

International Journal on Child Maltreatment



Research, Policy and Practice: Special Issue on Public Health Approaches to Prevent Child Maltreatment

Guest Editors:

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Submission instructions:

Manuscript abstracts are invited between 15-06-2021 and 31-09-2021. We invite empirical research, conceptual and theoretical work, reviews of the literature, and thoughtful commentaries. Abstracts for research articles should include the objective and aims of the study, the methodology, findings, and conclusions. Abstracts should be no more than 400 words.

Aims and scope of the special issue:

Over more than a century of governmental efforts to protect children and young people from the pernicious impacts of the many forms of child maltreatment, there have been notable advances, yet significant issues remain. Indeed, child protection services struggle to address the broader safety and wellbeing needs of children across the community, to engage with families who need support, and to drive a culture of prevention of all forms of child maltreatment in a non-stigmatizing and proactive way, not to mention the poor life outcomes for many alumni of the care system. It is unsurprising, then, that there have been steadily growing moves around the globe for policy re-alignment towards a system of prevention outside of child protection to reduce the service demands and costs and improve the social and material outcomes for all families, but particularly those who are struggling.

Calls for reform to child protection and child welfare systems are increasingly common, and within those, a consistent cry is to adopt what is referred to as 'a public health approach' more fully. A key characteristic of a public health approach is the focus on population-level interventions to address known risk factors and change the distribution of a health problem (rather than individual-level interventions typical of medicine, or traditional child welfare services that focus only on treating individuals with the problem). This means "shifting the curve" for all, rather than focusing primarily on high-risk segments of the population. Thus, instead of focusing solely on 'high risk' or 'dangerous' cases, the focus is on all children and their families, recognizing differing levels of vulnerability at the same time.

While conceptually sound, it remains unclear how systems for preventing the harms associated with child maltreatment can be fully realized, or whether current efforts are aligned with the core components of a public health approach. In this special issue, we seek to highlight advances in child maltreatment public health prevention by synthesizing current research and by gleaning new insights in work emerging from within and outside of the field. Particular attention will be paid to how systems can become increasingly more responsive to the needs of vulnerable populations.

Important dates:

Abstracts due: 31-09-2021
Invitations for full proposals sent: 15-10-2021
First submission due: 01-04-2022
Reviews completed and returned: 01-06-2022
Final manuscript due: 01-09-2022

Abstracts should be sent to:

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Following an invitation to submit a full manuscript, authors should prepare the paper in compliance with the International Journal on Child Maltreatment: Research, Policy and Practice's guide for authors (<https://www.springer.com/journal/42448/submission-guidelines>) and submitted through the Editorial Manager (EM) submission site <https://www.editorialmanager.com/malt/default.aspx>

Manuscripts will be peer reviewed. Please indicate in the cover letter accompanying your manuscript that your paper should be considered for the Special Issue on Public Health Approaches to Prevent Child Maltreatment

For questions regarding this special issue, please contact:

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For general questions or inquiries about the journal, please contact the Editors-in-Chief Carmit Katz, PhD (drckatz@gmail.com) and Jill McLeigh (JILL.MCLEIGH@cuanschultz.edu)