

## ***Writing for ACLP***

### **ARTICLE SUBMISSION PROCESS**

If you are planning to submit an article, it is highly advisable to contact the editorial panel at [bulletin@childlife.org](mailto:bulletin@childlife.org) or [journal@childlife.org](mailto:journal@childlife.org) before you begin work, to discuss your ideas and receive guidance. Your article proposal should include the following information:

- A brief description or summary of your intended topic
- Estimated length of your article
- Which publication – *ACLP Bulletin* or *The Journal of Child Life*?
- Intended submission deadline
- Your complete contact information
- Any additional questions you have about the submission process

By communicating with the editors about the topic and timing of your intended submission, you will avoid potential pitfalls and may increase your chances of writing an article that is ultimately accepted for publication. Please allow yourself ample time before the deadline to complete your article, and be sure to check in periodically with the editorial panel about your progress, including any changes they should anticipate to the content or length of your submission.

### **SUBMISSION DEADLINES**

Submission deadlines for *ACLP Bulletin* are as follows:

- **January 1:** Spring issue, published in April
- **April 1:** Summer issue, published in July
- **July 1:** Fall issue, published in August
- **October 1:** Winter issue, published in September

Submissions to *The Journal of Child Life* are rolling.

Please note, due to space limitations and content considerations, the editorial panel does not guarantee placement of an accepted article in a particular issue, and may at its discretion hold an article for publication in a future issue.

### **ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA**

Determine whether the manuscript should be submitted to *ACLP Bulletin* or *The Journal of Child Life*.

All *ACLP Bulletin* articles should meet the following requirements:

- Meets the 500 to 1,500-word requirement, or the word counts of the specific column
- Addresses a topic of interest to the child life community
- Incorporates evidence-based practice and research wherever possible
- Has not been published elsewhere in its submitted form

All articles for *The Journal of Child Life* should meet the following requirements:

- Does not exceed 7,000 words in length
- Presents scholarly findings
  - Original research
  - The development of a conceptual or theoretical framework
  - The use of effective assessment and intervention methodologies
  - Implementation of innovative service delivery models
- Provides a substantive review of an issues relevant to the child life practice
- Incorporates evidence-based practice and research
- Promotes the development of the child life profession
- Approved by the appropriate institutional review board (IRB), if applicable
- Content has been thoroughly researched for soundness and accuracy by conducting a literature review
- Has not been published elsewhere in its submitted form

Additionally, *all* articles should meet the following general requirements:

- Clear, concise, and free of spelling and grammar errors
- Free of political, racial, religious, gender, and ethnic bias
- Incorporates existing literature relevant to the discussed topic
- Sensitive to individuals who have a disease or disability and uses “people first language” (e.g., children with diabetes versus diabetic children)
- APA formatted
  - Statements or conclusions are based on someone else’s work must be cited and referenced
  - In-text citations are used
  - The list of references should contain only those works cited in the manuscript, and they should be alphabetized by the first author’s last name.
- Written using **active voice**, which makes 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 theory
- Uses the same, easy-to-read font throughout the manuscript
- Emphasis is indicated by italicizing text, not by bolding or underlining
- Consistent with the ACLP style guidelines
  - **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.
  - **credentials/degrees:** Use no periods (BA, MSc, PhD, CCLS)
  - **titles (executive director, president, etc.):** Do not capitalize a title unless it directly follows a person’s name, identifying their position (e.g., “Jill Koss, President, ACLP”). Exception: capitalize President when referring to the President of the USA.
  - **healthcare:** One word.
  - **caregiver:** One word.
  - **family-centered care:** Always hyphenate.
  - **family or caregiver(s):** Use instead of “parents” wherever possible
  - **names of children:** Use pseudonyms when giving real-life examples
  - **evidence-based practice:** Always hyphenate
  - **ACLP Forum:** Official name of the ACLP list serve (not listserv)
  - **list serve:** Generic term for ACLP Forum
  - **email:** No capitalization, hyphen, or space
  - **website:** One word, no capitalization.
- Submitted as a Microsoft Word document
  - Graphic files should be saved as separate files in JPG, PNG, or PDF format, and not embedded in the text.
  - Type a note within the manuscript in italics indicating where graphics and charts should go, with any text that should go with the graphic. Remember, you are responsible for obtaining consent to use any photographs and artwork not created by the author before submitting your article. Please contact the managing editor at [bulletin@childlife.org](mailto:bulletin@childlife.org) or [journal@childlife.org](mailto:journal@childlife.org) for a consent form designed for this purpose.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once you have submitted your article, you will receive an acknowledgement of receipt from the managing editor. All submissions will undergo a process of review and revision, which will typically take several weeks to several months, depending on the content and the type of article. In many cases, the editorial

panel will request additional edits and/or rewrites from the author before the article is accepted for publication.

Articles that are accepted for publication will undergo a final round of review and editing by the editorial panel, and then will be slated for inclusion in an upcoming issue of the *ACLP Bulletin* or *The Journal of Child Life*.

If you have any questions about writing or formatting your manuscript, or about ACLP's editorial process, please contact the managing editor at [bulletin@childlife.org](mailto:bulletin@childlife.org) or [journal@childlife.org](mailto:journal@childlife.org).