

Giving Children a Voice: Cross-cultural validation of the Perceived Efficacy and Goal Setting (PEGS) System in 6 Countries.

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Introduction: Children's right to express their views was enshrined two decades ago in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. While most therapists are very willing to listen, it can be challenging to obtain the perspectives of young children. Children's participation in establishing goals for therapy is of particular importance because involvement in goal setting has been shown to increase motivation and improve outcomes in occupational therapy. Goal setting is an abstract process that is difficult for young children, so goals are typically set by therapists, teachers and parents. The Perceived Efficacy and Goal Setting (PEGS) System (Missiuna, Pollock & Law, 2004) was developed to assist children with disabilities to assess their performance on daily tasks and establish goals for therapy. To make PEGS accessible to children around the world, it needed to be validated in countries beyond North America.

Objectives: This poster will highlight key findings of studies investigating the cross-cultural validity and other psychometric properties of the PEGS in 6 countries.

Methods: PEGS consists of 24 pairs of picture cards illustrating children performing everyday activities within and outside school. Each pair consists of one picture showing a child performing an activity easily and another card showing a child performing the same activity with difficulty. Each study translated the PEGS cards and established their own research protocol; in some instances, PEGS forms and the manual were also translated. The specific psychometric properties tested differed across studies and countries.

Results: The PEGS was shown to be valid for use with children with disabilities in such cultures and countries as Israel, Norway, Sweden, Brazil, Australia and the United Kingdom. Researchers recommended optional pictures depicting childhood activities common in their country.

Conclusions: PEGS was shown to be valid for use in a variety of countries and cultures. The activities depicted seem culturally neutral, as therapists were able to encourage children to elaborate about what each activity meant to them.

Contribution to practice: To encourage children to be active partners in intervention, tools for goal-setting must be available that have been translated and validated for use in each country and culture.