

INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

The number of adults with ASD is rapidly increasing, and there are limited resources available for this population (Bishop-Fitzpatrick, Minshew & Eack, 2013; Gelbar, Smith, & Reichow, 2014). Thus, there is a growing need for programs/interventions that improve adaptive behaviors necessary for employment in adults with ASD.

Autistry Studios

- Pre-vocational, project-based therapy program for ASD in San Rafael, CA
- Focuses on acquiring technical and social skills through hands-on projects
- Weekly 4-hour sessions
- 1:1 mentoring with clients and typically developing peers



BRIEF ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR SCALE (BABS)

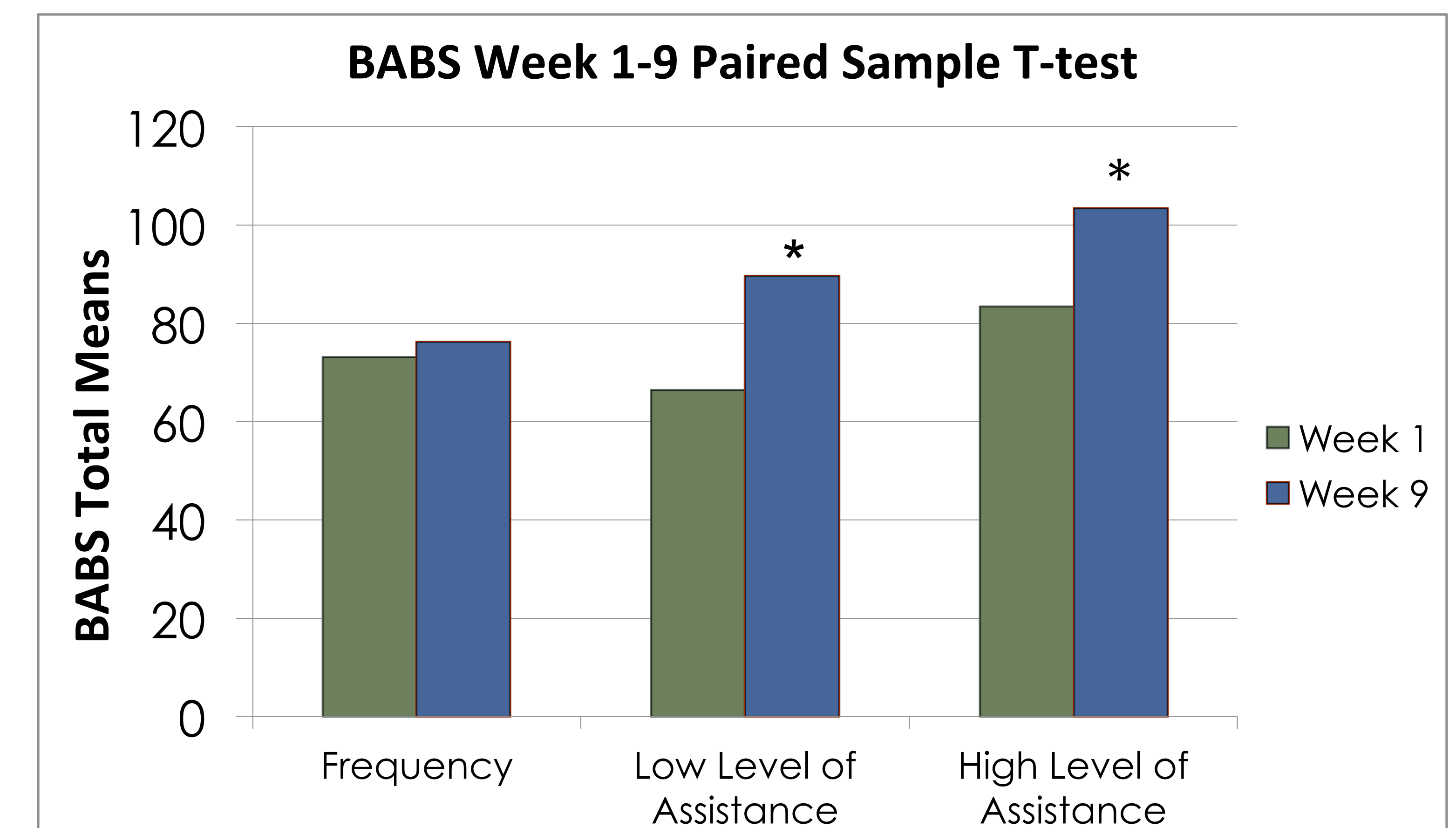
- The BABS measures the improvement of adaptive behaviors in Autistry clients, specifically in the domains of executive functioning (EF), socialization (SOC), and self-regulation (SR).
- The BABS quantitatively tracks Level of Assistance High (LoAHigh), and Level of Assistance Low (LoALow), frequency (FRQ), and Total Scores of the three domains.
- Each item consists of two Likert scales that capture the frequency and level of assistance of participants' adaptive behaviors.

Frequency					Level of Assistance						
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always	Dependent	Maximum Assistance	Moderate Assistance	Minimum Assistance	Verbal Cues	Supervision	Independent
Client manages frustration well.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Client keeps comfortable distance between self and others.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Client remains on task while working on his/her project.					1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Figure 1. BABS scoring sample. The frequency scores range from 1 to 5. The level of assistance scores range from 1 to 7. The single FRQ score is circled, the LoALow scores are crossed out, and the LoAHigh scores are circled.

RESULTS

- Total scores for LoALow and LoAHigh improved significantly between weeks 1 and 9.
- FRQ Total and domain scores did not change across weeks.
- LoALow and LoAHigh scores for EF and SOC improved significantly between weeks 1 and 9.
- SR scores did not change across weeks.
- Large effect size across all domains



* $p < .05$.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to measure the progress of adaptive behaviors of individuals diagnosed with ASD enrolled in Autistry's program.

DESIGN & METHODS

Design

- Exploratory prospective cohort design
- The Brief Adaptive Behavior Scale (BABS) was administered to clients by peer mentors following each session over the course of nine treatment sessions.

Participants

- 11 individuals with ASD enrolled in Autistry's project-based therapy program

Measure

- The BABS measure of adaptive behaviors was created for this study and informed by The Vineland-II and the BRIEF-II.



CONCLUSION

- Participation in Autistry Studios effectively improves adaptive behaviors in individuals with ASD.
- The BABS is a sensitive measure and captures subtle changes in adaptive behaviors. The BABS is particularly sensitive to highest and lowest levels of assistance.
- The BABS is a novel assessment and must be interpreted with caution. Future research is necessary to explore the validity and reliability of the BABS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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References: Bishop-Fitzpatrick, L., Minshew, N. J., & Eack, S. M. (2013). A Systematic Review of Psychosocial Interventions for Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 43(3), 687–694. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-012-1615-8>; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2014). Autism Spectrum Disorder. Retrieved from <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data.html>; Gelbar, N., Smith, I., & Reichow, B. (2014). Systematic Review of Articles Describing Experience and Supports of Individuals with Autism Enrolled in College and University Programs. *Journal Of Autism & Developmental Disorders*, 44(10), 2593-2601 9p. doi:10.1007/s10803-014-2135-5