

FGST The Family Goal Setting Tool

For families with children with disabilities

The Family Goal Setting Tool (FGST) has been designed to facilitate collaborative goal setting with families who have young children (birth to early school years) with significant global development delay and/or multiple and complex needs.

The FGST 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

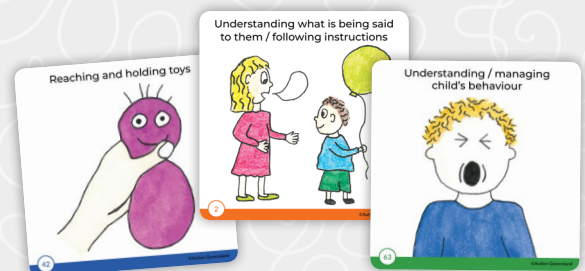
The tool is a card sort to scaffold the identification, communication and prioritisation of each family's goals. It encompasses child-focussed goals and the family need for information, support and the opportunity for active participation in the community.

The FGST consists of a pack of 80 goal cards divided into nine categories including:

- Communication
- Social Participation
- Emotional Regulation
- Play and Learning
- Self-care
- Motor Skills
- 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:

- Facilitated goal setting making it "easier"
- Highlighted child and family strengths
- Encouraged a holistic approach
- Fostered a sense of empowerment and ownership
- Provided a visual support for understanding concepts and prioritising goals.

Development of the Tool

The FGST was developed by Judy Jones, an occupational therapist at Autism Queensland and piloted in six of its early intervention teams. 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 contains **80 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.

"It changes the dynamic in a positive way"

What practitioners said...

'It is family directed rather than therapy directed. It changes the dynamic in a positive way.'

'I found even those families where you have thought it might be too simplistic have found it a really useful prompt...maybe they wouldn't have thought of the scope that they could with the cards.'

'In the past when we've told families we have planning coming up they like 'oh no'. It's like a big burden for them. ..It just takes the pressure off.'

'In the past, parents had difficulty coming up with goals. Often you would just get 'therapy'. Families can be a bit more independent with actually working through the card sort.'

'It really gives you a chance to tease things out as well, and if they raise a lot of things that they are not sure of, it really gives you the chance to investigate a bit further.'

"It covered more than just the baby, it covered services to help us cope"

What carers said...

'You know sometimes you'll sit down to do something and you won't remember everything that is important...But having the cards there, everything was...pretty much covered.'

'I thought it was helpful because you actually got to hold the thing in your hand and have a look at it... So the physical having to hold them and sort them I found to be therapeutic for myself.'

'I really rely on visual things so for me to see it, it's better than trying to think of something-they were good prompts for me to come up with ideas and then to actually sort it as to areas to concentrate on.'

'It was really worthwhile... that the 'No' cards can be because he's already been there, he's done that, it's something he can do. It's so nice to every now and then reflect on he can do this, look where we've come from....It's nice to say well this isn't a problem anymore, how nice is this.'

'It covered more than just the baby, it covered services to help us cope....probably the cards led to a conversation, of them advising me of what services were available to help all of us, rather than just the baby.'

Other 'Aspirations Self-Determination' Publications

FGST ASD Version: Designed to facilitate collaborative goal setting with families who have young children (from diagnosis to early school years) on the autism spectrum.

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