

Manuscript guidelines

Texas Child Care is an award-winning, quarterly journal published by the Texas Workforce Commission. Each issue offers practical and research-based articles about the development, care, and education of children from birth to age 8. Most readers are teachers and in-home child care providers. Readers also include program administrators, high school vocational educators, parent educators, college and university students and instructors, and parents.

Articles in Texas Child Care

Articles generally are of two types. The first type provides information about child growth and development theory. We look for manuscripts that reflect the best knowledge and practices in early childhood education. Writers address subjects related to child development theory, appropriate practices for children from birth to 8 years of age, school-family communication, health and safety, program administration, or professional development of teachers and caregivers. Successful articles offer flexible, practical recommendations and realistic examples that support the author's opinions.

Examples of this type of article:

- "Smart talk: Improving children's oral language," by Janie Haywood and J. Helen Perkins, Summer 2003, research-based teaching strategies
- "Improving parental involvement: 10 tips for success," by Laverne Warner and John Barrera, Summer 2003, best teaching practices
- "Financial health of child care facilities affects quality of care," by Mary R. Brower and Theresa M. Sull, Summer 2003, program and professional development

The second type of article gives teachers and caregivers ideas for hands-on activities to do with children. We look for well-developed, active learning themes that promote children's social, cognitive, emotional, and physical growth. This type of article begins with an overview of the theme, including evidence of how the theme builds children's skills; continues with a selection of hands-on activities related to the theme; and concludes with a list of related resources. Themes and activities must

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

The how-to portion of an activity article lists necessary materials and step-by-step instructions. Caregiver and child safety must be considered, and a list of sources for unusual materials is helpful.

Examples of this type of article:

- "Get kids moving: Simple activities to build gross-motor skills," by Barbara A. Langham, Summer 2003
- "Famous threesomes: Uncommon uses for common stories," by Jo Ann Lohl Spears, Spring 2003
- "Big box, little box," by Louise Parks, Fall 2002.



Texas Child Care also includes regular departments, written by the editorial staff, including book and product reviews, child-care news events, regulatory information, and a pull-out newsletter for parents.

Writing for Texas Child Care

The editors of Texas Child Care offer technical assistance to writers, will discuss ideas and outline by phone or email, and will send a free copy of the journal on request. The best way to learn about the articles published in Texas Child Care is to read and study the journal.

Texas Child Care does not accept articles already published elsewhere—either in print or electronically. Simultaneous submissions are discouraged.

Articles selected for publication are considered a professional contribution; authors are not compensated with fees or royalties. Authors receive free copies of the issue in which their work is published as well as a complimentary, one-year subscription to the journal.

Cover page

Include a cover page with the article's title and author's name, affiliation, address, phone number, and email address. If there is more than one author, designate one primary author with whom all Texas Child Care correspondence will take place.

Text format

Format pages with a 12-point type font, double-spaced lines, and wide margins. At the end of a sentence, put one space, not two, before beginning another sentence. Double space between paragraphs; do not indent.

- Do not underline or use boldface type. Italicize book titles.
- Number the pages.
- Write the article title and date in a footer on each page. Do not include the author's name except on the cover page.
- Use only one side of a page.
- List references on a separate page.
- Write a brief biographical sketch of the author(s) on a separate page. Two or three sentences about the author's education, experience, and current position are sufficient.

Manuscript guidelines

Organizing the article

- Craft a first sentence or paragraph that grabs the reader's attention.
- Choose two or three main ideas, link them logically, and offer examples to support each idea.
- Use parallel construction in lists, within sentences, between paragraphs, and among sections. Create simple, direct sentences that evolve into simple, direct paragraphs.
- Choose important pieces of information to be set aside in separate boxes, called sidebars, on the printed page.
- Offer ideas for illustrations or photographs.

Writing tips

- Use an informal, conversational style. Say "buy" instead of "purchase," for example.
- Write in active voice to energize the article's ideas. "Children followed the rules" instead of "The rules were followed," for example.
- Use gender-neutral writing, except when referring to a specific male or female.
- Delete unnecessary words. "Very" is often unnecessary, for example. Vary word choice.
- Choose specific words over general words. Write "smiling, cooing baby" instead of "happy baby," for example.
- Avoid using absolutes, such as "never" and "always."

References and text citations

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of all statements and references. Authors are also responsible for seeking and providing written permission from the copyright holder for quoted material longer than 40 words.

Cite sources in a list of references at the end of the article. After specific facts and quotes within the article, cite the author and date within parenthesis. Use the form below.

Book

- Reference citation: Albrecht, Kay and Karen G. Miller. 2000. *Innovations: Infant and Toddler Development*. Beltsville, Md.: Gryphon House.
Text citation: (Albrecht and Miller 2000)
- Reference citation: Shonkoff, J.P. and Deborah D. Phillips, eds. 2000. *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.
Text citation: (Shonkoff and Phillips 2000)

Journal article

- Reference citation: Lubeck, S. 2000. The role of culture in program improvement. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 16 (4): 499-523.
Text citation: (Lubeck 2000)
- Reference citation: Fuson, K.; L. Grandau; and P. Sugiyama. 2000. Achievable numerical understandings for all young children. *Teaching Children Mathematics* 7 (9): 522-28.
Text citation: (Fuson et al. 2000)

Electronic source

- Reference citation: Center for Public Policy Priorities. *State of Texas Children: 2000, Executive Summary*. www.cppp.org/kidscount/bf4execsum.html.
Text citation: (Center for Public Policy Priorities)
- Reference citation: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Obesity Still on the Rise, New Data Show*. www.cdc.gov/nchs/releases/02news/obesityonrise/html.
Text citation: (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

For other types of sources or more information, consult *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th edition.

Submitting an article to Texas Child Care

Submit the manuscript electronically or in print. Electronic submissions must include a cover statement and adhere to the format and writing guidelines described in this document. Print submissions must be accompanied by a floppy storage disk. Hand-written manuscripts are not accepted.

We will send a postcard or email message to acknowledge our receipt of the manuscript.

We review and accept articles throughout the year. It usually takes at least nine months from the time an article is submitted until it can be published.

The manuscript is reviewed by experts in early childhood education and child development for content, writing style, and appropriateness. A blind, peer-review process with the journal's Editorial Review Committee is available at the discretion of the editors.

We return unsuitable manuscripts. We may be unable to use a manuscript for a variety of reasons—timeliness, previously scheduled or printed articles, or space limitations—that do not necessarily reflect negatively on a writer's work.

If the article meets Texas Child Care guidelines, the author will receive a formal acceptance letter and copyright transfer form. The copyright transfer includes permission to use the article in both the printed publication Texas Child Care and its online version.

We may return an article selected for publication to the author for revisions to meet the journal's writing criteria. Once we accept a manuscript, we edit it for style, using *The Associated Press Stylebook*. We send the edited manuscript to the author for final approval before the article enters production.