

# Early Years Great Careers

Grow. Lead. Succeed.



## What do physiotherapists do?

Physiotherapists play a vital role in the early childhood sector, which supports the development, health and wellbeing of young children including babies and toddlers. Physiotherapy is a professional natural medical treatment focussed on restoring function after disease or injury. Physiotherapists may work as part of a health care team, independently in private practice, within early childhood education and care services or as industry consultants in metropolitan, regional or rural locations.

Physiotherapists assess the physical condition of clients to identify needs and plan appropriate treatments, which can include a wide variety of therapies and interventions. Physiotherapists who work in early childhood:

- Assess development of premature babies and plan and provide therapy for children with movement problems or physical disabilities.
- Assist individuals with permanent disabilities to maximise their abilities and manage the physical demands of daily living.
- Work as part of a team of allied health professionals to provide a multidisciplinary care plan.
- Educate children, their families, industry and the community about healthy lifestyles and avoiding injury.

## Fast facts

- Employment prospects in the early childhood and allied health sectors generally are strong and growing.
- Employment opportunities for physiotherapists are excellent; there is almost no unemployment in the physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech pathology professions.
- Federal Government labour market forecasting shows that in the coming years more than 26 per cent of new jobs will be in the health care and social assistance sector, making it the largest employer.
- Salaries commence at \$56,770 a year and will increase with experience and responsibilities.
- Physiotherapists have the opportunity to specialise in particular clinical areas such as paediatric, intensive care, orthopaedics, rehabilitation and women's health.
- There is opportunity to work as a specialist clinician or to diversify to other areas such as management, consulting, education and research and private practice.

Future employment rating ★★★★★

\*Future employment growth 11% PA or more. Source: DEEWR

## What should I study at school?

Useful subjects include English, advanced maths, biology, chemistry, physics, health

and human development, physical education and VET Certificate III in Health Services Assistance.

## What should I study at university?

**Bachelor Degree in Physiotherapy Applied Science (Physiotherapy) (four years)**  
**Master of Physiotherapy**

\* Completion of Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance may provide some credit to the degree program.

## Once I am qualified, what are my other career and leadership options?

Qualified physiotherapists can move into consulting, government roles or practice management positions. Other related occupations include chiropractor, massage therapist, medical practitioner, occupational therapist, osteopath, speech pathologist or sports scientist.

# Early Years Great Careers

Grow. Lead. Succeed.



**Ruth Sacks** Physiotherapist  
(early childhood intervention)

## What are your major qualifications?

I have a Bachelor of Physiotherapy.

## How long have you worked in early childhood and in your current role?

I began working in early childhood when I was living in London in 2006. I enjoyed it so much that when I moved back to Australia in 2008 I sought a similar role. I've been with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development ever since.

## What is a typical day?

My role involves working closely to support, empower and assist children with developmental delays, disabilities and additional needs. I am particularly qualified to help children develop their physical skills, such as sitting and walking, and improve their balance, coordination and physical function.

My day involves visiting children in their home or at early childhood education and care services. Part of my job is to help families coordinate the many extra services they may need, such as medical services, council supports, special equipment and child care. I also provide parents with everyday strategies to help their children learn and develop to their full potential.

## What influenced your interest in an early childhood career?

I have wanted to work with children for as long as I can remember. I just seemed to

find my way into early childhood and have remained in this line of work because of how much I enjoy it.

## What made you change to early childhood?

I began my career as a paediatric physiotherapist in a special school. There was an early intervention centre linked to the school and it sparked my interest to look into working in the early childhood area. I found the idea of working with children from as early as infancy exciting. It also allowed me to work closely with parents and families, which I enjoyed.

## What do you enjoy most about your career in early childhood?

I enjoy spending my days with children and trying to think of fun ways to help them learn and develop. It is a great feeling when you see these children learn a new skill and celebrate each achievement, however small, with their families. The special relationships I develop with them and their families are also a key part of what makes my job fulfilling.

## What is the best experience you have had as an early childhood professional?

One of the best feelings I can remember in my career was when a delightful little boy with a physical delay, who I'd worked with for almost a year, walked by himself for the first time.

## What would you say to others who might be considering a career in early childhood?

Early childhood is an incredibly rewarding area in which to work. A job in early childhood lets you share in, and make a difference to, the lives of children and their families.

## Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

In 10 years' time I still hope to be helping families to work towards and reach their goals for their children.

## Want to know more?

[education.vic.gov.au/earlyyears Careers](http://education.vic.gov.au/earlyyears Careers)  
[deewr.gov.au](http://deewr.gov.au)  
[myfuture.edu.au](http://myfuture.edu.au)  
[careersthatmatter.com.au](http://careersthatmatter.com.au)  
[joboutlook.gov.au](http://joboutlook.gov.au)



All indicative salaries in the document are gross before tax a year for full time employees. Indicative salary figures are taken from [http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/VPS\\_Salary\\_Rates.pdf](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/VPS_Salary_Rates.pdf), Allied Health 2.2.1. Salaries will vary depending on employer, role and Award.

Information regarding course and professional pre-requisites is of a general nature. Please consult a career practitioner and/or check with individual institutions to confirm specific course requirements.