

## Social Outcomes of a Child with Autism Spectrum Disorder Following a Listening Protocol

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DOI: [10.5014/ajot.2024.78S2-PO324](https://doi.org/10.5014/ajot.2024.78S2-PO324)

Date presented: March 22, 24

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**PURPOSE:** This study aimed to determine if the Safe and Sound Listening Protocol© used in accompaniment with occupational therapy interventions is an effective approach to elicit self-regulatory skills within social communication.

**DESIGN:** An experimental single-subject ABAB study design with a 20-month-old child diagnosed with moderate ASD. This child was recruited through a private referral agency within New York.

**METHOD:** Subject received the Safe and Sound Listening© program for 12 weeks on the protocol (A1, A2) and 12 weeks off the protocol (B1, B2) during the COVID 19 pandemic. Data was collected through daily virtual and telephone meetings with the parent who was given thorough instructions and demonstration on the application of the listening device and the method of data collection. A three-month post-measure was taken to determine the sustainability of the results.

**RESULTS:** This study found changes in social communication in the categories of language, facial expression, listening, emotional regulation, and behavior at every phase of the ABAB study, including the three-month post-test phase.

**CONCLUSION:** Results of this study indicate that this listening protocol, combined with other OT interventions, may help in improving the social communication and behavioral skills of a child with moderate ASD. These findings offer a further method of intervention for occupational therapist practitioners in improving the social communication skills of children with autism spectrum disorder.

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