

C. ACLP Writing Guidelines

ACLP publications adhere to the most recent [APA style guidelines](#).

All ACLP publications should meet the following general requirements:

- Clear, concise, and free of spelling and grammar errors
- Incorporate existing literature relevant to the discussed topic
- Follow [APA's inclusive language guidelines](#):
 - As the preferred terminology related to inclusive language evolves, ACLP publications should use the most inclusive language possible. ACLP respects individuals' choice of language to describe their abilities; individual publications reflect the language chosen by the author
- Written using active voice, which makes it clear who is doing what. For example, “The child life specialist observed that the child was experiencing anxiety as a result of the procedure” versus “It was observed that the child was experiencing anxiety due to the procedure.”
- Free of awkward phrasing or errors. Reading your work out loud may help you identify many such errors
- Written for an audience of child life professionals and assumes the reader is familiar with core components of child life theoretical framework
- Uses Arial font throughout the manuscript
- Follow APA guidelines for references and citations

Utilize the following ACLP language usage:

- **child life:** Similar to the term “social work,” child life is not capitalized when referring to the field in general
- **child life specialist:** Similar to referring to someone as a “nurse” rather than a “Nurse,” *child life specialist* should not be capitalized except when it is part of a formal title
- **Certified Child Life Specialist:** As a formally recognized title and credential (like “Registered Nurse”) *Certified Child Life Specialist* should be capitalized. **Note:** please do not use the CCLS credential as a substitute for a child life specialist (not certified) as an abbreviation
- **Certified Child Life Specialist (Credential) plural:** This should be represented as CCLSs. No apostrophe should be used when intention is to denote multiple Certified Child Life Specialists.
- **To show possession for multiple Certified Child Life Specialist utilize:** CCLSs’
- **credentials/degrees:** Use no periods (BA, MSc, PhD, CCLS)
- **titles (executive director, president, etc.):** Do not capitalize a title unless it directly precedes a person’s name, identifying their position (e.g., “ACLP President Jane Doe”). Exception: capitalize President when referring to the President of the United States.
- **health care:** two words
- **caregiver:** one word
- **family-centered care:** hyphenate
- **family or caregiver(s):** Use instead of “parents” wherever possible
- **names of children:** Use pseudonyms when giving real-life examples