Goal Setting

by Carly Buchanan and Rachael Anderson
(Occupational therapy students)
Cate Hilly (Clinical Placement Trainer)

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapists support people to do all the things that “occupy” their day, also called occupations. For children and youth, occupational therapists can facilitate the development of base skills that enable the child to engage in their everyday activities. This includes personal independence, and participation in self-care, play/leisure and schoolwork/homework. Working with their parents and teachers, occupational therapists can support a child in these areas.

Goal Setting in OT

Goal setting is a valuable way to allow us to support you and your child in activities at home, school and in the community. It helps us understand what is important to you and how we can work together. Our goal is to empower you with more skills and knowledge, so when tricky situations arise for your child, you can problem-solve your way through them together.

What is it?

Goal Setting

Why should we do it?

Your goals might include:

- Increasing your skills or confidence in playing with your child/ren.
- Knowing which activities to use to focus on different skills or body parts.
- Improving your understanding of your child’s strengths and favourite ways of learning.
- Adding to or discovering new ways to encourage your child to develop through play.

How to Set FAMILY GOALS

by Carly Buchanan and Rachael Anderson
(University of the Sunshine Coast)
Occupational therapy with children is:

- **Family-centred**: Considers your whole family’s needs, priorities and lifestyle in goal setting.
- **Client-centred**: Considers your child’s current and future skills, abilities, and occupations.
- **Occupation-focused**: Considers what you and your child need to, want to and should be doing.
- **Collaborative**: Involves everyone working together and negotiating to achieve a common goal.
- **Goal-directed**: Ensuring therapy has SMART goals to work towards.

### SMART Goals

Remember, your goals should be:

- **Specific** – What exactly do you want to accomplish? Make sure it is important to you. Break the goal down into smaller steps.
- **Measurable** – How will you know when you reach the goal? It needs to be measured and monitored.
- **Achievable** – How can your goal be achievable? Who or what do you need to reach the goal?
- **Realistic** – Does the goal fit into your current and future lifestyle?
- **Timely** – Is this a long-term or short-term goal? Set a deadline.

### Resources for goal setting:

- **USC C&Y Clinic** – “Ideas to improve your child’s attention and focus for fine motor activities” handout
- **Practica Program Blog** - Setting SMART Goals as Parents

**USC Child & Youth Clinic**

Level 1, Health and Sports Tower (Building T)

University of the Sunshine Coast

Sippy Downs, Qld 4556