

**Australia and New Zealand Conference for the Educators of the Deaf 2016**  
**July 7-10, 2016**  
**Christchurch, New Zealand**  
**“Understanding the Present and Sharing the Future”**

Papers for presentations - 40 minutes

**Title:** Increasing the Social Competence of Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

**Abstract**

Social relationships add quality to our lives and contribute to our ability to think and learn. Simultaneously, having well-developed social skills is critical for succeeding in school and at work. In contrast, research suggests that poorly developed social skills are a strong predictor of significant problems in adulthood. Children and youth who are deaf or hard of hearing have long been considered a population at risk for developing social skills and, consequently, social relationships. The purpose of this presentation is to explain the importance of social competence, to share valuable assessment instruments and procedures for evaluating students' social abilities, and to discuss actions that parents and educators can undertake to promote social competence.