

## Author Guidelines for Submissions to *NCFR Report*

### The mission of *NCFR Report*

*NCFR Report* is a quarterly magazine for members designed to encourage member-to-member dialogue. Through *Report*, National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) builds our community by reporting on people, events, and organizational news.

Each *Report* issue includes a Family Focus section addressing a “theme” that informs colleagues about research and its applications for practitioners and policy professionals. Past Family Focus themes and articles published in each issue can be accessed at [www.ncfr.org/ncfr-report/focus](http://www.ncfr.org/ncfr-report/focus).

### Submission and acceptance

Each issue of Family Focus is centered around a specific theme. If you have a recommendation for a themed issue, please contact the Family Focus Editor at [reporteditor@ncfr.org](mailto:reporteditor@ncfr.org).

Once themes are determined, a call for proposed articles will be shared with NCFR members and posted [online](#). NCFR members interested in contributing an article to Family Focus must submit their proposal [online](#) by the specified due date noted below. If you have questions about the article you would like to propose please contact the Family Focus Editor at [reporteditor@ncfr.org](mailto:reporteditor@ncfr.org) (or the Guest Editors, when applicable).

Below is a general schedule for when Family Focus is released, around when the proposals are due, and when articles must be submitted (pending acceptance). Actual proposal due dates will be posted [online](#). Final article submission due dates will be provided by the Family Focus Editor through email correspondence with the author.

Issue Release	Proposals Due	First Draft of Article Due	Final Article Due
Spring issue: March	Early-October	Late-November	Early-January
Summer issue: June	Early-December	Late-January	Late-March
Fall issue: September	Early-March	Late-April	Mid-June
Winter issue: December	Early-May	Late-June	Late-August

Articles accepted for publication will be edited using standard editorial practice, and given priority based on a) relevance to the Family Focus theme, b) how articles form a complementary collection, and c) brevity due to space limitations. Note that when articles cover very similar content and are of equal quality, priority will be given by date of receipt. Authors are notified as to whether the article is accepted.

The contents of Family Focus articles represent the views of their author(s) which may not represent the views of the entire organization.

## Writing style and article content

Family Focus has a goal of sharing translational Family Science with NCFR members. Authors are expected to describe scholarly research in an easy-to-read format and present clear implications for practice and/or family policy based on the scholarly research. All articles need to be clearly grounded in peer-reviewed, published research and/or theory.

Family Focus does not publish original research. In other words, Family Focus is not an outlet for authors to publish new research findings. The peer-reviewed, published research that is referenced in the article does not necessarily have to be from the contributing author. Authors are encouraged to integrate findings from their own research, but it must have already been peer-reviewed and previously published. Work that has been previously shared at a conference, may be considered.

If you are a practitioner, it is appropriate (and encouraged) to refer to examples of one's own experience with clients to reinforce or illustrate the translation of published research from others. When sharing your experiences, it is important to clearly connect it to (and cite) related research and/or theory.

The focus of your article should align with what was proposed and subsequently approved by the Editor. Should you find a need to deviate from your proposal, please consult with the Editor first to ensure the proposed changes still align with the needs of the Family Focus issue.

## Elements in a Family Focus article

In writing your article, try to accomplish the following objectives:

- Describe scholarly research in a translational, easy-to-read format.
- Present implications for practice and/or family policy based on the scholarly research discussed.
- Use an authoritative writing style with a clear foundation in empirical research and theory, not opinions or speculation.
- Be engaging — small, relevant stories can be used occasionally.

Articles are approximately **1600 words**, including title, author information, and references. Every article must include the following:

1. Brief title that concisely and accurately represents the main focus of the article and that grabs the reader's attention. The title of the article should be no longer than 15 words maximum and 125 characters and spaces.
2. Complete information for EACH author following the title, including: Name (as you would like it to appear in the publication), credentials (e.g., PhD, CFLE), position, and affiliation (if at a University, include department and University). Provide the email for first author only.
3. 3-4 short summary "In Brief" bulleted statements (50 words max) after the author(s) information and prior to the article that provide a "hook" for the reader and brief summary of the article. Each statement should be concise and clearly connected to a key theme of the article.
4. The body of the article should be written concisely (about 1500 words maximum) and include:
  - a) An opening paragraph (or two paragraphs max) that introduces the reader to the topic and clearly connects to the theme of the issue.
  - b) Brief subheadings (about 2-4 words) that clearly represent the main focus of each section of the article.
  - c) An implications section (clearly labeled) that outlines recommendations for research, practice and/or policy based on the scholarly work described in the article. If you decide to integrate implications

throughout the article, provide clear transitions between your summary of the research and your recommendations.

- d) A concluding paragraph that summarizes the key point(s) of the article and clearly connects back to the theme of the issue.
5. Empirical citations are expected in the text. At the conclusion of the article:
- a) Use the following heading, “**Selected References**,” followed by a list of 3-5 of the most important scholarly references cited in the article.
  - b) Follow this with the heading “**Complete References**” and list all of the references cited (including those under “Selected References”).
  - c) The selected references will be included in the print version of the article, and the complete references will be included in the online published version.

Rarely is there room for graphs or charts in print. When supporting graphs or charts are helpful in explaining the research — including videos of authors discussing the research — these valuable resources can be included online. Discuss ideas with the editor.

## References

1. In-text references and all references listed under Selected References and Complete References should be provided in APA 7 formatting.
2. It can be acceptable to allude to well-known and replicated research without specific attribution (e.g., “multiple researchers have found that...”). Be cautious about assumptions regarding what is well-known, however.
3. Obtain written permission to use any quotations or excerpts from another work not in the public domain or covered by “fair use” provisions of the U.S. Copyright Law. Proper acknowledgement should be given for such use of the materials in this new work.

## Formatting

1. Follow APA 7 guidelines when writing, unless directed otherwise.
2. Submit articles in 12-point Times New Roman font using Microsoft Word. Insert page numbers.
3. Sub-headers should be concise, convey critical messages yet catch the reader’s attention.
4. The article should be single-spaced, left justified, and have one space between paragraphs. Do not indent the first line of the paragraph. Use one space after periods.
5. The author byline should appear at the top of the file and should include the author’s name, credentials (e.g., Ph.D., CFLE, MFT, etc), position title, employer, and the first author’s email. Capitalize position title and employer; use a lowercase for ‘doctoral candidate’ or ‘student.’ Use a comma to separate pieces of author information (e.g., name, credentials, position title, etc.). Use a semicolon to separate authors from different employers. Use ‘and’ to separate authors from the same employer.
6. Eliminate any word-processor formatting, (i.e. no page breaks, no “tracking changes,” columns, etc).
7. Use bullets with lists rather than em dashes. Bulleted lists should contain 5 – 7 completed thoughts (avoid 1- or 2-word items).
8. Use letters [a), b), c)] rather than numbers [1), 2), 3)] when providing a list.
9. Use ‘et al.’ to list three or more authors each time the reference is cited.
10. Spell out acronyms the first time they are used.
11. Avoid redundancy.
12. Watch for correct use of singular and plural verbs in sentences and subject/verb agreement.

13. Capitalize the first word and proper nouns in headers and sub-headers.
14. Use hyphens rather than en dashes. Use em dashes when additional comments — such as this — are added into a sentence. The em dash can take the place of a parenthesis and be used for a hard break or dramatic pause. Use a space on each side of the em dash.
15. Use the word ‘to’ when connecting numerical ranges such as 3 to 5.
16. Write out numbers one through nine, unless referring to age.
17. Use the percent sign (%) when providing a specific percent (33%).
18. Spell out United States as a noun and use U.S. as an adjective.
19. Note that America and American refer to continents, not a single country. Please clarify the use of America and American.
20. Capitalize Family Science and Family Life Education.
21. Use Family Science rather than family studies.
22. Family Science is a discipline rather than a field.
23. No marketing of author’s products is allowed.

## **Submit your article**

Save your article as Microsoft Word file (no PDF files, please), and email it to the Family Focus Editor at [reporteditor@ncfr.org](mailto:reporteditor@ncfr.org). In the subject heading of your email, include “Family Focus [ISSUE; e.g., Spring 2021] Article.”

## **Article editing**

The editor may edit and a copy editor will perform copy editing to prepare the article for publication—including possible changes in the title, style, and format to conform to editorial usage, format of the magazine, and NCFR style. Changes may include last-minute deletions as necessary to meet the requirements of space and format. If there are large or substantive changes needed, the Editor will contact you.

## **Photos**

Authors whose articles are accepted for publication will be asked to provide a current headshot photo to be printed with their article. When asked, please send a high-resolution jpeg photo (preferably 1MB or larger) as a separate attachment (not pasted into a Word document or email). Do not copy and paste or submit a photo lifted from a web page; these generally are not suitable for print reproduction. *If there are more than four contributing authors to the article, only photos for the first four authors will be printed.*

## **Copyright information**

Authors are asked to sign a copyright agreement if their article is accepted for publication. That form specifically transfers full and complete copyright ownership of the article to NCFR. Authors agree to refer to NCFR all requests to republish or reprint the whole or any part of the work. NCFR will respect the wishes of the author as to the use of their writings to the extent it is consistent with NCFR’s purposes and goals. If any of the writings are republished or reprinted for the author’s use, no fee will be assessed. Authors may reprint articles for their own use.

## **Questions?**

Contact the NCFR Family Focus Editor at [reporteditor@ncfr.org](mailto:reporteditor@ncfr.org) for information.