

***ACLP Bulletin*: Guidelines for Submission**

Purpose: *ACLP Bulletin* provides a forum for child life professionals to share their work experiences, challenges, solutions, new resources, best practices, innovations, milestones, and successes.

Before you begin working on your article, please review the general writing and submission guidelines outlined in ***Writing for ACLP***, available on the ACLP website. If you plan to submit an article for a specific column, review the column-specific guidelines at the end of this document.

In addition to following the general guidelines outlined in *Writing for ACLP*, all *ACLP Bulletin* submissions should be timely and relevant, appealing to a wide audience of child life professionals and students.

Process: Before beginning to write, it is helpful to reach out to the *ACLP Bulletin* editorial team, who can help refine your topic and determine a target length for your article. To do this, please contact the managing editor at bulletin@childlife.org.

STYLE, FORMAT, AND WORD COUNT REQUIREMENTS

Style Guidelines: ACLP adheres to American Psychological Association's (APA) style in all published materials. Please review the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*, for detailed information on how to prepare an article for publication. Purdue University's Online Writing Lab (Purdue OWL: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/>) is a helpful resource for APA formatting.

Document Formatting

- Submit your article as a Microsoft Word file.
- Byline: Include your name, credentials, organizational affiliation, and location at the top of the first page.
- Use the same easy-to-read font throughout the manuscript. Manuscript should be double spaced.
- Indicate emphasis by italicizing text, not by bolding or underlining.
- Cite references that you use and include them in a reference list (see APA manual for specifics).
- Authors are responsible for obtaining consent to use any photographs, artwork, and graphics not created by the author before submitting the article. Please contact the managing editor at bulletin@childlife.org for a

- consent form designed for this purpose.
- Graphic files should be saved as separate files in PDF, JPG, or PNG format and not embedded in the text. Type a note within the manuscript in italics indicating where graphics and charts should go, along with any text that should go with the graphic.
 - Remember that graphics, such as pictures, tables, or other figures will take up additional space, and may require reducing the final word count of your article.

Word Count: If you're writing a general article, 1000-1250 words is a good target word count. If you're writing for a specific column, please review the content section of each column below to determine the target length. Our main goal is to publish articles that are concise, yet complete, and experience has shown that the suggested word counts are adequate to meet that goal.

Submitting your article: Your completed article should be emailed to bulletin@childlife.org. At the time of submission, please also email the *ACLP Bulletin* submission letter and copyright agreement, available on the ACLP website.

Submission deadlines:

- Winter: Due October 1, published in January
- Spring: Due January 1, published in April
- Summer: Due April 1, published in July
- Fall: Due July 1, published in October

Please note: Submissions are reviewed on a rolling basis as they are received. Due to space limitations, the *ACLP Bulletin* 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.

ACLP BULLETIN SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Before you submit your final draft, we recommend that you ask one or more colleagues to review and help you edit your article. Please email the following files to the managing editor at bulletin@childlife.org.

- ✓ **Article manuscript** (should include a cover page with title, word count, and author contact information, including: name, credentials, title, institutional affiliation, address, daytime phone, email)
- ✓ **Separate graphic/artwork files** (if applicable)
- ✓ **Signed Submission and Copyright Agreement Letter** (available for download on the ACLP website). Email a scanned version to the managing editor.

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, which will typically take several weeks, depending on the content and the type of article. *ACLP Bulletin* articles are reviewed by the Bulletin Committee members.

In many cases, the editorial panel will request additional edits and/or rewrites from the author before the article is accepted for publication. The requested turnaround period for edits is generally two weeks. If the requested edits are minor, a member of the editorial panel may incorporate the changes him or herself, with the author's approval.

In some instances, the editorial panel may decline a particular article based upon a variety of factors, which might include the relevance or accuracy of the content, the quality of the writing, or concerns about the article's organization or structure. In these cases, writers are typically provided with constructive feedback and offered the opportunity to rewrite and resubmit the article for a future issue.

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.

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

SPECIFIC COLUMNS

Authors writing general articles for *ACLP Bulletin* can use the above information to guide the process. There are also specific columns that recur in each issue of the journal. Details on these columns are listed below.

Alphabet 2.0

"Alphabet 2.0" presents an opportunity for authors to explore new perspectives on foundational child life concepts or advanced clinical, professional, and ethical topics for the experienced child life professional community. This column is intended to build upon the foundation laid by the initial "Child Life Alphabet" series (published between 2008 and 2015) within a framework of theoretical and research-based knowledge. The advanced topics explored in "Alphabet 2.0" should be grounded in a theoretical framework and/or research-based foundation that supports the topic of interest.

Content:

- The article should provide a formal introduction to the topic, with relevant terms defined. A clear connection to advanced child life practice should be articulated for the reader. The theoretical framework should be outlined through a logical sequence of ideas and supported by a research base from child life or related disciplines. The inclusion of brief anecdotes from the field is welcome and should underscore the relevance of the advanced topic to the child life community.
- References: The article should be supported by theoretical and current research-based references appropriate for an advanced reader (e.g., peer reviewed).
- **Word count:** 1000 to 1250 words.

Beyond the Classroom: Views of Emerging Professionals

The purpose of this student-written column is to provide a forum for those who are pursuing a career in child life to share their unique perspectives regarding pertinent topics. The column is intended to provide a voice for students to address issues important to them as they begin to transition from student to professional. An essential component of this column is reflection about the impact that the topic has had on the author as a future child life professional.

Content:

- With the audience being the larger professional child life community, students may submit anecdotal or academic-based entries relevant to the student experience within the child life field. Please note that information regarding specific school programs and instructions on obtaining practicum placements or internships are better addressed as student forum topics.
- Topics may include self care, information from thesis projects, reflective accounts of clinical practice while on placement, observations upon entering the field, professional challenges and successes, etc. While many experiences described in this column will be common across child life professionals, of greatest interest is the unique impact that an experience has had on you.
- “Beyond the Classroom” articles should include significant reflection about how the author’s view of the topic has changed through their child life education and training and how new knowledge will be incorporated into practice.
- **Word count:** 500 to 750 words

Global Perspectives

“Global Perspectives” is a recurring column designed to share information on the psychosocial care of children in healthcare settings from the perspective of international colleagues and those involved in international programs or

organizations. The intention of this column is to foster increased understanding of the experiences, challenges, goals, and successes of those providing psychosocial care in pediatric healthcare globally as the provision of child life services grows around the world. In support of this, the column will focus primarily on the views and experiences of colleagues living and working outside of the US and Canada.

Content:

- Submissions should discuss some aspect of psychosocial care in the provision of child life or related services outside of the US and Canada. For example, the perspective and reception of child life practice within the healthcare communities of a country, modes of delivery of psychosocial care in a region, the state of the child life profession globally, or authors' interest and experience with pediatric health and psychosocial care could potentially be examined.
- This column has flexibility for accommodating a variety of writing styles and topics. Support and mentoring for authors for whom English may be a second language can be provided upon request.
- **Word count:** 750 to 1250 words.

In the News: Connections to Child Life

“In the News: Connections to Child Life” is intended to highlight relevant and up-to-date topics pertinent to the child life profession. This column will explore how the tenets of child life services interpret and/or guide delivery of informed clinical practice for local, regional, and world issues. This column gives space to explore how child life clinicians can professionally participate in the processing of current events and issues pertaining to children, adolescents, and families. This column can also be a place for shared experiential knowledge of professionals working closely with issues specific to current events.

Content:

- Submissions should examine specific political, environmental, and social issues that have recently taken place and affected children and families psychosocially, physically, and/or emotionally. Content may bring attention to well-known events or events not highlighted in the media, that have affected communities, children, and families. Because the *ACLP Bulletin* production timeline includes submission three months before publication, acknowledging that the article reflects the current state of a developing event may be important for reader context.
- **Word count:** 750-1000 words.

Loose Parts: Creating and Constructing

The “Loose Parts” column incorporates both narrative and images to share innovative ideas, projects, and interventions that have been done within the

scope of child life work. “Loose parts” is a concept first coined by architect Simon Nicholson in 1972; in a general sense it refers to using many different materials and choices to make something of nothing. In the field of child life, loose parts programming and intervention allow children to have mastery of their play experiences by creating something that is fairly self-directed and encourages creative freedom.

Content:

- Describe the materials being used and the process to create your project or intervention.
- Ensure that readers can replicate the process with thorough, easy to read instructions.
- Include images to illustrate important steps in the creation of the project.
- **Word count:** 500 to 700 words.

Changing Perspectives: Reflective Practice in Child Life

Reflective practice is an important and current topic in child life. As child life specialists navigate the ever-changing and evolving world of healthcare, they find themselves growing in both professional and personal capacities. The ability to recognize such shifts within one’s own practice is paramount to ongoing professional development. Over time, child life specialists develop specialized skill sets within various settings, but it is the learning that occurs on an informal basis that often has the greatest potential to impact them and their work in unforeseen ways. Perspectives change as significant life experiences challenge child life specialists to reconsider how they practice or view their own role. By sharing such stories within our greater child life community, we learn from each other’s altering perspectives and gain a wider insight into what drives us to continue the work we do.

Content:

- “Changing Perspectives” is intended to give writers an opportunity to highlight how they have experienced a transformation as a child life specialist through a significant personal or professional experience and how that has impacted how they perform their role. Consider reflecting upon an interaction with another healthcare practitioner, detailing an experience with a patient/family that significantly changed your outlook on the provision of care, or sharing a personal story that has impacted your own outlook on the profession. This column has flexibility for accommodating a variety of writing styles and topics. Informal tone and first person language are welcome for this column.
- **Word count:** 1000 to 1500 words.

Scenes from the Life

“Scenes from the Life” is an anecdotal column created to share interesting examples of interactions with patients and families. The submission may relay a humorous, witty, poignant, or challenging experience or observation.

Content:

- Distill the anecdote into a brief form.
- **Word Count:** 250 to 700 words.

Specialized Resources

“Specialized Resources” provides an opportunity for child life professionals to share specific interventions, techniques, and/or resources (such as books, articles, handouts, teaching/preparation guides, websites, applications, and games) related to promoting the developmental and coping needs associated with a particular patient population or diagnosis.

Content:

- Submissions for this column should share clinical and therapeutic resources relevant for professionals, patients, and family members who may be experiencing a specific illness or condition.
- Each article will focus on one illness/condition and a specific related resource, intervention, or process.
- Proper citations should be included for research studies, products, or materials mentioned.
- Please include in your submission only those resources with which you have had direct experience so that your insights and information can be of the most benefit to readers.
- Introductory sentences: Provide a brief (one paragraph) introduction to the population or diagnosis for which the resources are targeted.
- After the list of resources, please include a few sentences about your experience and expertise with the targeted population, as well as your contact information so that interested readers may contact you with further questions.
- **Word count:** 500 to 750 words.

Authors of the *Specialized Resources* column must not have any affiliation with the company or organization associated with any products or services mentioned in the written article. If a product is recommended, it is preferable that generic names and only general information be provided to avoid conflicts of interest (e.g., “teaching doll” rather than “Legacy doll”). Please keep in mind that upon publication, your article will be prefaced with the following disclaimer statement: *This column represents only the personal views of the author, and the Association of Child Life Professionals does not endorse or sponsor the products or services mentioned. In addition, the author verifies that they have no affiliation with the companies or organizations related to the products and services mentioned in this article. If readers would like further information, they may contact (Author) at (email address).*

