ABSTRACT

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Title: A PROTOCOL FOR REDUCING ANXIETY IN INDIVIDUALS WITH
                   AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are complex developmental disorders characterized by early-onset deficits in social communication as well as restricted and stereotypical behaviors (ASHA, 2019). The link between anxiety and autism has well established in the ASD population. Thus, there is a significant need for support involving sensory appropriate therapeutic intervention during experimental research protocols. Evidence based practice presents the need for continuous consent and also suggests a combination of mindfulness and guided breathing when an introduction to an unfamiliar environment is made. The purpose of this study is to model a test session for the child participant in the form of a video, and also present the potential use of therapeutic techniques for alleviating anxiety. This video model will be created using all the items and their sequence presented in an existing evidence based protocol designed by Turcios et al (2017), with the addition of a sensory friendly breathing technique for children partaking in research settings. The goals of this project include children being able to understand and consent to each step of the research process and also partake in new techniques to aid anxiety felt during unfamiliar situations.