



**Early Childhood  
Australia**  
A voice for young children

# WRITING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA

**ECA Conference 2014**

Pam Linke, Judy Radich, Alison Elliott & Jackie Brien

# Publications Committee

- Pam Linke (Chair)
- Alison Elliot (Editor, Every Child)
- Margaret Sims (Editor, AJEC)
- Jackie Brien (Deputy Editor, Every Child)
- Judy Radich
- Carmel Richardson
- Christopher Jones, Publications and Studio Manager
- Julie Rutups (Board member)
- Sam Page (CEO) and Ros Cornish (National President)

# ECA Publications and Studio

- Located in ECA's Head Office in Canberra
- ECA Publications and Studio team manage, edit, design and oversee the production the publications for ECA
- Christopher Jones—Publications and Studio Manager
- Tara Corcoran and Bec Mills—Publishing Editors
- Clair McDonald and Anna Nguyen—Graphic Designers

# Early Childhood Australia Publications

- Introductions
- *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood (AJEC)*
- *Every Child* magazine
- *Research in Practice Series*
- *Everyday Learning Series*
- *Voice* newsletter
- *ECA WebWatch* e-newsletter
- Special titles (when required)



# ECA Publications Roles

- Publishing & Marketing Section (ECA Office)—manage publications process, marketing of ECA and external titles
- Publications Committee—overview of quality assurance, network authors, reviewers, marketing advice etc.
- Publications Editors—ensure quality and content for specific publications
- Reviewers—quality assurance and relevance

# Submissions—an overview

- Authors are given an ECA agreement form stating that they have made a commitment to ECA to take on their particular role. The form outlines expectations to meet (e.g. deadlines, ECA style etc.) and states that authors must notify ECA if they are unable to fulfill this agreement.
- Any photographs provided by authors must be high-quality (300dpi) for printing purposes and must not be pasted into other file formats, e.g. Word docs etc.
- Scripts submitted undergo a review process before publication is agreed.

# Australasian Journal of Early Childhood

Purpose of AJEC:

- A leading Australian early childhood scholarly journal
- To encourage the critical exchange of ideas in the field
- To support the professionalisation of early childhood across Australasia

Jackie Brien



# Australasian Journal of Early Childhood

## Audience:

- Practitioners, academics and students in the early childhood field or related fields from across Australia and the world

## Distribution methods:

- Hardcopy
- Online

Jackie Brien



# Australasian Journal of Early Childhood

Three article categories:

- Primary research (3000-6000 words)
- Research notes (1000-3000 words)
- Commentaries (3000-6000 words)

Style:

- Writing style needs to take into account the diverse readership with different levels of knowledge and experience
- See AJEC Author Guidelines for further specifics of style

Jackie Brien

# Australasian Journal of Early Childhood

Review process:

- An initial review is undertaken to ensure the article is suitable for AJEC
- All submitted articles undergo an external blind peer-review process by at least two separate reviewers
- Authors may have to revise their articles before they can be accepted for publication

Jackie Brien

# Australasian Journal of Early Childhood

## Reviewers:

- AJEC's 4th edition each year includes an annual call for reviewers, via an Expression of Interest

## AJEC Committee:

- Positions are for 3 years
- AJEC's 4th edition each year includes a call for Expressions of Interest to serve on the Committee to replace those whose terms have finished
- This year will include a special call for the position as Chair of the Committee

Jackie Brien

# Australasian Journal of Early Childhood

Future goals for AJEC:

- To continue its progress as a world-respected journal
- To encourage the continued submission of 'alternative' articles to stimulate interesting discussion/debate
- To acknowledge and expand its growing international readership and authorship
- The journal has changed its name to the *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood* to reflect this
- To continue to make an important contribution to the early childhood sector

Jackie Brien

# Research in Practice Series (RIPS)

Guidelines for authors—detail to follow review process:

- Content and style suitability and match to purpose
- Coherence, and structure
- Recommendations

Role of the Series editor:

- Response to manuscript and reviews
- Reconciliation of diverging views
- Advice to improve quality of communication

Judy Radich

# RIPS Guidelines for authors

- Target audience
- Length of manuscripts
- Style, readability
- References
- Photographs/illustrations
- Author licence/copyright

Judy Radich

# Every Child

- A premier early childhood magazine accessed by more than 40,000 practitioners
- Articles present useful information about diverse topics—health, education, social trends etc.
- Aims to encourage innovation, promote good practice and stimulate debate



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# Every Child

Also included:

- book reviews
- profiles
- creative ideas
- guest statements from well-known identities
- letters to the Editor

# Every Child

Word lengths:

- Feature length articles (1100 words)
- Regular articles (550 words)
- Book reviews (300 words)

Alison Elliott

# Every Child guidelines for authors

- Friendly but professional style
- Easily readable and jargon free
- Quotes and examples from real people
- Culturally sensitive
- No long academic references
- Accessible to all those working with young children or interested in issues related to the field

Alison Elliott

# Everyday Learning Series

- Parents
- TAFE students
- Family day care carers
- Each book covers a particular topic, e.g. Everyday learning about grief and loss; ...reading and writing; ...being green.
- How everyday experiences can be transformed into learning opportunities

Pam Linke

# Writing for your audience

Why write in plain English? Because we want readers to:

- read it
- understand it
- use it.

The term derives from the 16th-century idiom, 'in plain English', meaning 'in clear, straightforward language'. It does not mean dumbing down the message. 'Good writing consists of trying to use ordinary words to achieve extraordinary results.'(Michener)

Easier reading style helps to decide how much of an article is read.

# Blocks to Reading

- Unfamiliar words (complex words, jargon)
- Long sentences (many subordinate clauses, hidden verbs, excess words)
- Passive voice
- Writing for a class of readers other than one's own is very difficult—it takes training, method, and practice.
- **Some Early Childhood Jargon:** ... misconceptions, foster, scaffold, knowledges, constructivism, heuristic, modelling, provocation, envision, critical, dispositions, pedagogy ...

# Complex to simple

- High-quality learning environments are a necessary precondition for facilitation and enhancement of the ongoing learning process ... Children need good schools if they are to learn properly.
- Firearm relinquishment is a mandatory condition ... You must hand over your guns.
- Eliminate ... cut, drop, end
- Encounter ... meet
- Endeavour ... try
- Ensure ... make sure
- Enumerate ... count
- Knowledges ... knowledge
- Equitable ... fair



# Exercise—re-write for Everyday Learning

The exclusive use of traditional developmental psychology as a foundation discipline in early childhood education is now being challenged. Key features of the new paradigm of Childhood Studies are its interdisciplinary nature, its view of childhood as a social construction and children as active social agents, its emphasis on the diversity of childhoods, and its strong relationship with emerging social policy prioritising children.

# The last word

- When you absolutely must include words and phrases from your professional jargon, accompany them with brief definitions.
- To quote Michener: 'No writer has to use all the words he does know.'
- Keep this in mind: Simple words work best.

# Questions

How can we reach more writers, reviewers, editors?



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