

Writer guidelines

Texas Child Care Quarterly offers practical and research-based articles about the care, development, and education of children from birth to age 8. It is intended primarily for early childhood teachers and in-home child care providers. Other readers include program administrators, high school vocational educators, parent educators, college and university students and instructors, and parents.

We encourage submissions from those who work in the field of early care and education. Articles selected for publication are considered a professional contribution. Writers are not compensated with fees or royalties.

We do not accept articles published elsewhere—either in print or online. Simultaneous submissions are discouraged. We do not accept fiction or poetry.

The best way to learn about writing for the journal is to read and study back issues, particularly the ones from the past two or three years.

What we want

We look for articles that reflect the best knowledge and practices in early childhood education, as determined by organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Topics include child development theory, appropriate teaching practices for children from birth to age 8, school-family communication, health and safety, program administration, and professional development of teachers and caregivers. Articles may focus on a specific age group, such as infants and toddlers, preschoolers, or school-age children (up to age 8).

We welcome articles containing hands-on learning activities that teachers and caregivers can do with children to promote their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. Activities must:

- be appropriate to the age and developmental level of the targeted group,
- be inexpensive to conduct,
- support cooperative (rather than competitive) learning,
- value creative expression, and
- enhance self-confidence.

How to query us

We encourage prospective writers to contact us with a query or an outline for a proposed article. A query gives us a better idea of the content and your writing style and can save you time if your proposal doesn't fit our needs. We are not averse to considering whole articles, however, if you prefer to work that way. We are also happy to discuss ideas for articles and willing to assist first-time writers in getting started.

Indicate your academic or professional experience in early childhood education or the article topic. If there is more than one writer, designate which one is the primary contact and include the person's day-time telephone number.

We respond to queries within a few days. If your idea sounds appropriate for the journal, we will give further guidance and a deadline for submitting the article.

Writing the article

Articles range in length from 1,500 to 3,500 words.

Craft a first sentence or paragraph that grabs the reader's attention. A vignette or anecdote often serves the purpose well. Provide a rationale for the topic and an overview of recent research literature.

Decide on one or two main ideas that you want to communicate and develop them fully in the body of the article. Provide practical recommendations (how-to) for working with children and support your

views and opinions with realistic examples drawn from the classroom. Consider using bulleted or numbered lists for tips and how-to suggestions. End with a summary of the main points and a list of references or resources for adults and children.

Some writing tips:

- Use common words: *buy* instead of *purchase*, for example, and *use* instead of *utilize*.
- Write in a natural, conversational style: “Take children outdoors every day for physical activity” instead of “Physical movement in the outdoor environment should be integrated into the children’s daily regimen.”
- Write in the active voice. “Children followed the rules” instead of “The rules were followed by the children.”
- Use gender-neutral writing, except when referring to a specific male or female. Plural nouns and pronouns can often avoid the awkward he/she and her/him construction.
- Choose specific words over general words. Instead of *large box*, for example, write *refrigerator-sized box*.
- Prefer strong verbs such as *run*, *paint*, and *cry* over to-be verbs (*is*, *are*, *was*, *were*). “The child climbed onto the table” instead of “The child was on the table.”

For more writing tips, consult *The elements of style* by William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White.

References and text citations

Writers are responsible for the accuracy of all statements. If you are quoting more than 40 words from copyrighted material, obtain written permission from the copyright holder before submitting the article.

Texas Child Care Quarterly uses the APA (American Psychological Association) style. For guidance and additional information, consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition*.

Credit sources for statements and statistics within the text by citing the author and date within parentheses. Use the complete citation in a list of references at the end of the article. Here are examples:

Book

- Reference citation: Fishbaugh, Angela. (2011). *Celebrate nature! Activities for every season*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.
- Text citation: (Fishbaugh, 2011)

- Reference citation: Schickedanz, Judith A. (2008). *Increasing the power of instruction: Integration of language, literacy, and math across the preschool day*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Text citation: (Schickedanz, 2008)

Journal article

- Reference citation: Siegel, D. (2006). Physical fitness and academic achievement. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance* 77(2), 9.
- Text citation: (Siegel, 2006)
- Reference citation: Rose, K.K. & Elicker, J. (2008). Parental decision making about child care. *Journal of Family Issues* 29(9), 1161-1184.
- Text citation: (Rose & Elicker 2008)

Electronic source

- Reference citation: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). Hand washing. *Raising Healthy Children*. Retrieved from www.cdc.gov/Features/HandWashing/.
- Text citation: (CDC, 2017)
- Reference citation: Williams, J. (2009). 30 classic outdoor games for kids. *Wired*. Retrieved from www.wired.com/2009/08/simpleoutdoorplay/.
- Text citation: (Williams, 2009)

Formatting your article

Prepare your article in Microsoft Word or compatible software. Do not send PDF files or embed graphics or photographs.

Prepare the article in plain text with no formatting like justified type, underlined or bold-faced type, or other design features. Use italic only when consistent with APA guidelines.

Use a readable type font such as Arial or Times New Roman in 12-point size. Double space between paragraphs; do not indent. At the end of a sentence, put one space, not two, before beginning the next sentence.

Follow the APA guide for cover page and header, subheads to indicate the article’s different sections, and a reference page at the end of the article.

Include a brief biographical sketch. Two or three lines about your current position, education, and experience are sufficient.

Completing the submission

We ask contributors to help us maintain the standards of the *Quarterly*; the Author Agreement Form (at the end of this section) attests to your willingness to comply with these guidelines and basic editorial practice. Copy, sign, and date the document and submit it with your article as an email attachment to editor@childcarequarterly.com.

Either an electronic signature or a scan with your original signature is acceptable.

Accepting your article

We acknowledge receipt of articles by e-mail within a few days of receipt. We review and accept articles throughout the year. In some cases, we will send an article to early childhood education professionals or topic experts for blind review.

We review articles for content, appropriateness for our readers, and writing style. We may ask for revisions or additions before acceptance. If the article meets our guidelines, we will e-mail an acceptance message and author agreement form.

We may choose not to accept an article for a variety of reasons. It may not be aimed at our target audience, the content may not reflect sound education practice, or we may have addressed the same topic within the past two or three years. Non-acceptance does not necessarily reflect negatively on your work.

Once we accept an article, we copyedit it for grammar, punctuation, and style, using the *APA Manual* to determine such matters as capitalization, abbreviation, and references and the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Ed.*, for spelling.

We send the edited article to you for final approval before we post it to the *Texas Child Care Quarterly* website. The Texas Workforce Commission reviews all issues of the *Quarterly* prior to publication on the web, and has final authority for publication decisions. ■

Author agreement with *Texas Child Care Quarterly*

As editors of *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, we want to ensure that all editorial content is of the highest quality, helps educate our readers, and conforms to the standards of editorial practice.

By submitting an article, you are responsible for the accuracy of all statements and references.

Furthermore, you warrant the following:

- The article is original and neither the article nor any part of it has previously been published in any form;
- Publication of the article in *Texas Child Care Quarterly* will not infringe upon any copyright, right of publicity or privacy, or other right; and
- The article does not contain any scandalous, libelous, or unlawful matter.

You agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the Texas Workforce Commission, the editors, and *Texas Child Care Quarterly* from any and all claims and damages that may arise from a breach of the above.

Please sign and date this form in the space below and submit it with your manuscript to editor@childcarequarterly.com.

Sincerely,

Louise Parks and Barbara Langham

Signature of primary author

Date