

## ***Share your knowledge***

by Joan Marie Galat and Jena Snyder

Many members of the Alberta College of Social Workers have taken the time to share their stories in the pages of the *Advocate*. We appreciate receiving your submissions. Enthusiastic readers in Alberta and across the country tell us they want more! We know many more of you have worthwhile experiences, knowledge, and opinions to share, and encourage you to review the guidelines below before you submit your articles for consideration.

### ***Four Reasons to Write***

- Promote and strengthen the social work community
- Unite, inspire, and inform your colleagues
- Share your expertise and discoveries
- Explore solutions and ideas that make a difference

### ***Submission Guidelines***

The *Advocate* editorial board is interested in stories about every aspect of social work. We want to hear all perspectives—from students to retired social workers, from front-line staff to those in management, teaching, private practice, or other roles. The opinions, experiences, and observations of registered social workers from Alberta are of particular interest. In addition, we welcome book and movie reviews with a social work angle, as well as news about awards, research, and activism.

### ***Get Started***

- Read the *Advocate* and familiarize yourself with the kinds of articles we publish.
- Keep submissions short: 600-1,000 words. (If you're using 12-point Times New Roman or Cambria font, 1,000 words is two pages of single-spaced type with a hard return after each paragraph.)
- Acknowledge sources in the body of the text, not in footnotes.

### ***Writing Tips***

- Write with *Advocate* readers in mind. Ask yourself: will social workers find this interesting?
- Ensure that your article's focus is on social work.
- Engage from beginning to the end. Start with an irresistible teaser, rather than background information. Remember to bring the article to a satisfactory close by revisiting your main points.
- When interviewing others, use direct quotes. Let the character, personality, and words of your interview subject shine through. Choose quotes that add life and advance the main ideas of your article.
- For a lively feel, use active phrasing: "She led the campaign," not "the campaign was led by..."
- Define acronyms in the first instance of use. Example: "The Gerontology-Social Work Action Group (G-SWAG) has 14

new members.” Not: “G-SWAG has 14 new members.”

- Eliminate slang or jargon (unless it falls within a direct quote).
- Avoid bolding, underlining, or italicizing for emphasis. Instead, choose words that are powerful enough to express your message. Do use italics for book, magazine, or journal titles, as well as government acts.
- Follow journalistic writing style. After the first instance, the *Advocate* refers to individuals by their last name. Therefore Sam Peabody becomes “Peabody.”

### ***Must Do's***

- Your article may pass through a number of inboxes as the editorial board reviews it. To help us keep track of your submission, give your file a unique, identifiable name. Always include the file extension (.doc or .docx).  
Example: *Youth at Risk\_Peabody\_15March2013.docx*
- Give your article a strong headline that contains a verb. A title like “my report” will not attract readers.  
Example: *Youth at risk join entrepreneur movement*
- Include your byline, credentials, and full affiliation.  
Example: *By Francesca Loofa, BSW, RSW, Community Support Specialist, Alberta Health Services*
- Include a one- or two-line biographical statement. Place it at the end of your article.  
Example: *Evan Keel is a private practitioner who works with children and families. He writes from Lethbridge.*
- Include both your email address and phone number so we can contact you if necessary.

### ***Presentation***

- Put your energy into writing and let us worry about the formatting—that’s our designer’s job. Please include subheadings and photo captions. Avoid tabs or extra spaces in your copy.

### ***Images***

- If taking photos with a digital camera or cell phone, make sure the resolution is set to high, or largest size. Low-resolution photos or graphics found on the Internet may look good on screen, but they are not acceptable for print. We usually include a head and shoulders photo of the author, but we can edit a group shot if necessary or use a candid shot if you prefer. Please send an unedited photo—let us do the cropping or enhancing.
- You can submit images in a number of ways:
  - Attach the image files to an email. Include your name and the article’s title in the subject line: *Photos from Jane Doe for Youth At Risk article*. Always include captions in the body of your email: *From left to right: Jane Doe, John Doe, and Bob Smith*.
  - Embed your photos in your Word document and save as .docx if possible. Do not reduce the size of the photos.

- Image files may also be uploaded and shared via an online service such as Dropbox. Contact us for more details.
- Color charts may not make sense after they are converted to black and white. Embed the chart in your Word document, but please send the original file as well (Word, Excel, etc.) so we can either extract the image or use the data to produce a new image in black and white.

### ***How to submit***

You may submit a query outlining your idea or a complete article following the above criteria. To discuss a proposal or submit your news, articles, and letters, contact: Charity Lui, Membership Activities Coordinator: [charity@acsw.ab.ca](mailto:charity@acsw.ab.ca)

The Advocate, ACSW, c/o Membership Activities Coordinator Charity Lui

#550, 10707-100 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3M1

Phone: 1-780-421-1167 or toll-free in Alberta: 1-800-661-3089

Fax: 1-780-421-1168 or toll-free in Alberta: 1-866-874-8931

### ***What happens after you submit?***

The *Advocate* is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December. The editorial board meets quarterly to review submissions. Selected submissions are sent for editing. Please be aware that even if your article is accepted, it may not run immediately, as space is limited. Occasionally, articles are sent back to writers with requests for changes, particularly if the guidelines have not been followed. Sometimes articles are not published for reasons unrelated to the content. For example, we may have more submissions than our space accommodates or we may have received multiple submissions on similar topics.

Editing is a collaborative process designed to make your article shine. We recognize that the writer is the expert on the subject material; in turn, the editor is the expert who ensures the reader will be able to understand your content. All articles are edited following the *Advocate's* editorial standards.

***Details to Include:***

**1. Your contact information**

Jane Doe  
123 4 Street  
Anytown, AB T01 2B3  
(780) 555-5555  
jane.doe@gmail.com

**2. The name of your file**

Always include the file extension (.doc or .docx), e.g. **YouthAtRisk\_Peabody\_10sept13.docx**

**3. Word count**

**4. A photo of yourself, and any other photos relevant to your article**

**5. Captions for photos or notes to *Advocate* editors regarding any accompanying photos or graphics**

**6. Title of your article with a subtitle if desired**

Youth at risk join entrepreneur movement: how you can help

**7. Your byline and credentials, and affiliation**

by Francesca Loofa, MSW, RSW, Community Support Specialist, Alberta Health Services

**8. Your file, attached to an email**

**9. Your bio, including credentials and contact information (if you wish to include it).**

Jane Doe, MSW, RSW, is a mental health therapist at the Downtown Mental Health Clinic. If you have questions regarding this article, Jane can be reached at [jane.doe@gmail.com](mailto:jane.doe@gmail.com).

***Submission checklist***

\_\_\_ My article is the correct length (between 600-1000 words).

\_\_\_ I reviewed all spelling, especially names.

\_\_\_ I verified my facts and quotes, and checked that all names and credentials are correct.

\_\_\_ I saved my file as a Word file.