Submissions Guidelines for *Young Children*
The Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children
Updated June 2012

young children

About *Young Children*

Young Children is the peer-reviewed journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It is published five times per year and each issue offers practical, research-based articles on timely topics of interest. Our readers—nearly 80,000 members and subscribers—work with or on behalf of young children from birth through age 8 (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergartners, and primary school children). They include teachers, family child care providers, child development program administrators, resource and referral counselors, early intervention specialists, elementary school principals, teacher educators, students, researchers, policy makers, and others.

The editorial team and consulting editors use the following criteria when reviewing articles submitted to *Young Children*. We look for articles that

- reflect the **current knowledge base** in early childhood education
- share **numerous positive examples and vignettes** from the author's experience
- provide **practical strategies for practitioners**
- cite **relevant research findings**, when appropriate
- suggest ways to **involve families**, when appropriate
- discuss the roles of **culture, ethnicity, and home language**, when relevant to the content
- support **inclusion** of children with a range of abilities
- show **respect for individual characteristics** such as gender, culture, ethnicity, and home language

Articles selected for publication in *Young Children* are considered a contribution to the profession; authors do not receive fees or royalties. All articles published in *Young Children* have been peer reviewed by members of the NAEYC Consulting Editors Panel and the *Young Children* editorial team.

Consulting editors are experts in early childhood education and child development who apply for their positions and are appointed by the NAEYC Governing Board for three-year terms.

Types of articles

Young Children articles vary in content, length, and writing style because our readers have diverse backgrounds and interests. The best way to learn what kinds of articles are appropriate for *Young Children* is to read articles published in the journal. Access selected articles at www.naeyc.org/yc/pastissues.

Many of our authors have observed a particular classroom, school, or teacher prior to their writing process. If you could not have written your article without documentation of someone else's good practice, please credit these contributions or include him or her as a coauthor.

Young Children does not publish term papers, literature reviews, or reports of research methodology and findings. The journal does not accept articles already published elsewhere in print or electronic format. We expect that articles have not been simultaneously submitted to other publications.

Writing style

Successful authors write in an informal, conversational style. They use the active voice (e.g., "The teacher planned . . . " rather than "Plans were made by the teacher . . . ") and language that is plain and clear. This makes the text easier and more enjoyable to read.

The following table indicates some preferred language.

Use this . . .	Instead of . . .
development and learning	growth and development
dual language learner	English language learner
guidance	discipline
home language	native language
child care; preschool, school-based, center-based program; family child care program; or child development program	daycare program
use	utilize

In addition, avoid using the words *should* and *must* when describing teaching practices ("Teachers **can** engage children by …" versus "Teachers **must** engage children by…").

General feature articles (Note: Article proposal is not required, but see the Formatting Requirements section on page 3 for formatting guidelines.)

These articles address important issues for the early childhood community. Here are examples of the types of articles found in *Young Children*.

• Innovative, research-based teaching strategies. See example: http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200503/03korte.pdf

• Early childhood theories and research, along with recommended practices. See example: http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200309/Planning&Reflection.pdf

• Specific issues affecting young children. See example: http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200501/smith.pdf

Cluster topic articles (Note: Article proposal *is* required.)

Each issue includes a group of articles that consider different aspects of the same topic. Cluster topics are decided on many months in advance (see page 5). For an example of a cluster article go to www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201107/Self-Regulation_Florez_Online-July2011.pdf

Young Children requires authors to submit an article proposal before submitting a full article for a cluster topic. This process provides authors with useful feedback from peer reviewers and editors before they write and submit full-length articles. Not all authors are invited to submit full articles. The following steps detail the submission process for cluster articles.

1. Write and submit an article proposal. The author's 2- to 3-page cluster proposal is due at least 9 months prior to the cluster publication date. The proposal should include

a. Intended audience for the article
b. Why the topic is important for early childhood educators
c. An outline of the topics to be addressed
d. How one-third of the article will be devoted to practical strategies for practitioners
e. A description of any tables, exhibits, or images that will accompany the article
f. A reference list

To submit proposals for cluster articles, use Manuscript Central at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/youngchildren. Each proposal will receive an ID number. Include the author(s) name, contact information, affiliation, and a brief cover letter.

2. Proposal review. Consulting editors and the *Young Children* editorial team review the proposals. Editors provide feedback four to six weeks after the cluster proposal due date.

3. Cluster article submission. *Young Children's* editors invite selected authors to write and submit full-length articles that will undergo peer review. Please note that the invitation to write a cluster article does not guarantee acceptance. Authors whose proposals are not selected will be notified of this decision. Cluster articles are due four months before the publication of the cluster.

Periodic features

In addition to cluster and general articles, *Young Children* includes several periodic features. We accept submissions for these features on an ongoing basis.

• **Viewpoint** columns allow authors to express their research-based opinions about specific issues or practices. See example: http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200507/02Neuman.pdf

• **Teachers on Teaching** articles are brief pieces in which teachers share ideas, reflections, and insights about teaching and learning in all age groups and in a range of settings. See example: http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200901/pdf/BTJChenfeld.pdf

• **Family Ties** articles are brief, practical pieces about effective strategies for engaging families. See example: http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200409/seplocha.pdf

• **Research in Review** articles summarize research and describe implications for practice. Authors work with the journal's Research in Review editors. For more information, contact Derry Koralek, Editor in Chief/Chief Publishing Officer. See example: http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200309/DelayingKEntry.pdf

Formatting requirements

When submitting an article to *Young Children,* please adhere to the formatting and submission guidelines.

Length

All manuscripts must meet page-length requirements:

• General and cluster articles and Viewpoints are from 3–12 pages, double-spaced, including references and visuals. Our readers find articles 3–9 pages in length most useful; these shorter articles tend to be published more quickly.

• Teachers on Teaching and Family Ties are 2–3 pages, double-spaced. These shorter articles tend to be published more quickly.

Format

If manuscripts are not formatted correctly, they will be unsubmitted until the appropriate changes are made.

• Make sure the name(s) of the author(s) does not appear on any page of the article; all manuscripts are subject to blind review.

• Use pseudonyms instead of children's real names.

• Include subheads throughout the article. (Make sure the subheads do not contain information that could identify the author to reviewers.)

• Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, double-spaced lines, and at least one-inch margins.

• Number the pages.

• Include the title and date in the footer.

Cover letter

• Prepare the cover letter as a separate document.

• List the title.

• Indicate the type of article (cluster topic, general, Teachers on Teaching, and so on).

• List the name, affiliation, title, address, phone, fax, and e-mail for each author.

• Designate one author as the primary contact.

• Give the Manuscript ID for any manuscript written by a primary author or coauthor that was accepted for publication or published in *Young Children* within the last two years.

• **Provide a brief summary of how one-third of the text offers useful and relevant information for teachers and other practitioners.**

Style guides

Authors should provide accurate and complete information for references and resources. *Young Children* expects authors to focus on references published within the last 10 years in order to reflect the most recent research and data. Authors should also use the number of resources appropriate for the length of their manuscript.

Young Children follows *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th edition, for spelling and *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition, for style and reference formatting, especially Chapter 15, "Documentation II."

For more information, visit www.m-w.com or www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.

Visuals

We encourage authors to include informative, interesting visuals (e.g., high-resolution photographs, children's work samples, charts, graphs) that enhance the content of the article and promote understanding. This is not a requirement. Photographers must obtain and keep model releases for all recognizable people in each photo (signed by all adults who appear in the photo and by the parents or legal guardians of all the children photographed). One copy of the model release and the visuals themselves should be uploaded as separate files in Manuscript Central as part of the manuscript submission. Do not include them in the body of the article. *Young Children* does not pay authors for their own photos when they are integral to the content of the article.

To make a photograph submission, please see our photography guidelines at www.naeyc.org/publications/forauthors/photoguidelines.

Permissions

Authors are responsible for seeking and maintaining written permission from parents or legal guardians to include children's art and work samples. NAEYC may request to review these permissions.

For quoted material longer than 100 words, authors must seek and submit to *Young Children* written permission from the copyright holder prior to publication.

How to submit an article

Young Children receives all submissions through Manuscript Central at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/youngchildren. After creating an account, authors will find instructions for manuscript submission. Be sure to submit the cover letter, article, and photographs as separate files. Authors can contact Manuscript Central for assistance or e-mail the *Young Children* editorial staff at editorial@naeyc.org.

With the exception of cluster articles, articles are generally published 12 to 24 months after acceptance. Authors may check the status of their submissions in Manuscript Central by logging into the accounts and clicking on the "Submitted Manuscripts" link on the left side of the dashboard.

Please note: Individuals may submit only one article within a six-month period. *Young Children*'s preferred practice is to publish a particular author only once within a 12-month period. On rare occasions we make exceptions to best meet the needs of our readers.

Authors may submit only one article at a time. This holds true whether they are the only author, or one of several. If authors have written several articles for submission, they must decide which one to submit first.

After the article has been reviewed, the author will be notified of its status. After receipt of this notification, the author may submit another article. **Thus, only one article per author can be under initial consideration and review at a time.**

Review and editing process

The *Young Children* review process generally takes six to eight months from receipt of a manuscript. The process is compressed for cluster articles. The schedule may vary according to the schedule of our reviewers, many of whom are on the academic calendar. The review and editing steps are explained in the following table.

	Description of the process	Time frame
1	**Initial reading.** Given the volume of articles we receive, not all articles can be sent out for review nor can we provide individual feedback on articles that are not reviewed. The editor in chief determines whether articles will go out for review. There are a number of reasons why articles are not sent out for review. Sometimes articles do not meet basic guidelines for content, writing style, length, or format. At times, the journal has a backlog of articles or has recently published an article on the same topic. In some cases, we receive a number of proposals for a cluster that address the same topic and age group. The editor in chief might recommend revising an article before it is considered for review by consulting editors.	12–16 weeks after receipt
2	**Peer review.** Articles that meet basic guidelines undergo peer review by members of NAEYC's Consulting Editors Panel. The reviewers provide comments and suggestions. NAEYC senior staff may also review articles.	16–20 weeks after receipt
3	**Decision.** Using all reviews as a guide, the editorial team determines one of the following as the next step: • Accept the article. • Ask the author to make revisions and resubmit it for further review (most articles require some revision) and possible acceptance. • Advise the author that the article is not accepted. The editor in chief notifies the author of the decision via e-mail. When necessary, this correspondence includes the reviewers' feedback and suggestions for enhancing the manuscript.	20–26 weeks after receipt
4	**Revision.** When authors submit revised articles, they must include a summary of what the author did to address the reviewers' feedback, through Manuscript Central.	Within 6 months of authors' receipt of decision e-mail

After revisions

Members of the editorial team read the revised manuscript, consider the author's responses to the reviewers' feedback and suggestions, and determine one of the following as the next step:

- Accept the article.
- Ask the author to make additional revisions.
- Advise the author that the manuscript still does not meet criteria for publication in *Young Children*.

From acceptance to print

It is not possible to determine in advance the exact publication dates of accepted articles (unless they are accepted for a particular cluster). When planning issues, the editorial team considers the content, style, intended audience, and length of articles, as well as articles' submission dates.

Authors are notified when their articles are scheduled for publication. They are asked to make updates and to complete biographies, copyright transfer, and photograph submission and credit forms.

Editing involves the editorial and copy editing teams. The copy editor returns the edited article to the author via e-mail for final approval before the manuscript enters production. On occasion, last-minute changes in an issue's content may cause publication of an article to be postponed.

Authors receive two copies of the issue in which their article appears.

Young Children Cluster Topics for 2012–2013

Issue Date	Cluster Topic	Proposals Due	Article Due Date
January 2012	Curriculum, Assessment, and Teaching: Putting It All Together	N/A	N/A
March 2012	Real Stories from Real Classrooms	N/A	N/A
May 2012	Technology and Young Children: New Tools and Strategies for Teachers and Learners	N/A	N/A
September 2012	Developmentally Appropriate Practice for Infants and Toddlers	Not accepting new submissions	N/A
November 2012	The Role of Relationships in Early Childhood Education	Not accepting new submissions	N/A
March 2013	Supporting Dual Language Learners and Their Families	Not accepting new submissions	N/A
May 2013	Individualizing in Early Childhood—the What, Why, and How of Differentiated Approaches	August 1, 2012	December 1, 2012
July 2013	Using Documentation and Assessment to Support Children's Learning	October 1, 2012	February 1, 2013
September 2013	Environments that Engage and Inspire Young Learners	December 1, 2012	April 1, 2013
November 2013	Positive Guidance in the Early Years: Using Developmentally Appropriate Strategies	February 1, 2013	June 1, 2013

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Writing

- Write in the active voice using plain language. This makes the text clearer for readers.
- Focus on references published within the last 10 years.

Formatting

- Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, double-spaced, and 1-inch margins.
- References and tables count toward the 12-page manuscript limit; visuals do not.
- In your cover letter, be sure to explain how one-third of the article is devoted to information for practitioners.
- Upload visuals separately from the manuscript. Don't paste photographs or work examples into the manuscript.

Cluster Proposal

- Include items a–f as described in the submissions guidelines.
- Keep the proposal to 2–3 pages.

Using Manuscript Central

- Upload your cover page, manuscript, and photographs as separate items.
- To submit a revision, click on the purple star that says "Click here to make a revision."
- When submitting a manuscript based on a proposal, submit it as a revision of the proposal.

Deadlines

- We hold fast to our submission deadlines for cluster proposals and articles. If you miss a cluster deadline, you can submit your article as a general article for a future issue.

The Review Process

- The editing process takes several months. Expect a decision approximately 6–8 months after submitting your manuscript.
- Track the progress of your manuscript in your Author Center in Manuscript Central. This will tell you if the manuscript is waiting to be sent out to reviewers, if it is waiting for reviewer scores, or if it is waiting for the editor in chief's decision.

Questions?

If you have any questions about cluster topics, submitting your manuscript, or Manuscript Central, please contact Mabel Yu at myu@naeyc.org or 202-232-8777, ext. 8417.