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## **Outcomes of Project-Based Therapy in Individuals with Autism**

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## Abstract

As the number of individuals with ASD entering adulthood increases, this population faces limited resources to effectively foster independent living. Therefore, it is crucial to explore innovative interventions that help this population develop the skills necessary to live more independently. This exploratory prospective cohort study evaluated the effectiveness of project-based therapy at Autistry Studios, which focuses on improving adaptive behavior skills for adults and adolescents with ASD. The study used the Brief Adaptive Behavior Scale (BABS), a novel quantitative assessment, to track the development of adaptive behaviors in individuals with ASD within the domains of executive functioning (EF), socialization (SOC), and self-regulation (SR). The BABS specifically measures frequency of behaviors (FRQ), the highest level of assistance (LoAHigh) required, and the lowest level of assistance (LoALow) required. Paired-samples *t*-tests compared the mean BABS scores for 11 participants between nine sessions at Autistry Studios and found significant differences in LoAHigh and LoALow Total scores. Additional analyses found significant differences in the LoAHigh and LoALow scores in the domains of EF and SOC. Cohen's *d* effect sizes for the difference between session one and nine for LoAHigh and LoALow scores were large to very large and suggesting practical significance in all domains. The results indicate that Autistry's pre-vocational, project-based therapy program is effective in improving adaptive behavior skills in adults and adolescents with ASD, as measured by the BABS assessment.