Reviewer Guidelines for Child Development

The editors of *Child Development* strive for rapid and thoughtful publication of articles devoted to topics in child development ranging from the fetal period through late adolescence. Our editors expect detailed comments from reviewers assessing both the strengths and weaknesses of the manuscript. Although an editor may ask you to focus on particular areas for a given manuscript, generally you should consider the following:

- Does the study make a substantive (i.e. more than incremental) contribution to the literature?
- How well does the introduction frame the study empirically and theoretically, and does it justify all of its aspects?
- Do the authors present a sound conceptual framework, clear hypotheses and appropriately describe the methodology?
- How adequate are the methods for testing the hypothesis/hypotheses and answering the research questions?
- Do you have concerns about the empirical analysis that can be addressed with the available data? That cannot be addressed with the available data?
- How are the results integrated back into theory and previous studies, even recognizing the manuscript's limitations?
- What is your overall assessment of the study in terms of further consideration for potential publication in *Child Development*?

In addition, all *Child Development* manuscripts are expected to conform to four policies:

1. **Sociocultural Policy**. Although *Child Development* previously required the reporting of participant ages, gender and race/ethnicity, further relevant information such as participants' socioeconomic

status, language, family characteristics, specific location information, etc. is required.

2. **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. Please review the Author Guidelines on Scientific Integrity and Openness in Child Development.
3. **Characterization of Studies on a Continuum from Purely Confirmatory to Purely Exploratory**. 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.

Although we expect reviewers to be highly critical in their assessment, we strive to provide authors with useful, constructive feedback, **and will not accept offensive or insulting comments**. We expect both our editors and reviewers to not only serve as gatekeepers for our journal but to also provide a constructive and positive experience for the authors (many of whom are international or early career researchers), even if a paper is ultimately rejected. To this end we reserve the right to lightly edit any such offensive language while seeking to preserve the reviewer's assessment.

Though we try to identify manuscripts whose writing and style seriously interfere with clarity, some submissions will not be in the best possible English and/or may not perfectly adhere to APA style at first submission due to the international scope of the journal. If the work is accepted for publication, the author(s) will be required to improve the expression and format to an acceptable level.

Please **DO NOT**:

- Make publication recommendations in your review (Comments to the Author). Only make any such recommendations in the Comments to the Editor area.
- Sign your review or include identifying information unless it is your explicit preference that the author know your identity. Please note that our review procedure default is double-blind.

- Insult the authors when critiquing their work. Obviously offensive comments will not be tolerated.

Again, our office reserves the right to lightly edit reviews to comply with the above points.

- **Acceptance Rate:** *Child Development* has an acceptance rate of approximately 17%. We encourage you to bring a critical eye to every submission and ask yourself: "Is this something that meets the high standards of *Child Development*?"
- **Due Dates:** It is important to us to provide feedback to our authors as quickly as possible, so we ask that reviews be submitted within three weeks of assignment. Limited deadline extensions can be requested in certain circumstances.
- **Length:** We trust reviewers to use their judgment in terms of the length of reviews. A typical review is anywhere from a few paragraphs to 2-3 pages in length. Most reviewers give an overview of the paper, along with a more detailed analysis of certain issues, followed by a summary of their impressions and what might be done to improve the paper.
- **Student Reviewers:** We require all reviewers to hold doctoral credentials. However, we welcome and encourage student reviews conducted under the supervision of an established researcher. If you would like a graduate student to assist with your review, or if you are a student and would like to review with a mentor, please send a request to our office (cdev@srcd.org). We ask for careful supervision of these student reviewers in order to assure quality work.

Below you will find more thorough descriptions of what we look for in various submission categories. Thank you very much for sharing your expertise with *Child Development*. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to contact us at cdev@srcd.org.

Student Reviewers

Student Reviewers. Although journal reviewers must hold doctoral credentials, graduate student reviews conducted under the supervision of an established (PhD) researcher are welcome and encouraged. Please contact the CD editorial office (cdev@srcd.org)if you would like a graduate student to assist with your review, or if you are a student interested in reviewing with a mentor. We ask for careful supervision of student reviewers in order to assure quality work.

Students and research supervisors must be paired prior to reviewer invitations, and invitations are extended based on editor need and discretion. Supervising co-reviwers must also hold a doctoral degree in a subject-area appropriate to the student's expertise. Student and supervising reviewers are responsible for observing

reviewer guidelines when conducting their review. Please see journal Reviewer Guidelines for full requirements."

Article Types

Empirical Articles

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

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

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 Sections

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

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]".

Registered Reports

Registered Reports are an empirical article in which the conceptualization, methods, and proposed analyses are pre-registered and reviewed prior to data collection and/or analysis being conducted. This format is designed to minimize bias in deductive science, while also allowing flexibility to conduct exploratory (unregistered) analyses and report serendipitous findings. The cornerstone of the Registered Reports format is that the manuscript will be assessed prior to data collection, with the highest quality submissions accepted in advance. Initial submissions will include a description of the key research question and background literature, hypotheses, study design and procedures, analysis pipeline, a statistical power analysis or other sample size rationale, and full description of planned confirmatory data analyses. Pilot data (where applicable) may also be included.