How to Use a STAR Chart

Setting:

This may be environmental or personal and may include:

- The physical environment: busy, noisy, hot, dark….
- The social interactions and relationships within the environment
- The activities that the child is doing
- His/her physical well-being: hunger, thirst, tiredness, illness…
- His/her thoughts and mood
- His/her physical state – anxiety, fear

Trigger:

These are the things that may 'set off' a particular behaviour and usually occurs shortly before the behaviour of concern. However, a trigger can also be something that happened several hours ago/the previous day if a child has a significant delay in their processing of information.

- Had the child been asked to do something?
- Were they requesting something from you, something they wanted?
- Had the activity just finished/started?
- Was something happening that the child dislikes or fears?
- Was it something the child associates with a particular event?

Actions:

This is the observable behaviour shown by the child. Start by describing the action which is of concern.

Result:

These are the events that follow the action. The results will influence the likelihood of the action happening again. If the results are rewarding for the child, they increase the chances of the behaviour happening again.

- Did the child's behaviour result in them getting something they didn't have before, e.g. object/food?
- Sensory results: the child gains sensory satisfaction or avoids sensory overload.
- Social results: the child gains attention/comfort OR succeeds in avoiding unwanted social contact.
- Occupational result: the child gets to do a desired activity OR escapes an unwanted activity

Please note: These resources are to be used once you have an understanding of how to implement them after attending training or following advice from your autism outreach team. If you are not sure how to use them then seek advice first!

How to use the information gathered:

Discuss the information with the whole team

- Can you find any regular triggers?
- Does the 'action' happen on a certain day of the week, or time of day?
- Is there something in the 'setting' that causes the action to happen?
- What can you do to help?
- Can you change something in the setting to help the child?
- Can you support the child to communicate in different ways?

Make a plan that will help the child and discuss this with all staff