

Intended for healthcare professionals

Sage Journals

The Journal of School Nursing

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Submission guidelines



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Please read the guidelines in full before submitting your manuscript. Manuscripts not conforming to these guidelines may be returned.

Submit Manuscript 

THE JOURNAL OF SCHOOL NURSING

Manuscript Submission Guidelines

The *Journal of School Nursing (JOSN)* is the official journal of the National Association of School Nurses. It is a peer-reviewed journal whose purpose is to provide a peer-reviewed forum for improving the health of school children and the school community. The *JOSN* is an excellent vehicle for translation of research to practice to over 15,000 clinician-readers who are members of NASN. See the Aims and Scope link for a description of types of manuscripts sought. Manuscripts from all disciplines related to child, school, and community health are welcome.

Because *JOSN* seeks manuscripts that bring new perspectives and innovations to school nursing, we urge authors to review previously published articles related to their topic in order to (1) build on the comprehensive body of published literature on the subject and (2) ensure the uniqueness of their own article's contribution. Studies that rely solely on measures of self-report (e.g., participants' perceptions of learning or satisfaction) are generally not considered sufficiently rigorous to warrant publication in the Journal of Nursing Education. Studies that employ a single pretest-posttest measure without a control group are also unlikely to be considered for publication in the journal.

Average time from submission to first decision: 27 days

There are no fees payable to submit or publish in this Journal. Open Access options are available - see section below.

JOSN offers optional open access publishing via the Sage Choice programme and Open Access agreements, where authors can publish open access either discounted or free of charge depending on the agreement with Sage. Find out if your institution is participating by [visiting Open Access Agreements at Sage](#). For more information on Open Access publishing options at Sage please [visit Sage Open Access](#). For information on funding body compliance, and depositing your article in repositories, please [visit Sage's Author Archiving and Re-Use Guidelines](#) and [Publishing Policies](#).

Manuscript Format

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th edition. Manuscripts, including abstracts (150 words) and references, should be double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font, left justified margins, and one-inch margins on all sides. No identifying information about the author(s) should be in the body of the paper, abstract, or figures. Abstracts should be in narrative form without headings. Manuscripts should not exceed 20 pages, excluding abstract, references, tables, and figures. Tables should be typed one to a page with any notes/legends typed on the same page. Label each figure with its number and legend. All tables, figures, graphs, and drawings should follow the reference list and not placed in the body of the manuscript and uploaded as separate files. No more than 3 tables and 2 figures may be submitted.

Authors should familiarize themselves with [Sage's Accessibility Guidelines](#) to ensure their manuscripts meet recognized accessibility standards.

Types of Articles

For all types of manuscripts, please see the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020)* for guidance in developing the abstract. Identify three to 10 key words or short phrases placed below the abstract. These key words will be published with the abstract. It is important to embed key words in the abstract. Key words from Index Medicus are helpful.

Original Research Reports

Original research reports can address specific clinical issues, health concerns or behavioral factors that affect individuals and or populations within the school community. For

intervention studies and randomized controlled trials, please review the Consort Statement including a description of the participant Flow Diagram for inclusion in the manuscript- <http://www.consort-statement.org/> . Original research reports include pilot, preliminary and feasibility studies and research designs including observational, epidemiological, quantitative, qualitative, and clinical trials. Clinical trials are registered. For reporting qualitative studies the Consolidated criteria for Reporting Qualitative research (COREQ) will be helpful (<http://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/coreq/>). The implications for school nursing and school health services delivery must be identified. See the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020) for guidance in formulating elements of a research report as well as the reference list and tables. Manuscript narrative should not exceed 20 pages excluding references and tables. The following criteria guide the peer reviews of original research manuscripts:

1. The title and abstract are descriptive of the study.
2. The purpose of the study is clearly stated.
3. Research questions or hypotheses are clear.
4. The significance of the study is clear and builds on previous research.
5. The literature review is current (most within the last five to ten years), synthesized and related to the purpose of the paper.
6. Theoretical/conceptual framework/models as appropriate
 1. Described/operationalized
 2. Guides the research
7. The purpose, theoretical framework, design, and methods are congruent.
8. Methods include:
 1. Design
 2. Institutional Review Board approval
 3. Population/setting
 4. Sampling procedure description, sample size rationale
 5. Measures are described
 6. The data collection and analysis procedures are appropriate, and clearly reported.

7. Interventions and fidelity steps are described
 8. The statistics and analyses are described in an understandable manner.
 9. Steps for human subjects' protection including consenting and assents for children are assured and ethics maintained.
9. Results
1. Participant flow/consort diagram
 2. Results including ancillary analyses
10. Discussion synthesizes the results
 11. The application to school nursing practice is relevant, clear, and practical.
 12. Limitations and recommendations for future research are presented.
 13. References current and relevant

Literature Reviews

Literature reviews should provide a comprehensive review of the literature and synthesize findings related to specific problems or school health programs. Simple or narrative reviews of the literature, as well as rapid assessments, integrative reviews, scoping reviews, systematic reviews, meta-analysis or qualitative reviews are acceptable. All reviews must be guided by a clear statement of purpose or research question. Search procedures should be reported including search terms as well as inclusion and exclusion criteria. All reviews require a synthesis of the findings. While the following links are useful resources for systematic and meta-analysis literature reviews, they can also provide structural information for all reviews: the Cochrane Collaboration <http://www.cochrane.org> ; Joanna Briggs Institute – <http://www.joannabriggs.edu.au> ; PRISMA Group – <http://www.prisma-statement.org/> . School nursing and school health services implications drawn from the reviews strengthen the relevance for *The JOSN*. The following criteria guide the peer review of Literature Review manuscripts:

1. The title and abstract are descriptive of the review.
2. The purpose of the review is clearly stated.
3. Research questions are articulated.
4. Data bases searched are described.

5. The sampling procedure is clearly described including inclusion/exclusion criteria and time span of published articles.
6. The data collection and analysis procedures of literature are accurate, appropriate, and clearly reported.
7. For meta-analyses, statistics are described in an understandable manner.
8. The results are clear and address the purpose or answer the research question(s).
9. Results of the review show synthesis of manuscripts reviewed.
10. The application to school nursing practice is relevant, clear, and practical.

Quality Improvement Projects

Quality Improvement Projects are designed for the implementation of systems level interventions to improve the quality of care. Models exist for designing and reporting on quality improvement projects such as the Squire Standards for Quality Improvement Reporting Excellence: <http://squire-statement.org/guidelines> and the Institute of Healthcare Improvement Model of Improvement (Plan-Do-Study-Act): <http://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/HowtoImprove/default.aspx>. The quality improvement model used for the project should be identified in the manuscript. The following criteria guide the peer review of Quality Improvement Report manuscripts:

1. The title and abstract are descriptive of the project.
2. The introduction succinctly states problem, what is known about the problem and the frameworks or theories used to explain the problem.
3. The intervention chosen is justified and includes a explanation of why it is expected to work.
4. The purpose of the project is stated succinctly.
5. The setting, the intervention, and the intervention team are described in detail
6. The process and outcome measures are described.
7. Appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods to measure the outcomes are described.
8. The steps of the intervention as delivered over time are described including adjustments made during the project.

9. The results of the process and outcome measurements are reported.
10. Unintended consequences and unexpected barriers are reported if applicable.
11. The impact of the intervention on the outcomes is interpreted.
 1. Findings are compared with those in the literature.
 2. Differences between the expected and observed outcomes are explained.
 3. Sustainability of the intervention or program is addressed.
 4. Suggested next steps are included.
12. Include recommendations to address or overcome barriers.
13. The application to school nursing practice is relevant, clear, and practical.
14. The reference list, tables, and figures are formatted according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020).
15. The manuscript narrative does not exceed 15 pages double spaced with one-inch margins. Title page, abstract, references and tables are excluded from the page limit.

Policy Report

Policy reports synthesize the evidence and research on topic to assist decision makers in creating legislation, policies, and standards. The following criteria guide the peer review of policy report manuscripts:

1. The introduction includes a clear statement of the problem and purpose of the report.
2. The issue is succinctly summarized.
3. A concise overview of the research or evidence on the issue is provided.
4. Policy options are analyzed.
5. A recommendation is made based on the analyzed policy options. The advantages and disadvantages of adopting the recommendation are addressed.
6. The conclusion mirrors the introduction.
7. The manuscript focuses on a single topic and does not include content tangential to the issue.

8. The reference list, tables, and figures are formatted according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020).
9. The manuscript narrative does not exceed 5 pages double spaced with one-inch margins. Title page, abstract, references and tables are excluded from the page limit.

Evidenced Based Practice Reports

Evidence based practice (EBP) reports are not research and research terms should not be used (such as study and investigator). However, EBP reports must adhere to Ethical Standards and local approval. **Exemption from Institutional Review Board (IRB) review must be reported.** The EBP model for the project (such as Iowa or Johns Hopkins Models for Evidence Based Practice Change) is identified.

The following criteria guide the peer review of EBP manuscripts:

1. The title and abstract are descriptive of the project.
2. The introduction includes a clear statement of the issue(s) that triggered the project. Data or evidence are included to support the existence of the issue.
3. The purpose of the project is clearly stated.
4. The evidence base for the change is appraised and well-synthesized.
 1. Evidence is adequate, current (most within the last five to ten years).
 2. Synthesis tables are included as appropriate with the populations, settings, interventions and outcomes of the intervention from each article.
 3. Identify the recommended intervention or program based on the evidence.
 4. Describe why the intervention is appropriate for this population and why it is feasible.
5. The purpose and methods are congruent. The methods section must include:
 1. Design of the project.
 2. Description of the setting and population related to the project.
 3. Adherence to ethical standards including local approval and or report of approval or exemption from IRB review.
6. The outcome measures and the analysis used in evaluation are clearly stated.

7. The measures used to assess the project outcomes are clearly described.
 1. Project implementation steps are well described.
 2. The data collection and evaluation procedures are accurate, appropriate, and clearly reported.
 3. Statistics and/or analysis procedures are described in an understandable manner.
 4. The results are clear and address the purpose statement. Tables are included as appropriate.
8. The discussion is framed around the effectiveness of the practice change based on the measured outcomes. The results are synthesized and identify lessons learned. Sustainability of the intervention or program is addressed.
9. The application to school nursing practice is relevant, clear, and practical.
10. The reference list, tables, and figures are formatted according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition (2020).
11. The manuscript narrative should not exceed 15 pages double spaced with one-inch margins. Title page, abstract, references and tables are excluded from the page limit.

Brief Research Reports

Brief research reports are shorter (no more than 10 pages excluding references and limited to 2 tables and 1 figure) manuscripts addressing preliminary results, methodological issues in research or issues that influence research. Brief research reports are scholarly manuscripts that include references and call attention of researchers in school nursing and the school health community to developing research or issues in research. The following criteria guide the peer review of Brief Research Reports:

1. The title and abstract are descriptive of the brief report
2. The purpose of the research report is clearly stated
3. The supporting literature is adequate and current (most within the last five years).
4. The methods are specified to the extent available and include:
 1. Study design
 2. Institutional Review Board Approval
 3. Setting, population & sample

4. Procedures described
5. Analysis is appropriate for the purpose stated.
5. Results – describe preliminary results or issues including lessons learned
6. The Brief Research Report narrative is congruent with the purpose.
7. The narrative is scholarly, properly supported and clearly stated.
8. The application to school nursing practice is relevant, clear, and practical.
9. Brief Research Reports do not exceed 10 pages and limited to 2 tables and 1 figure excluding references.

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor provide a forum for commenting on articles published in The *JOSN* and topics of general interest in school health care. The length should not exceed 800 words of text with a minimal number of references. One table or figure may be included, if necessary. Any comments regarding a specific article must include the title, author(s), and date of publication. Letters that contain questions or critique of a previously published paper will be forwarded to the author(s) of that article for a reply. The sharing of ideas, experiences, opinions, and alternative views is encouraged. The Executive Editor of The Journal reserves the right to accept, reject, or excerpt letters for clarity and appropriateness of content, and to accommodate space requirements. Submit Letters to the Editor to <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/josn>. The following criteria guide the review Letters to the Editor.

1. The title is descriptive of the letter to the editor.
2. The purpose of the letter is clearly stated.
3. The supporting literature is adequate and current (most within the last five to ten years).
4. The narrative regarding the current issue or previous published manuscript in The *JOSN* is clear and not personal.
5. The narrative is congruent with the purpose.
6. The narrative is relevant, clear, and practical.
7. The letter narrative does not exceed 800 words including references.

Referenced Editorials

Editorials are written by the editor, the editorial board or invited authors. Editorials address current issues important to the health of school children and school nursing practice. The purpose of editorials is to stimulate scholarly thought among school nurses and other school health practitioners and researchers.

Manuscript Submission

Manuscripts should be submitted electronically at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/josn>. Authors will be required to set up an online account on the Sage Track system, powered by ScholarOne.

You may stop a submission at any phase and save it to complete later. After submission, you will receive a confirmation via e-mail. You can log on to Manuscript Central at any time to check the status of your manuscript. The Editor will inform you via e-mail once a decision has been made.

Submitted manuscripts will be reviewed by the Editor for adherence to page limitations and content appropriate for the journal. Manuscripts will then be sent out anonymously for peer review. Obtaining permission for any quoted or reprinted material that requires permission is the responsibility of the author and should be submitted with the manuscript as supplementary files. Submission of a manuscript implies commitment to publish in the journal. The Editor bases the decision to publish on the reviewers' recommendations. Accepted manuscripts will be returned for revisions prior to sending to the publisher for typesetting. Authors will receive proofs for approval via email. Authors assume final responsibility for the content of the manuscript, including the edited copy. The Journal reserves the right to edit all manuscripts to its style and space requirements. When the manuscript is published, authors will receive a complimentary copy of the issue. Manuscripts are submitted to the software, iThenticate, to detect similarity to other published work.

As part of the submission process you will be required to confirm that you are submitting your original work, that you have the rights in the work, and that you have obtained and can supply all necessary permissions for the reproduction of any copyright works not owned by you, that you are submitting the work for first publication in the Journal and that it is not being considered for publication elsewhere and has not already been published elsewhere. Please see Sage's guidelines on [prior publication](#) and note that the journal may accept submissions of papers that have been posted on pre-print servers; please alert the Editorial Office when submitting and include the DOI for the preprint in the designated field in the manuscript submission system. Authors should not post an updated version of their paper on the preprint server while it is being peer reviewed for possible publication in the journal.

If the article is accepted for publication, the author may re-use their work according to the journal's author archiving policy. If your paper is accepted, you must include a link on your preprint to the final version of your paper.

Please use the [author response template](#) to outline your revisions and responses to the reviewers' comments.

Email questions to the Editor.

The Journal of School Nursing

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Editor

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- Note: You will need your cover letter, title page, manuscript, and figures in separate files to submit. It is helpful to create these individual files before beginning the submission process.
- Log in and select “Author Center.”
- After you have logged in, click the “Submit a Manuscript” link on the Author Center screen.
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- Select the description of the file in the drop-down menu next to the Browse button.
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Sage offers authors of primary research articles the option to make them freely available upon publication in *The JOSN*. The 'Sage Choice' publishing option enables authors to comply with funding body requirements, where publishing research findings open access is a stipulation of funding, such as is the case for the NIH/Wellcome Trust for example. For more details visit www.sagepub.com/sagechoice.sp.

ORCID

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Authorship Guidelines

The submitting author is responsible for listing the contributions of all authors at submission. All authors should agree to their individual contributions prior to submission. The *JOSN* has strict authorship requirements in accordance with the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' (ICMJE, n.d.) recommendations and uses the Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CreDIT) system (Sage, 2021). Per these guidelines, to qualify as an author one must meet all the following:

- Responsibility for at least one of the following roles, as defined by the taxonomy: conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis or investigation.
- Actively involved in writing the manuscript, either in drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content.
- Given final approval of the version to be published.
- Agreed to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved (ICMJE, n.d.).

Manuscripts should be submitted for consideration only after all contributing authors give consent. When there is no data collection, analysis, or interpretation for the work (e.g., for an Editorial) the first criterion may be met by the roles "Conceptualization" or "Methodology". During the submission process, the submitting author will be responsible for identifying the roles of all authors that qualify them for authorship. As a part of the CreDIT system, the roles identified for each author during submission will be published if the manuscript is accepted.

Please refer to the [CRedit Gateway page](#) for more information. You should not include an author contribution statement in your manuscript as this will be added at Production stage.  does not replace the Acknowledgements section.

Any contributors who do not meet all four authorship criteria outlined by ICMJE should be listed in the Acknowledgements. Examples of those who might be acknowledged include a person who provided purely technical or writing assistance, or a department chair who provided only general support (CITE <https://www.sagepub.com/credit>). *JOSN* allows shared first authorship when applicable. Please designate the co-first authors within an Authors' Note section just before the references.

Please note that AI chatbots, for example ChatGPT, should not be listed as authors. For more [information see the policy on Use of ChatGPT and generative AI tools](#).

Peer Review Policy

Sage does not permit the use of author-suggested (recommended) reviewers at any stage of the submission process, be that through the web-based submission system or other communication. Reviewers should be experts in their fields and should be able to provide an objective assessment of the manuscript. Our policy is that reviewers should not be assigned to a paper if:

- The reviewer is based at the same institution as any of the co-authors
- The reviewer is based at the funding body of the paper
- The author has recommended the reviewer
- The reviewer has provided a personal (e.g. Gmail/Yahoo/Hotmail) email account and an institutional email account cannot be found after performing a basic Google search (name, department and institution).

Funding

To comply with the guidance for Research Funders, Authors and Publishers issued by the Research Information Network (RIN), The *JOSN* additionally requires all Authors to acknowledge their funding in a consistent fashion under a separate heading. Please visit [Funding Acknowledgements](#) on the Sage Journal Author Gateway to confirm the format of the acknowledgment text in the event of funding or state in your acknowledgments that: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Declaration of conflicting interests

It is the policy of The *JOSN* to require a declaration of conflicting interests from all authors enabling a statement to be carried within the paginated pages of all published articles.

Please include any declaration at the end of your manuscript after any acknowledgements prior to the references, under a heading 'Conflict of interests'. If no declaration is made

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When making a declaration the disclosure information must be specific and include any financial relationship that all authors of the article has with any sponsoring organization and the for-profit interests the organization represents, and with any for-profit product discussed or implied in the text of the article.

Any commercial or financial involvements that might represent an appearance of a conflict of interest need to be additionally disclosed in the covering letter accompanying your article to assist the Editor in evaluating whether sufficient disclosure has been made within the Declaration of Conflicting Interests provided in the article.

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Research ethics and patient consent

Medical research involving human subjects must be conducted according to the [World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki](#)

Submitted manuscripts should conform to the [ICMJE Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work in Medical Journals](#), and all papers reporting animal and/or human studies must state in the methods section that the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board provided (or waived) approval. Please ensure that you have provided the full name and institution of the review committee, in addition to the approval number.

For research articles, authors are also required to state in the methods section whether participants provided informed consent and whether the consent was written or verbal.

Information on informed consent to report individual cases or case series should be included in the manuscript text. A statement is required regarding whether written informed consent for patient information and images to be published was provided by the patient(s) or a legally authorized representative. Please do not submit the patient's actual written informed consent with your article, as this in itself breaches the patient's confidentiality. The Journal requests that you confirm to us, in writing, that you have obtained written informed consent but the written consent itself should be held by the authors/investigators themselves, for example in a patient's hospital record. The confirmatory letter may be uploaded with your submission as a separate file.

Please also refer to the [ICMJE Recommendations for the Protection of Research Participants](#)

Clinical Trials

Journal of School Nursing conforms to the [ICMJE requirement](#) that clinical trials are registered in a WHO-approved public trials registry at or before the time of first patient enrolment as a condition of consideration for publication. The trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract.

Research Data

The journal is committed to facilitating openness, transparency and reproducibility of research, and has the following research data sharing policy. For more information, including FAQs please visit the [Sage Research Data policy pages](#).

Subject to appropriate ethical and legal considerations, authors are encouraged to:

- share your research data in a relevant public data repository
- include a data availability statement linking to your data. If it is not possible to share your data, we encourage you to consider using the statement to explain why it cannot be shared.
- cite this data in your research

Information required for completing your submission

You will be asked to provide contact details and academic affiliations for all co-authors via the submission system and identify who is to be the corresponding author. These details must match what appears on your manuscript. The affiliation listed in the manuscript should be the institution where the research was conducted. If an author has moved to a new institution since completing the research, the new affiliation can be included in a manuscript note at the end of the paper. At this stage please ensure you have included all the required statements and declarations and uploaded any additional supplementary files (including reporting guidelines where relevant).

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