The collaborative goal setting experiences of parents of children with disabilities and occupational therapists

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Objectives

• To share my research findings about the collaborative goal setting experiences

• To present how goal setting practice can be further improved based on insights obtained from this inquiry.
Research Questions

• What are the collaborative goal setting experiences of parents of children with disabilities and occupational therapists?

• What does collaborative goal setting mean to parents and therapists?
Research Questions cont.

3. Are their similarities and/or differences in goal setting experiences of parents and therapists?

4. How do parents and occupational therapists believe collaborative goal setting could be improved?
Methodology

- Phenomenological, Naturalistic Inquiry
- Interviewed parents and occupational therapists
- Reviewed goal setting documents in files
- Content data analysis
### Parent Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent’s pseudonym</th>
<th>Parent’s occupation</th>
<th>Child’s pseudonym</th>
<th>Child’s diagnosis</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Clinical psych</td>
<td>Josie</td>
<td>DCD</td>
<td>6 yr 9 mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyn</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>Craig</td>
<td>Dyspraxia</td>
<td>4 yr 5 mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keiko</td>
<td>Home mum</td>
<td>Tommiko</td>
<td>Neuronal migration disorder</td>
<td>2 yr 7 mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>Abigail Max</td>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>6 yr 10 mo, 3 yr 10 mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>Down syndrome</td>
<td>11 yr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Therapist Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Therapists’ pseudonym</th>
<th>Years of clinical experience</th>
<th>Years of experience in child &amp; family services</th>
<th>Length of time at Therapy ACT (years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carol</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The goal setting experiences of parents of children with disabilities and occupational therapists

**Theme One**
“An obscure concept”
Learning to goal set

**Theme Two**
“The things we would discuss became the goals”
Goal setting experiences

**Theme Three**
“It’s just the beginning”
The impact of goal setting

**Theme Four**
“People vary in their life experiences”
Factors that influence goal setting experiences

**Theme Five**
“More guidance, more direction”
How goal setting could be improved
Theme One: “An Obscure Concept”

Learning to goal set

“You learn as a parent”

“There just want action”

“Developing my own technique”
Theme Two:
“The things we would discuss became the goals”

The goal setting experiences

“Goals are often really open ended”

“The issues that were there are different now”

“We kind of melded those ideas together”
Theme Five: “More guidance, more direction”

How goal setting could be improved

“Reinforce with the parents”

“Take time to goal set”
Fresh Perspectives from this Research

• Parents do have goals for their children not OT specific

• Parents learn to become active participants in collaborative goal setting over time

• How much a parent wants to participate is individualised
Fresh Perspectives cont.

• Therapists need to learn how to engage families & children in collaborative goal setting and develop their own techniques

• Make goals more explicit, break down into steps, regular reviews, use less jargon, make it functional, input from child, family and OT
Take Home Messages

1. Current practices can be improved
2. Therapists need permission from managers to take time to set and review goals
3. Support students and therapists to learn how to engage families/children in goal setting
4. The impact of routine use of goal setting tools with families/children in Australia needs exploration
Acknowledgements

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• Parents and therapists

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• Chris and Nicole
Email Address

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