Child Development Submission Guidelines

*Child Development* invites for consideration manuscripts that are neither identical to nor substantially similar to work published or under review elsewhere. Editors retain the right to reject manuscripts that do not meet established ethical standards for research or dissemination.

1. **Types of Manuscripts**
2. **English Language Editing Services**
3. **Ethics and Integrity**
   - Sociocultural Policy
4. **Formatting Requirements**
   - Format and Style
   - Page Limits
   - Manuscript Structure
   - Abstracts
   - References
   - Figures
   - Footnotes/Endnotes
   - Blinding
   - APA Style Reminders
   - Note: Online Supplementary Materials
5. **Additional Requirements**
   - Prior Publication/Preprints
   - Methodological Recommendations
   - Characterization of Studies on a Continuum from Purely Confirmatory to Purely Exploratory
6. **Manuscript Submission and Review Process**
   - Submission Site
Types of Manuscripts

*Child Development* considers manuscripts in the formats described below. Inquiries concerning alternative formats should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief prior to submission. Most submissions (see below) are expected to be no more than 40 manuscript pages, including tables, references, and figures (but excluding appendices). With the exception noted below, if the submission is more than 40 pages, it will be returned to the author for shortening prior to editorial review. Note that we encourage extensive use of electronic supplements that do not count toward the page limit.

**Empirical Articles** comprise the major portion of the journal. To be accepted, empirical articles must be judged as being high in scientific quality, contributing to the empirical base of child development, and having important theoretical, practical, and/or interdisciplinary implications. Reports of multiple studies, methods, or settings are encouraged, but single-study reports are also considered. Empirical Articles will thus vary considerably in length, but should be no longer than 40 manuscript pages; text and graphics should be as concise as material permits. All modes of empirical research are welcome.

**Brief Reports** are reserved for short, cutting-edge empirical papers that are no longer than 4,000 words in length (including body text, tables, appendices, etc. but excluding references and electronic supplements), which advance research and knowledge in an area through noteworthy findings and/or new methods.

**Reviews** focus on past empirical and/or conceptual and theoretical work. They are expected to synthesize, analyze, and/or critically evaluate a topic or issue relevant to child development, should appeal to a broad
audience, and may be followed by a small number of solicited commentaries. A large majority of the reviews accepted for publication at *Child Development* are meta-analyses or invited narrative reviews. Quantitative meta-analyses may be up to 50 pages in length to accommodate sample-specific detail.

**Special Section** is a format in which papers on a focal topic, written by different authors, are published simultaneously. In some cases, calls for submissions on particular topics will be disseminated through the SRCD (via e-mail or SRCD publications), and submissions will undergo normal editorial review. In some cases, a submitted manuscript (e.g., an Empirical Article) may be selected as a lead article for this format, with invited commentaries providing additional perspectives. The editors also welcome suggestions from readers for topics for this format.

**Commentaries** are peer-reviewed papers that respond to previously published *Child Development* papers. The original paper’s authors have the option to submit a follow-up Commentary in response. Authors must note the paper of reference title, author list and, when available, DOI on the cover page at submission and cover letter. Paper titles are also set as “Commentary: [paper title].”

**English Language Editing Services**

Authors have the option, but are not required, to use the services noted below to translate or proofread their text pre-submission. This option may be particularly helpful to non-native English speakers. Please note that this list is not exhaustive, and SRCD does not endorse – and is not responsible for the quality of – any product or service mentioned.

- Alba Editing
- American Journal Experts
- AuthorAID
- Editage
- INLEXIO
- International Science Editing
- ScienceDocs
- SPi Global
Ethics and Integrity

- Ethical Standards for Research with Children
- Policy on Scientific Integrity, Transparency, and Openness
- Author Guidelines on Scientific Integrity and Openness in Child Development

Sociocultural Policy

As developmental science becomes more global, and the role of context in human development becomes more evident, it is necessary that SRCD publications provide, in addition to age, an indication of the unique characteristics of the sample and the “socioeconomic and cultural place” from which their findings originate. Accordingly, it is now required that manuscripts to be published in SRCD journals specify clearly in the appropriate section(s) (e.g., Method, Discussion) and in an abbreviated form in the Abstract: (1) the dates of data collection (if applicable); (2) the theoretically relevant characteristics of the particular sample studied, for example, but not limited to: race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language, sexual orientation, gender identity (inclusive of non-binary options), religion, generation, family characteristics; and (3) the place(s) from which that sample was drawn, including country, region, city, neighborhood, school, etc. and all other context variables that are relevant to the focus of the publication, except when it violates expectations of privacy and confidentiality by an institutional review board or the setting itself. Additionally, selection and recruitment procedures should be clearly specified in the Method section.

The Sociocultural Policy is the product of a recognition that current policies and practices were not reflecting the state of the scholarship in terms of addressing diversity and replicability. As such, the Sociocultural Policy reflects current gaps in the science and is a dynamic policy. The Society will conduct ongoing reviews and re-evaluations of the Sociocultural Policy’s effectiveness over time and its efficacy in advancing the Society’s strategic goals. The Sociocultural Policy, procedures, and rationale will be revisited on a biannual basis to reflect changing demographics, an increasingly global society, and relevant contemporary issues.

**Note for Child Development authors:** In the adjudication of manuscripts, sociocultural generalizability or its absence will not be assumed on the basis of the demographic characteristics of a single sample. Instead,
because sociocultural generalizability of scientific findings (or the lack thereof) is necessarily a product of direct comparisons across demographically diverse samples, *Child Development* encourages manuscripts reporting explicit comparisons of two or more groups to explore generalizability of key developmental phenomena, even if the focal phenomenon is generally regarded as well established in one cultural or other context. (Note that this should not be misconstrued as implying that *Child Development* does not publish studies based on single racial/ethnic groups, as the journal does publish such studies.) In addition, the editorial board of *Child Development* expects that the default position for quantitative (i.e., meta-analytic) reviews will be to include tabled information briefly describing key demographic features of the studies synthesized, along with explicit, even if exploratory examination of such key demographics (i.e., sex and ethnicity/race) as study-level moderators of the focal associations of interest. (This table, which should also minimally include effect size and reliability data for focal measures for each sample, may appear in supplementary, electronic materials.)

**Back to Top**

**Formatting Requirements**

The following points are requested of all papers submitted to *Child Development* and are required for any paper ultimately accepted for publication. Failure to comply with these requirements may lead to delays in processing, review, or publication. Failure to comply may also lead to the manuscript being returned to you for revision.

**Format and Style**

*Child Development* requires that all documents be submitted as Microsoft Word files (.doc or .docx; exceptions may be made by contacting the SRCD Editorial Office).

In addition, all manuscripts **must** align with APA Style rules including:

- Double-spacing throughout (abstract, body text, references)
- Using 12-point, Times New Roman font
- 1-inch margins
- When providing racial or ethnic designations, please follow APA's language guidelines. See the
Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2001, pp. 75–76). Use initial capital letters (i.e., Black and White instead of black and white). Do not use the term Caucasian when describing Whites or people of European descent.

Page Limits

40 pages for Empirical Articles and Reviews, inclusive of everything aside from electronic supplementary materials. The reference list is included in the 40-page total, and may be 8 pages at most. (Quantitative meta-analyses may be up to 50 pages in length).

4,000 words for Empirical Reports, excluding title page, abstract, and references, but inclusive of body text, tables, figures, and appendices.

Manuscript Structure

Empirical Articles and Reports must have the following major sections (other article types may vary):

- Introduction (but not labeled as such)
- Method
- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Tables and Figures

The Method section must include participant demographic information, such as sex, SES, race or ethnicity, recruitment method, etc.

Abstracts

- Must be 120 words or fewer
- Include participants' numerical age
- Include total number of participants (Ns)
- Should generally report the focal effect size(s), as appropriate
- Must be written in the third person, not first person
References

- Do not exceed 8 pages
- Are cited both in the body text and on the reference list
- Are listed in alphabetical order by authors' surname
- Include the DOI # when available

Figures

Color figures publish online for free, but there is a $325 cost to print in color. More technical information on images (accepted file types, image quality, etc.) is available at Wiley-Blackwell Author Services.

Footnotes and Endnotes

*Child Development* does **NOT** publish footnotes or endnotes of any kind. All such notes must be incorporated into the body text.

Blinding

*Child Development* uses a double-blind reviewing procedure. Please ensure any information that might identify authors is either removed or sufficiently masked.

Information such as the author list, affiliations, acknowledgements, etc. should be removed from the main manuscript file and uploaded as a separate Title Page file during submission.

In-text references to any work by the authors should be referred to in the third person to mask the authors' identities (for example: "We have shown in previous work that children...(Martin, 2011)" should instead be written as "It has been shown in previous work that children...(Martin, 2011)").

APA Style Reminders

The following are reminders of often forgotten points of APA style. However, ultimately it is the author’s responsibility to comply with APA regulations. Failure to follow APA rules may lead to delays in the production process and the publication of your manuscript.

**Sexism**

Avoid sexist language; use plural phrases such as "children and their toys" rather than "a child and his toy." Refrain from referring to children with "it."

**Figures**

Please keep figures as clear and simple as possible. For example, do not use a three-dimensional bar graph unless you are presenting data along three dimensions. Be sure that labels are large enough to be visible when the figure is reduced in size. Remember to provide figure numbers and captions separately, not on the figure itself. Individual figures must be in EPS, PDF, PNG, or TIFF format, with resolution of at least 300 dpi.

"Relationship" vs. "Relation"

These are not interchangeable. "Relationship" is used to describe a social bond, such as between a mother and a child, a teacher and a child, etc. "Relation" is used to describe non-animate associations, including those between variables.

**Uses of Slash (/)**

Uses of slash in the abstract and body text must be avoided. Examples include "and/or," his/her," etc. "His/her" can (and should) be written as "his or her." Slashes may be used in references, tables, and figures. Slashes may also be used when citing previously written material, such as including in the paper a test question that was used with participants.

**Note: Online Supplementary Materials**

*Child Development* is able to host supplementary materials to articles published in the journal on its Wiley Online Library website. The current editorial team has been encouraging authors to take advantage of this
resource as a way to cut the amount of material included in print articles and to provide additional information to interested readers. As such, we are urging authors to look critically at their manuscripts to find information that could potentially be moved online. Examples of such materials include extra tables, figures, or appendices; test questions or other test materials; videos of experiments taking place; or additional data sets from meta-analyses. For Wiley's guidelines for online supporting materials please see http://olabout.wiley.com/WileyCDA/Section/id-828014.html.

Additional Requirements

Prior Publication/Preprints

Submitted manuscripts must not have been published elsewhere. In general, preprints (e.g., on a departmental website, on PsyArXiv) will not count as prior publication. However, if the document has a copyright license (including Creative Commons), or any other constraints on editing or publication of the work, this information must be disclosed and addressed in the cover letter. **It is the responsibility of authors to provide sufficient information about publicly available versions of the manuscript to allow editors to make informed decisions about prior publication.**

Please note that once a manuscript is accepted for publication, SRCD policy requires that any previous versions be labeled as “drafts” or “working papers.” There must be some designation indicating that those documents are not “the version of record.” If restrictions on prior versions preclude editing to add this designation, SRCD will likely be unable to accept the submission.

Methodological Recommendations
In an effort to further *Child Development’s* tradition of publishing rigorous research, we previously announced methodological author recommendations to support the production of accessible and reproducible, high-quality research without excluding innovative hypothesis-generating inquiry. To satisfy these recommendations, we ask that authors address sample recruitment and selection, data collection and coding, descriptive statistical information, and model misspecification in the body of their manuscripts or as online supplements. View the full descriptions of the recommendations and further information.

**Characterization of Studies on a Continuum from Purely Confirmatory to Purely Exploratory**

As implied in the Methodological Recommendations described immediately above, published reports in *Child Development* lie on a continuum between more exploratory, “discovery” science and more confirmatory hypothesis testing. However, locating a given contribution on that continuum can be difficult for even the most informed reader. Submitting authors to *Child Development* are expected to clearly and affirmatively describe in their manuscripts to what degree the analyses presented represent a relatively exploratory versus confirmatory effort, and in what ways. For example, pre-registered reports of large, well-defined samples that involve point or point-like predictions are more confirmatory whereas research in a novel domain with smaller samples and with non-directional hypotheses or perhaps with no initial hypotheses are more exploratory.

Authors should consider carefully the exploratory versus confirmatory nature of what they are presenting, and, indeed, whether the nominally significant results highlighted in their manuscripts are consistent with sampling error. These affirmative statements will signal to readers:

1. how much excitement is warranted about a focal result given
2. the degree of confidence that the authors express that their work is confirmatory and therefore should be considered as an especially strong target for replication efforts.

Back to Top

**Manuscript Submission and Review Process**

**How to Submit**
Manuscripts should be submitted online through the *Child Development* ScholarOne Portal.

Submit to *Child Development*

Full instructions and support are available on the site and a user ID and password can be obtained on the first visit. If for some reason you cannot submit online, please contact the SRCD Editorial Office by telephone (202-800-0668) or by e-mail (cdev@srcd.org).

Cover letter

Please include a cover letter that contains the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the author(s), and the street address, telephone, fax, e-mail address of the corresponding author. Please also provide details about other published or submitted papers having substantial overlap (including data sets) with the new *Child Development* submission to enable editors to judge whether the new submission is sufficiently distinct from other work. Please also consider suggesting an Associate Editor to process your manuscript in the cover letter; note, it is not always possible to honor such requests.

**Corresponding Author Responsibilities**

A corresponding author's submission to *Child Development* implies that all coauthors have agreed to the content and form of the manuscript and that the ethical standards of the SRCD have been followed (see the SRCD website or pp. 283–284 of the 2000 SRCD Directory). Any financial interest or conflict of interest must be explained in the cover letter. The corresponding author is responsible for informing all coauthors of manuscript submission, editorial decisions, reviews, and revisions.

Manuscript Review

*Child Development* conducts a double-blind review process. Each manuscript is handled by the Editor-in-Chief or an Associate Editor who consults with one or more Consulting Editors and/or ad hoc reviewers who have relevant expertise. Cover sheets are removed before review to ensure blind review; authors should avoid including any other information about identity or affiliation in submissions. Copies of the submission and associated correspondence are retained in the SRCD archives.
Prior to formal assignment to an Associate Editor, the Editor-in-Chief, in consultation with members of the Editorial Board, will determine whether a submitted manuscript is likely to be competitive for publication in the journal. Desk rejection is a common outcome for manuscripts submitted to the journal, which speeds up feedback to authors and creates fewer burdens for reviewers. Studies based on underrepresented groups and/or drawn from diverse populations will be regarded as strong candidates to advance to further consideration by an Associate Editor.

Manuscripts that pass through an initial review by the Editor-in-Chief (which will generally take no longer than 1 week) are assigned to an Associate Editor, who will in turn generally invite 2-3 consultants who have pertinent areas of expertise to review the manuscript. Authors are encouraged to recommend possible reviewers during the submission process, but this is neither required nor are the editors required to abide by the recommendations. Associate Editors also reserve the right to desk reject a manuscript they regard as not competitive for publication in the journal.

Once the Associate Editor receives the requested number of reviews they will make an editorial decision in part based on the reviews and reviewer recommendations, along with their own editorial judgement. The Associate Editor’s decision letter, and accompanying reviews, are blinded and processed by the SRCD Editorial Office staff. These materials are then sent to the authors and all reviewers who contributed to the review process.

Consistent with the recently adopted Author Guidelines on Scientific Integrity and Openness for Publishing in Child Development: (a) providing data and/or code used to produce a manuscript published in Child Development to other researchers who wish to reproduce those findings or include them in a meta-analysis is strongly encouraged and (b) information about whether an author intends to share data and/or code post-publication will be collected post-acceptance, prior to publication. Whether or not authors agree to make data available and/or make their analytic methods (e.g., code) available post-publication, however, will not affect the review/acceptance decision. Nonetheless, at Child Development the action editors reserve the right to independently determine whether it is necessary for an author to provide data and/or code pre-publication to reviewers and/or the action editor in order for the Editor-in-Chief or Associate Editor to render a decision on a manuscript.

Child Development strives to deliver decisions within 60 days of submission. However, given the nature of
the review process turnaround times may vary. If you have any questions about your submission, please inquire at cdev@srcd.org or call (202) 800-0668.

Submissions to Child Development by current Associate Editors and the Editor-in-Chief are handled independently by a Special Associate Editor.

Conflicts of Interest and the Review Process

Child Development takes conflicts of interest (COIs) very seriously. COIs arise when scholars are asked to review papers of which their opinions could be biased. In order to avoid any COIs in the manuscript review process, we ask that authors NOT recommend as a reviewer any person who:

- Is a close personal friend of any of the authors
- Works in the same department or school as any of the authors
- Has recently collaborated with any of the authors on projects or publications (this includes members of the authors' dissertation committees)
- Was a recent Ph.D. student advised by any of the authors
- Has any other relationship with the authors that could bias their opinion of the submitted manuscript

We also ask that anyone invited to review a manuscript inform the SRCD Editorial Office if they believe they have a conflict of interest. If you have any questions about potential COIs, please contact the SRCD Editorial Office (cdev@srcd.org).

Back to Top

Accepted Manuscript and Publication Information

Pre-Accept Process

All papers approaching acceptance are returned to authors at Accept/Revise for author paperwork and final minor changes to manuscripts. At this stage, authors will be required to run StatCheck on their manuscripts (a free, easy to use, web-based version is available at StatCheck.io). Authors will also be required to affirm in the updated cover letter to the Associate Editor that that the revised manuscript has no inconsistent $p$-
values as detected by StatCheck. Authors are provided the Conflict of Interest and Public Summary forms when their paper is returned. Papers cannot move forward from this stage without completed forms. **NOTE: Completion of forms and an Accept/Revise decision does not guarantee acceptance.**

**Publication Process**

**Full Accepted Manuscript Requirements**

When a manuscript is accepted, authors will be asked to submit a final version and accompanying materials via the submission portal to the SRCD Editorial Office. These materials include:

- A final version of the manuscript that follows all requirements listed in the Publication Checklist.
- The main text as a Microsoft Word document with figures and tables removed and notes in-text stating where they should appear on publication ([Table 1 goes here])
- Individual high-resolution figure files as EPS, TIFF, or PDFs clearly labeled
- Individual table files as Microsoft Word documents clearly labeled

Once the above materials have been received the paper will be scheduled to be sent to our publisher Wiley-Blackwell for typesetting and proofing. It will then publish online to W-B’s Early View system, with print publication to follow (articles for special sections and issues typically do **not** publish to Early View).

**Note to NIH Grantees**

Pursuant to NIH mandate, the SRCD through Wiley-Blackwell will post the accepted version of contributions authored by NIH grant holders to PubMed Central upon acceptance. This accepted version will be made publicly available 12 months after publication. For further information, see [www.wiley.com/go/nihmandate](http://www.wiley.com/go/nihmandate).

**SRCD Policy on Media Embargo Dates**

**iThenticate Notification**

Powered by Turnitin’s text comparison tool iThenticate, CrossRef’s Similarity Check enables the SRCD Editorial Office to assess the originality of all submitted manuscripts. iThenticate finds and reports overlaps in text through the use of text-searching algorithms, checking a document against an extensive database of
published scholarly writing. Its reports highlight material that matches documents in the iThenticate database and their percentage of similarity. The reports allow editors to judge the appropriateness of any substantial overlap between documents, which can range from authors using identical language across manuscripts to report precise details of methods to more concerning cases of recycling text.

For more information, please see the Committee on Publication Ethics' Text Recycling Guidelines: https://publicationethics.org/text-recycling-guidelines.

Back to Top