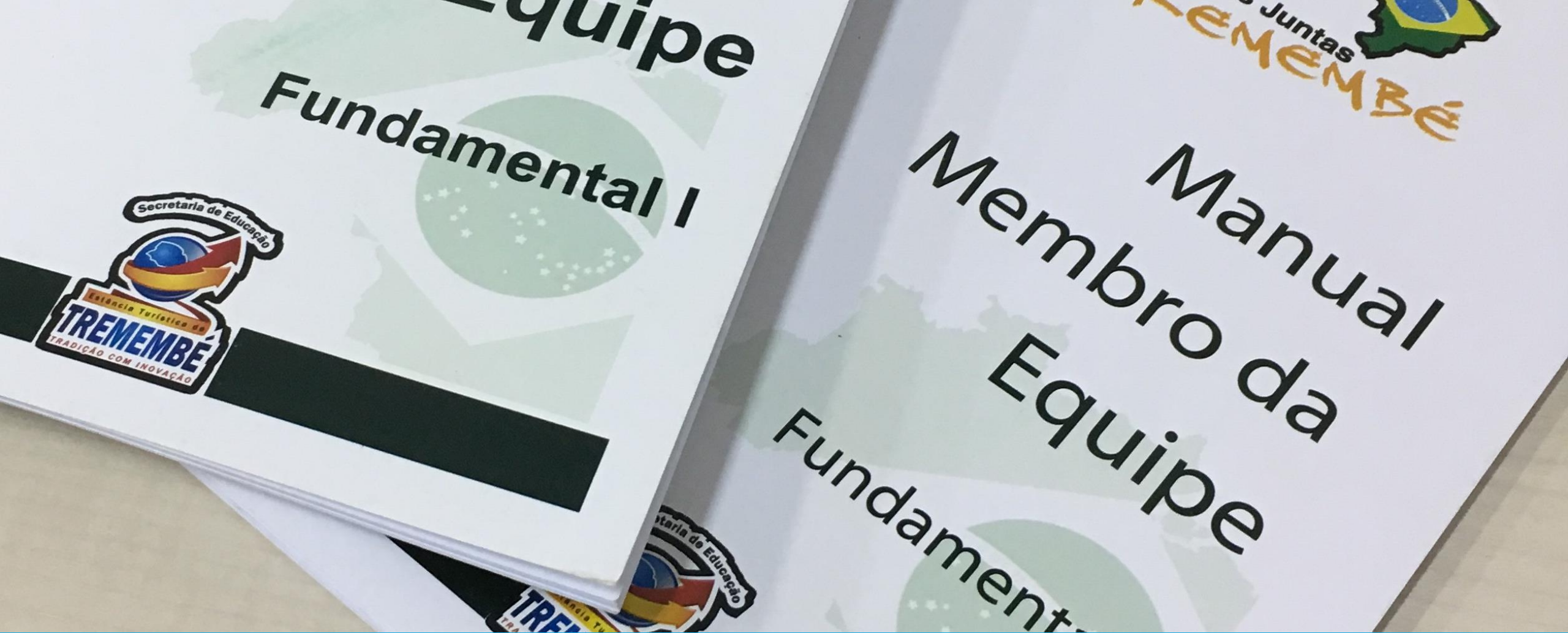
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# Graduating as a family



# FASTWORKS – almost 2.000 people gathering in our annual event







# OBJECTIVES OF THIS REPORT:

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1. To describe the qualitative findings who lead to successful translation of the manuals;
2. To present the qualitative findings who lead to making effective materials;
3. To discuss the key elements for an initial cultural adaptation of a foreign program



# Cultural Adaptation Process

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The implementation of an evidence-based program across countries and culturally diverse communities is a challenge for researchers, program coordinators and practitioners for several reasons including language barriers, existence of stereotypes and prejudices and, as expected, diverse costumes and practices.

Therefore, it is not an easy task to bring a foreign Program to a country with so low tradition of systematic and evidence-based approaches such as Brazil.



# MATERIALS AND MANUALS

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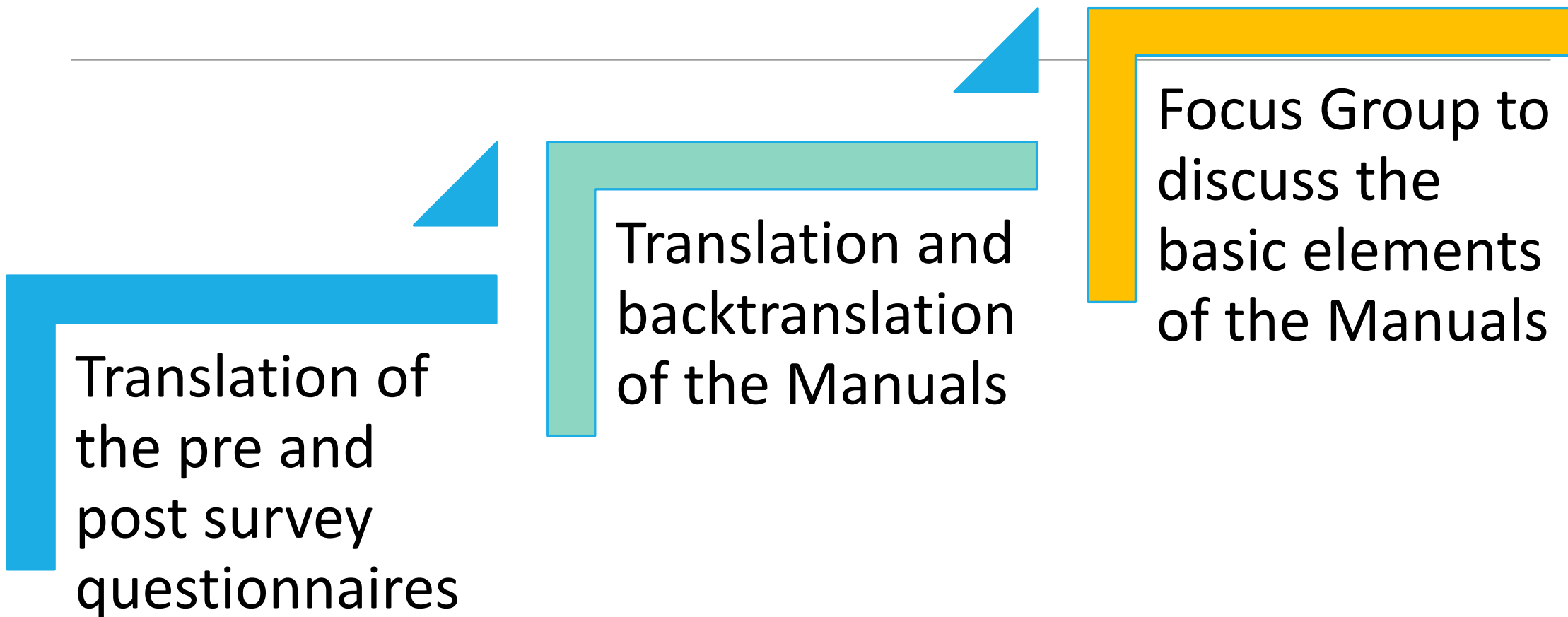
The adaptation took place in stages: from translation and back translation of Manuals and Materials to continuous adaptations of session structure and adaptable elements.

Throughout the process the manual was treated as a “living document”. Changes were applied and documented as the team developed improvements for the adaptation.





# STAGES OF THE PROCESS





# STAGES OF THE PROCESS

Pilot Team Members training using the first version of the manual

Pilot Fast Session with volunteer families to test Materials and Checklists

Continuous changes of adaptable core elements of the session and continuous changes of the Manual during 3 years



# METHOD:

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The materials (games and feeling charades cards) were tested in a pilot session and then discussed in Focus Groups.

An experimental session was conducted and filmed.

Two Focus Groups were conducted

Eighteen people were interviewed being family members and team members participating in the training program.



# The very first experimental session

Primeira Sessão FAST

- Boas vindas/Bandeira	-> 20 min
- Dança *	-> 20 min
- "Ola" FAST	-> 5 min
- Música do FAST	-> 10 min
- Risque e Rabusque	-> 10 min
- Charadas dos Sentimentos	-> 10 min
- Momento das crianças	-> 1 hora
- Grupo de apoio	-> 10 min
- Tempo com os colegas FAST	-> 35 min
- Brincadeira Especial *	-> 15-20 min
- Lotoia	-> 5 min
- Recados e CHUVA	-> 5 min

Conducted with volunteers and followed by a discussion group allowed to test several components of the session as well as materials.



# FOCUS GROUPS

The Focus Groups discussions resulted in changes in those adaptable elements of the program:

- FAST SONG
- MEAL TIME
- MATERIALS USED IN THE SPECIAL PLAY BOX
- Pre and post questionnaires language



# RESULTS



## THE USE OF MANUALS

**The CHALLENGE:** “In general, Brazilians do not read neither like to use Manual”

The Manuals were reduced to a minimum of pages with essential information.

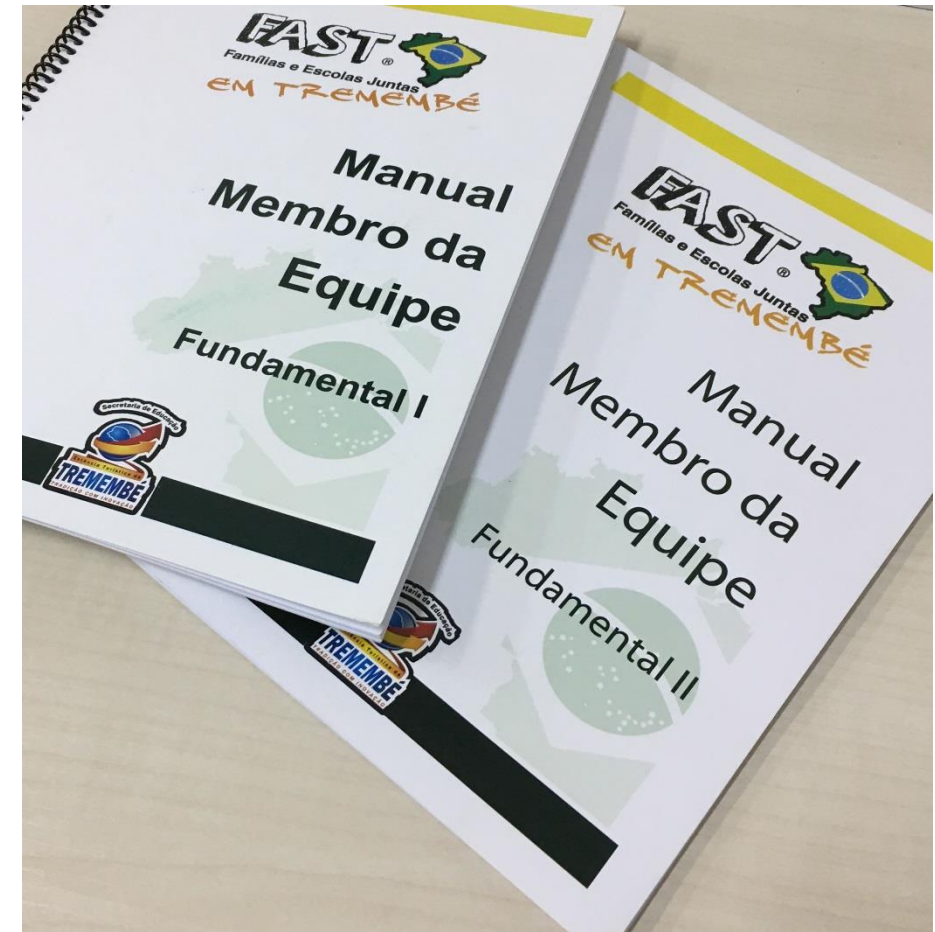
The training process had to be flexible enough to allow time to get to know the Manuals as people had difficulty reading upfront

# THE CONTENT OF MANUALS

## The FIRST TRANSLATION and BACK TRANSLATION:

A group of professionals from diverse background such as psychologists, social workers and teachers participated in Focus Groups discussions to allow the elaboration of the OFFICIAL VERSION

During the past three years many words and expressions were exchanged according to suggestions of Team Members during Training.

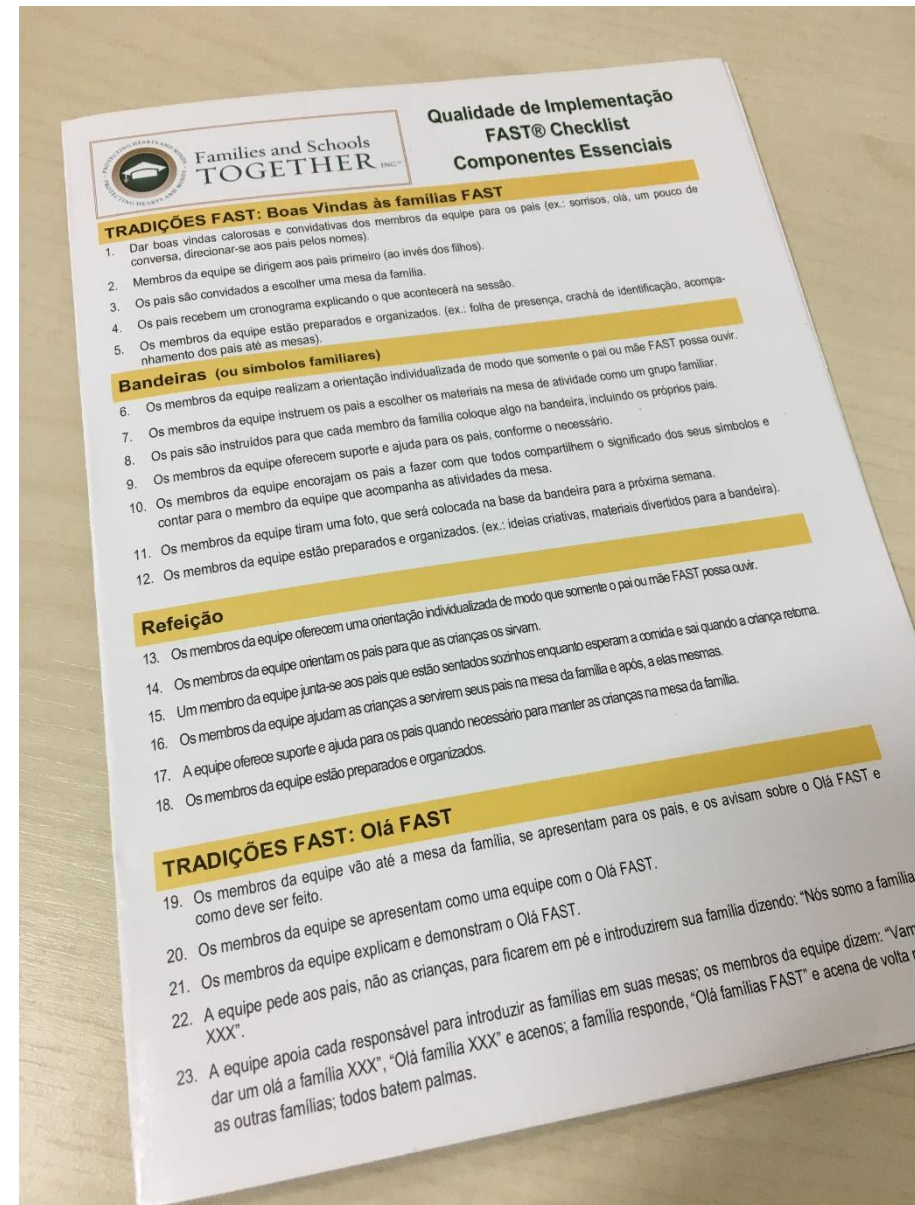


# QUALITY OF IMPLEMENTATION FAST CHECKLIST ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS

**The CHALLENGE:** “overall, Brazilians have prejudice against CHECKLISTS as they consider it blocks the creative and spontaneous behavior”

Many times Teams Members “forget” to bring them to session.

The underpinning belief is that they "already know how to perform"

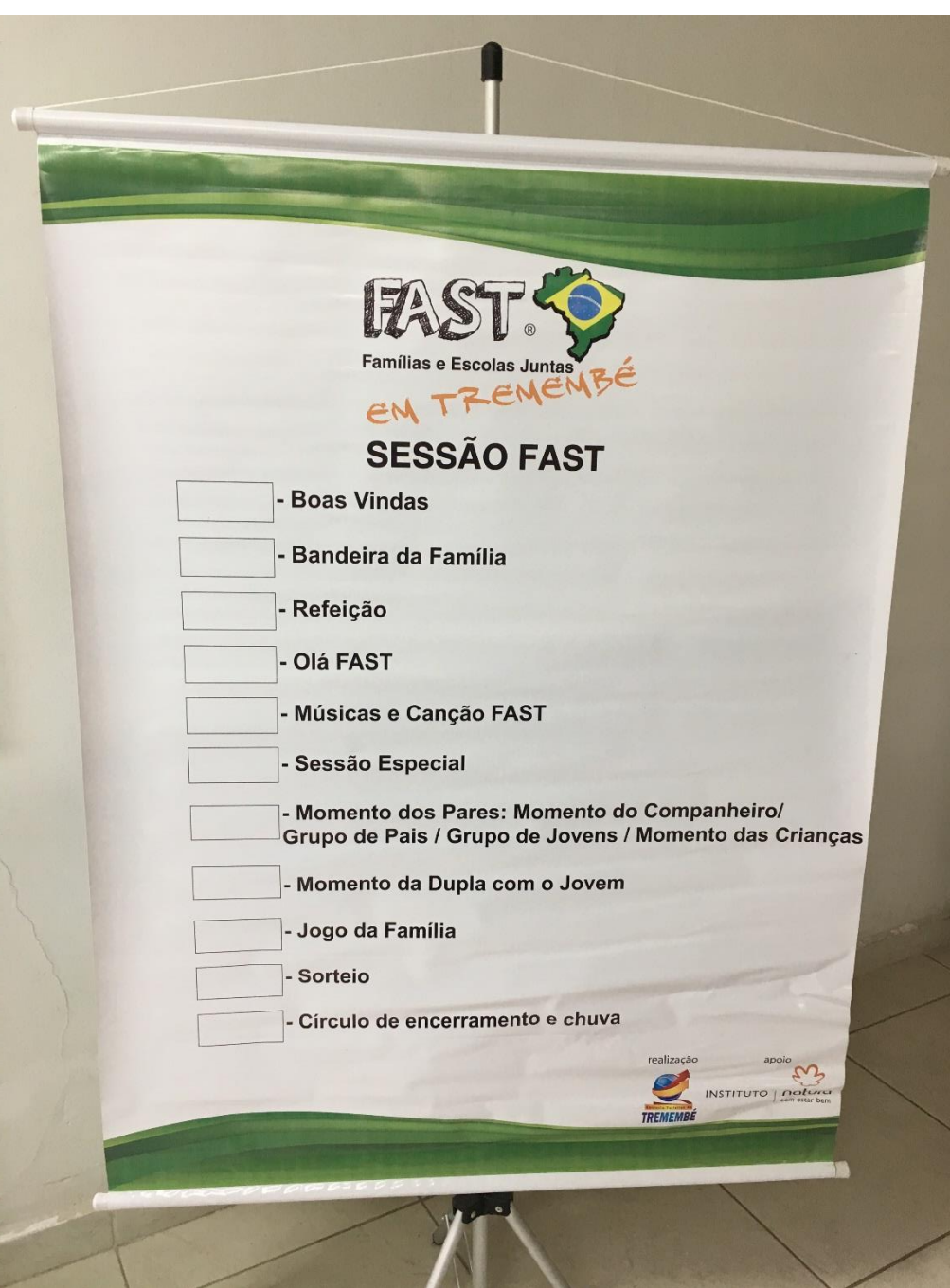




## A poster with the session schedule

Unfortunately Brazilians are well known for their lack of punctuality, for our GREATEST CHALLENGE so far is to follow the SESSION SCHEDULE.

The poster was a suggestion and has proven to be very helpful. Team members, parents and children usually check and follow it, although in the beginning of each FAST Cycle the sessions do not start on time.





# Training Sessions



Were essential to test the manuals and materials and INTERVIEWS with volunteers allowed several changes.





# DISCUSSION

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- FAST was designed to be culturally diverse.
- The program's components are designed to have commonalities across all cultures. The program is also designed to be adaptable to suit various cultural settings.
- In Brazil the adaptations transformed the Program into a funny gathering time among diverse families in the school setting and each year is attracting more and more families.





