

# Submission Guidelines for *Young Children*

The Journal of the National Association  
for the Education of 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—approximately 70,000 members and subscribers—work with or on behalf of young children from birth through age 8 (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergartners, and primary school children). Members 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**
- Support **inclusion** of children with a range of abilities
- Show **respect for individual characteristics** such as gender, culture, ethnicity, and home language

Readers need information and ideas about adapting their practice to support children and families from diverse backgrounds, including dual language learners. For more information, see NAEYC's "A Guide for Writers on Addressing Linguistic and Cultural Differences" by Karen N. Nemeth at [www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/files/NAEYCWritingGuide\\_CulturalDifferences.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/files/NAEYCWritingGuide_CulturalDifferences.pdf).

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 for 3-year terms.

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## 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](http://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; early care and education; 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: An article proposal is not required, but see the “Formatting Requirements” section.) These articles address important issues for the early childhood community. The following are examples of the types of articles found in *Young Children*.

- Innovative, research-based teaching strategies. See example: [www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200503/O3korte.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200503/O3korte.pdf).
- Early childhood theories and research, along with recommended practices. See example: [www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200309/Planning&Reflection.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200309/Planning&Reflection.pdf).
- Specific issues affecting young children. See example: [www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200501/Smith.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200501/Smith.pdf).

**Cluster topic articles** (Note: An 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 4). For an example of a cluster article go to [www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201107/Self-Regulation\\_Florez\\_OnlineJuly2011.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/201107/Self-Regulation_Florez_OnlineJuly2011.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 describe the submission process for cluster articles.

**1. Article proposal submission.** 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. See the “Format” and “Cover Letter” sections.

**2. Proposal review.** Consulting editors and the *Young Children* editorial team review the proposals. Editors provide feedback approximately 8 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 also 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 5 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: [www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200507/O2Neuman.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200507/O2Neuman.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: [www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200309/DelayingKEntry.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200309/DelayingKEntry.pdf).

## Formatting requirements

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

### Length

All manuscripts **must** meet page-length requirements:

- General and cluster articles and Viewpoints are 3–12 pages, double-spaced, including references and tables. **Our readers find articles 3–9 pages in length most useful; 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) as well as specific work places/schools/program names do not appear on any page of the article; all manuscripts are subject to blind review.
- Use pseudonyms instead of children’s real names.
- Include headings and subheadings throughout the article.
- Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, double-spaced lines, and at least 1-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 of the article.
- Indicate the type of article (cluster topic, general, Viewpoint).
- List the name, affiliation, title, address, phone, fax, and email 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](http://www.m-w.com) or [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://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.

### Permissions

The following information concerns the author's obligation to obtain permissions.

#### Photographs

Prior to submission, the author must possess completed model release forms for any recognizable person appearing in the author's photos (signed by any adult who appears in the photo and by the legal guardian of any child who appears in the photo). If the author did not take the photos but submits them with the article, the author must confirm that she or he has the right to publish the photos and that the photographer possesses the necessary model releases.

One sample 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](http://www.naeyc.org/publications/forauthors/photoguidelines).

#### Quoted text

For use of outside visuals (e.g., figures, tables) and 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 email the *Young Children* editorial staff at [editorial@naeyc.org](mailto:editorial@naeyc.org).

With the exception of articles for clusters, articles are generally published 16 to 28 months after acceptance. **Authors may check the status of their submissions in Manuscript Central by logging in and clicking on the "Submitted Manuscripts" link on the left side of the dashboard.**

**Please note: Individuals may submit only 1 article within a 6-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 6–8 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 following are steps in our review and editing process.

#### 1. Initial reading (12–16 weeks after receipt)

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/chief publishing officer 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/chief publishing officer might recommend revising an article before it is reviewed by consulting editors.

#### 2. Peer review (16–26 weeks after receipt)

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.

#### 3. Decision (26–32 weeks after receipt)

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/chief publishing officer notifies the author of the decision via email. When necessary, this correspondence includes the reviewers' feedback and suggestions for enhancing the manuscript.

#### 4. Revision (within 6 months of authors' receipt of decision email)

When authors submit revised articles, they must include a summary of how they addressed the reviewers' feedback, through Manuscript Central.

**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 biography, 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 email 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 2015–2016**

Issue date	Cluster topic	Proposal due	Article due
March 2015	Blocks: Great Learning Tools From Infancy Through the Primary Grades	n/a	n/a
May 2015	Leadership: Supporting a New Generation of Early Childhood Professionals	n/a	n/a
July 2015	Social Studies: From a Sense of Self to a Sense of the World	n/a	n/a
September 2015	[Editor's Choice] It's Elementary! Supporting Literacy in the Primary Grades	n/a	n/a
November 2015	[Editor's Choice] Supporting the Educators Who Support Children and Families	n/a	n/a
March 2016	It Takes a Team: Collaborating With Colleagues in Related Fields	February 1, 2015	October 1, 2015
May 2016	Topics and Issues in Urban Education	August 1, 2015	December 1, 2015
July 2016	21st Century Teaching and Learning	October 1, 2015	February 1, 2016
September 2016	Ensuring Best Practice: Local, State, and Federal Quality Improvement Initiatives	December 1, 2015	April 1, 2016

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**Submission Quick Tips****Writing**

- Write in the active voice using plain language. This makes the text clearer for readers.
- Cite references published within the last 10 years unless they are seminal works.

**Formatting**

- Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, double-spaced, and 1-inch margins.
- Include references and tables as part of the 12-page manuscript limit; visuals are not part of this limit.
- Explain in your cover letter 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 submission guidelines.
- Keep the proposal to 2–3 pages.

**Using Manuscript Central**

- Upload your cover page, manuscript, and photographs as separate items.
- Submit a revision by clicking on the purple star with the text, "Click here to make a revision."
- Submit a manuscript based on a proposal 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 final 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, for reviewer scores, or for a decision from the editor in chief/chief publishing officer.

**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.

**Interested in writing for other NAEYC publications?**

Review our author guidelines for Books, For Families website, *Teaching Young Children*, and *Voices of Practitioners*, available at [www.naeyc.org/publications](http://www.naeyc.org/publications).