

From the Executive Editor

A Stage for Quality

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A year has passed since we shared the first issue of *The Journal of Child Life: Psychosocial Theory and Practice* (*JCL*). The road to publication was long and during those years of planning, we found ourselves worrying that *JCL* would not receive high-quality submissions. We were wrong. The launch was greeted with a substantial number of submissions, including ones that represent high-quality child life science. We see this as evidence that child life's contribution to psychosocial research is growing.

In Boles, Turner, Rights, and Lu's seminal article included in this issue's collection, results of their scoping review highlight the growth our profession has seen in the quantity of scientific contributions made over the past two decades. The authors caution, however, that the quality of these contributions is equally important. As they note, despite numerical growth, large gaps remain in our evidence base and can be seen by the number of papers that fail to feature child life-led interventions, fail to include child life specialists as authors, and fail to provide a strong description of our scope of practice. We see *JCL* as a stage for sharing the quality Boles, Tuner, Rights, and Lu describe and have been delighted by the progress we have witnessed this year. While your hard work has meant some growing pains for *JCL* and the Journal Review Board, it has undoubtedly improved child life science. Our expectations, like our readers', have been raised by the caliber of submissions we have received.

To demonstrate this quality, Volume 2, Number 1 represents a varied cross section of the current state of child life research. Some of the papers discuss ways to advocate for child life in emerging settings such as Schmitz, Burns-Nadar, Berryhill, and Parker's look at the roles of child life specialists supporting patients during pediatric sexual assault forensic exams. Other papers examine burnout and shared trauma, features of our year coping with a global pandemic. For example, Hoelscher and Ravert examine which types of

work relationships are associated with levels of professional burnout and discuss implications for relationship building. As we enter our second year of coping with the shared trauma of COVID-19, research featuring ways to adapt our work for future pandemics is crucial. As a response, ACLP is rolling out the Emotional Safety Pillars. Emotional safety emphasizes the role child life professionals play in mitigating trauma and keeping patients emotionally safe during medical care. In this issue, we include the introduction to the Emotional Safety Pillars and encourage you to follow up in future issues as we showcase each of the four pillars.

Ethically sound peer-review is tediously slow and many of the articles included in this issue weathered the growing pains we encountered during our first year. Despite hurdles, we have also experienced growth beyond our expectations. We increased the number of articles published in each issue, the Journal Review Board adapted to a new platform for reviewing, and we spent the year improving our process. You can also contribute to refining the quality of research in *JCL*. Academic dialogue allows us to think collectively and contribute to a shared knowledge that improves our work with patients and families. *JCL* accepts papers in the following formats: original qualitative and quantitative research, quality improvement projects, theoretical analyses, case studies, systematic reviews and metaanalyses, and especially important for dialogue, letters to the editor. We want to hear your thoughts about the articles you read and how they contribute to your clinical practice.

My term as Executive Editor of *JCL* comes to a close this spring. Since 2019, my role has been to help transition the long-standing peer-review structure of *Child Life Focus* into a system that can support the submissions of a stand-alone (and one day scientifically indexed) scholarly journal. Now that this stage has been built, we have been eager to turn our atten-

tion toward sharing the highest quality science. The incoming Executive Editor, Ali Chrisler, PhD, CCLS, brings a keen eye for quality and high expectations for *JCL*'s reputation. I am certain her critical thinking will ensure *JCL* continues to grow into a credible and rigorous resource for child life professionals. Along with Associate Editor Jenny Staab, MS, CCLS, and Managing Editor Keri O'Keefe, Ali will have a consci-

entious and discerning team. I look forward to seeing all the ways *JCL* will flourish under their eyes.

Many in the child life community have contributed to the success of *JCL*'s first year including former editors, reviewers, authors, ACLP staff, the ACLP Board of Directors, educators, and most importantly, our readers. *JCL* is just getting started and we thank you for contributing to its development.