

The Family Goal Setting Tool

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Version

The Family Goal Setting Tool: Autism Spectrum Disorder Version (FGST: ASD Version) has been designed to facilitate collaborative goal setting with families who have young children (from diagnosis to early school years) on the autism spectrum.

The FGST: ASD Version is suitable for use by:

- Inter/transdisciplinary early childhood intervention teams
- Sole Practitioners
- Planners/case managers who wish to have a holistic understanding of the child and family's needs and priorities.
- NDIS Planning

The tool is a card sort to scaffold the identification, communication and prioritisation of each family's goals. It encompasses child-focussed goals and the family need for information, support and the opportunity for active participation in the community.

The FGST: ASD Version consists of a pack of 68 goal cards divided into eight categories including:

- Communication
- Social Participation
- Emotional Regulation
- Play and Learning
- Self-care
- Community Access & Participation
- Information
- Support.

Goal Setting Cards

- Each card combines an illustration and simple wording to describe a possible goal.
- Goals are intentionally broad, encompassing both child and family needs.
- A sorting process assists parents/carers to identify and communicate key priorities and needs.
- Additional ideas are captured through the use of a 'something else' card which remains visible throughout the sorting process.



The FGST was developed by Autism Queensland and piloted in six of its early intervention teams.

Research findings indicated that carers and practitioners alike found the tool:

- Provided a visual support, prompting ideas and 'giving words' to parents hopes and concerns
- Was engaging and easy to use
- Facilitated thorough and holistic goal setting
- Relieved the stress and pressure of goal setting
- Facilitated prioritisation of key areas.

Development of the Tool

The FGST: ASD Version was developed by Judy Jones, an occupational therapist at Autism Queensland and piloted in six of its early intervention teams. It was adapted from the Family Goal Setting Tool (FGST, Jones 2014) developed in 2009-2010. The aim of the tool was to provide carers with a starting point when trying to identify and communicate goals, as well as supporting a better understanding of the broad scope of concerns that could be addressed. It also aimed to provide practitioners with a structure to facilitate in-depth discussion of child and family needs and priorities.

What the FGST includes:

The FGST: ASD Version contains **68 goal cards**, **three sorting base plates** and a **Something Else card**, **User Manual**, **Check Sheet**, and master copies of a **Goal Record Sheet** and **My Priority Goals Form** designed to be copied. The tool is available for purchase online from the Autism Queensland website.

"I just loved the family support part of it."

What practitioners said...

'I think they (the families) gained a lot of power in the meeting, rather than coming to us and saying 'whatever you think will be fine.' So I really liked that aspect of it.'

'I've found it was a really good ice breaker... Some families, they didn't have much to say and it was really a way to start, to open up the conversation, to get them to talk about more things that were happening at home and that sort of thing.'

'I just loved the family support part of it. I loved that it wasn't forgotten... It's really helped with bringing out the importance of looking after themselves as parents and the rest of the family as well.'

'The mums were like 'he can do that, he can do that', it was actually a really positive thing.'

'I'm a new grad so I definitely think it's given me a greater idea of the goal setting process. Not only the process of how to move forward, but also the process to recognise what's already been achieved... and it's just given me a better basis to be more confident in goal setting.'

What carers said...

'I think as a parent it's nice and easy to do, and it's visual, you know, you're not reading piles and piles of paper. And you're not expected to know these things off the top of your head, it gives you a bit of a prompt I guess.'

'Really, really wonderful. We all worked as a little team.'

'It helped create discussion, and it helped prioritise our goals.'

'Because I teach goal-setting at uni I thought that's actually a really nifty way to be able to get people to visually conceive an idea about what it is they want for their child. I was impressed ...That they take a really holistic approach to looking after a child rather than just what I had in my mind.'

'Because it was a visual tool for me to be able to physically arrange I was able to see what I had, what I'd laid out where and it was a lot easier for me to understand and work through.'

'So we actually wrote the goals together based on the cards.'

'My husband and I were sitting there and we were sort of going 'well this would be my number one' and 'this was my number two''

"It helped create discussion, and it helped priorities our goals"

Other 'Aspirations Self-Determination' Publications

FGST For Families with children with Disabilities: Designed to facilitate collaborative goal setting with families who have young children (from birth to early school years) with significant global development delay and/or multiple and complex needs.

Adolescent/Adult Goal Setting Tool (AAGST): Designed to enable people on the autism spectrum and other neurodivergent individuals to actively engage in person-centred planning processes. The tool can be used by schools for post-school transition planning for students, employment agencies, disability service providers, therapists supporting adolescents and adults on the autism spectrum with goal planning, individuals and their families.

All tools are available for purchase from the Autism Queensland website www.autismqld.com.au



For more information:

E. customerservice@autismqld.com.au

P. 07 3273 0000

www.autismqld.com.au