



# Working in special education

Adviser on Deaf Children





## Meet Nicki Young, an Adviser on Deaf Children in Hawke's Bay

Nicki Young works for the Ministry of Education as an Adviser on Deaf Children (AODC).

### Nicki's story

Nicki worked as a teacher for five years, before completing a Diploma in Deaf Education in 1993. Nicki has completed a Masters in Special Education (Sensory) as part of her training to be an AODC. A mother of two children, Nicki has worked as an AODC since 2007.

### Nicki's day-to-day

As an AODC, Nicki endeavours to help children and young people who are deaf or hard of hearing to learn and develop. In this role, she works closely with, and alongside, parents, whānau, caregivers, teachers, the Deaf Community, the Deaf Education Centres and other service providers.

Working as an AODC Nicki has acquired an understanding and knowledge of a range of language and communication skills, including spoken language and New Zealand Sign Language.



### Reflecting cultural values in her work

Nicki works hard to keep up her knowledge of tikanga and attends regular training days, hosted by the Ministry of Education. For the past two years Nicki has been attending Te Reo Māori night-classes to help support her engagement with whānau Māori.

### Rewards of the role

Nicki describes being an AODC as “the best job in the world.” “An AODC’s day is incredibly varied and interesting. We visit a range of facilities and work alongside a fabulous mix of people.” The best bit? Seeing new parents becoming empowered and sharing that they feel more capable and confident is rewarding.

**Nicki would love to see**  
“younger colleagues, as well as Māori, Pasifika and other cultures, represented in greater numbers in the AODC profession.”

## Nature of the work

The Ministry of Education is a significant employer of Advisers on Deaf Children (AODC).

### Advisers on Deaf Children:

- › work closely with parents, caregivers, teachers and other specialists to help children with a hearing loss from birth to year 3 at school to learn and develop
- › help children with hearing needs (and their families) prepare for, start and settle into early childhood centre and school
- › collaborate with a range of professionals from education, health and community organisations.



## Qualifications and experience

To become an AODC you will need:

- › a teaching degree or diploma
  - › a Teacher of the Deaf qualification or equivalent
  - › a Master's degree in deaf education (or be willing to study towards one)
  - › deaf education teaching experience.
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## Skills and knowledge

In addition to the qualifications and experience, an AODC must have knowledge of or skills in:

- › New Zealand Sign Language
- › child development
- › deaf education
- › managing deafness and hearing needs in a variety of settings
- › psychology and education theory and child development
- › community and family support services
- › effective communication, teaching, research and planning.

## Career development

Becoming an AODC will give you the rewards and challenges of the job itself, as well as opportunities to develop your career.

### You will:

- › be supported and supervised by experienced professional colleagues
- › be kept up to date with the latest evidence
- › take part in ongoing professional learning and development
- › have opportunities to share and extend your knowledge and skills.

There might also be opportunities to take part in projects or working groups and in time, you might be considered for leadership roles.









## Further information about Advisers on Deaf Children

### Special education careers and professional development

For information about the role of an Adviser on Deaf Children and working in special education, visit our special education careers webpage

**[www.education.govt.nz/careers-in-special-education](http://www.education.govt.nz/careers-in-special-education)**

### Special education scholarships and study awards

If you're interested in a career in special education you may be eligible for a scholarship or study award. Find out more at

**[www.education.govt.nz/r/sestudyawards](http://www.education.govt.nz/r/sestudyawards)**

### Career information

For profiles of different careers visit the Careers New Zealand website **[www.careers.govt.nz](http://www.careers.govt.nz)**

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## Contact us

Want to speak to someone about a career as an AODC? Give us a call or drop us an email.

### Ministry of Education – Special Education

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