



Editorial Policies

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, The Montana Coalition, Inc., publishes various products which may include but are not limited to the Linking Infants and Families to Supports (LIFTS) magazine, the HMHB blog, HMHB social media posts, films, the Mother Love podcast, press releases and responses to press inquiries, and the HMHB newsletter. Collectively, all of these HMHB products are known as “publications” in this document. For all publications, HMHB adopts the following policies.

I. Purpose

HMHB publishes materials to promote storytelling as a healing modality, normalize experiences that mothers and other parents/caregivers may have in pregnancy and parenting, raise awareness of issues pertaining to maternal-child health and other pregnancy and parenting issues, and generate support for HMHB as an organization.

HMHB publications are consistent with our mission to improve the health, safety, and well-being of Montana families by supporting mothers and babies, age zero to three. In general, HMHB seeks to build community and empower families and, accordingly, strives to promote informative, positive, compassionate and harm-reducing messaging and to avoid fear-based, judgment-focused and punitive messaging. HMHB also strives to communicate in ways that acknowledge families’ varying backgrounds, income levels, and experiences, as well as the different types of professionals who assist families.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Director has final decision-making authority for all HMHB publications, but may delegate all or part of that authority to an HMHB staff member or contractor by informing relevant HMHB staff members. The Executive Director’s authority includes:

- setting budgets,
- selecting themes,
- establishing tone and style,
- determining format and design,
- updating contributor guidelines as needed,
- creating and implementing publication-specific calendars,
- ensuring consistency among publications,
- accepting and rejecting submissions for publication,
- consulting with experts regarding content or other publication-related matters,
- contracting with outside professionals,
- editing and revising draft materials,
- making final approvals for publication,
- promoting publications,
- approving forms, disclaimers, procedures, and processes relating to publications, and
- enforcing these editorial policies.

The Executive Director may also establish specific parameters regarding content, such as general types of articles to feature in a magazine (e.g., lead, editor’s note, feature, creative



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corner), segments of podcast episodes (introduction, conversation, information re partner organization), or social media format (e.g., quote, attribution, thank you to submitter).

Other HMHB staff assist in publication-related activities as directed by the Executive Director. To ensure consistency among publications and compliance with all HMHB policies, all HMHB staff and volunteers will:

- not, unless specifically directed otherwise, publish or post anything in an HMHB publication without first obtaining the Executive Director's approval;
- obtain all necessary releases from outside contributors;
- refer any media inquiries to the Executive Director, Board Chair or President, or their designee; and
- maintain a respectful tone in all publications, consistent with HMHB policies regarding email content

Contributors include anyone who submits for publication a story, photo, artwork, or any other contribution relating to the contributor's experience with pregnancy or parenting.

Outside professionals include anyone other than HMHB staff who performs a service related to an HMHB publication such as interviewing, designing, photographing, or editing.

Contributors and outside professionals are ultimately responsible for ensuring accuracy in any information they provide, meeting deadlines, and communicating with HMHB as needed.

III. Communication with Potential Contributors

HMHB welcomes submissions from people who want to share their stories about pregnancy and parenting, and wants to ensure as much comfort as possible about understanding the process. Accordingly, the typical submission process will work as follows:

1. HMHB will post guidelines about its publications and/or submissions on its organizational website (<https://hmhb-mt.org/>), and may change them from time to time.
2. HMHB will include in the guidelines instructions for submitting ideas for stories and photos, which may be through a designated email address (e.g., stories@hmhb-mt.org) or in another way such as an online form.
3. HMHB may designate deadlines for submission to particular outlets or for particular types of publications, and will not accept late submissions if a deadline is set.
4. Designated HMHB staff will follow up with each inquiry from a potential contributor to:
 - a. Learn more about the potential contributor's idea for sharing a story, photo, artwork or other contribution;
 - b. Fill out a scorecard or other document reflecting whether and how the potential contribution fits in with HMHB guidelines and other criteria for publication;
 - c. Recommend to the Executive Director the most appropriate outlet(s) to recommend for sharing the contribution;



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- d. Recommend to the Executive Director any outside assistance that may be helpful, such as a professional writer, photographer, or producer;
 - e. Discuss release forms and any other necessary paperwork that would be required before publication;
 - f. Empower the contributor to consider seeking outside help such as mental health counseling or legal advice, before signing a release or otherwise committing to sharing a contribution;
 - g. Inform the potential contributor of any next steps, such as how to turn in any paperwork and the Executive Director's approval process;
 - h. If applicable, set a separate meeting regarding potential recording of a podcast, film, or other media production; and
 - i. Present the potential contribution to the Executive Director for approval.
5. The Executive Director will review potential contributors' submissions, along with HMHB staff input, and determine whether the submission will be published and, if so, in which outlet(s).
 6. HMHB will communicate the Executive Director's decision about publishing to the potential contributor as respectfully and promptly as possible.
 7. If approved for publication, designated HMHB staff will:
 - a. Obtain any necessary release(s), if not already done;
 - b. Negotiate any compensation and process any paperwork (contract, invoice) relevant to the compensation, if applicable;
 - c. Contract with outside professionals as needed to assist with creating or obtaining the story or photo;
 - d. Work with the contributor and any outside professionals in the editing process to ensure accuracy and consistency;
 - e. Finalize the story or photo and facilitate publication; and
 - f. Notify the contributor when the contributor's submission is published.

HMHB will make reasonable efforts to contact a potential contributor, using the contact information the potential contributor provides. If the potential contributor does not respond to HMHB's reasonable efforts at contact for any reason, the potential contribution may be deemed withdrawn.

IV. Advertising

If there is no prohibition against advertising in a relevant grant or contract, a publication may include advertisements. Any advertisement must be consistent with HMHB's mission and overall organizational messaging.

In general, HMHB will prioritize advertisements for products and services that are free of charge or low cost to families with children age zero to three. Examples include government nutrition and home visiting programs and entities that are working toward relevant systemic change, such as early childhood coalitions.



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If an entity or individual wishes to advertise in a manner not addressed in the preceding paragraph, HMHB will consider the nature of the entity’s product or service, the availability of the product or service (especially at lower cost), and the nature of the advertisement and its messaging. For example, HMHB will generally look more favorably on a potential ad stating “XYZ company supports HMHB’s efforts to promote healthy outcomes” than “XYZ’s baby products are better than TUV’s.”

If HMHB publishes an advertisement, we may also publish a disclaimer stating that the running of an advertisement does not constitute HMHB’s endorsement of a particular product or service.

The Executive Director will determine advertising rates and deadlines for each publication format, or may negotiate directly with potential advertisers.

V. Donations and Other Funding

Anyone may donate to HMHB and specify that they want their donation to support publication-related work or a specific publication or type of publication. The Executive Director may pursue specific grants or contracts to support this work, and may also adopt specific “pay-it-forward” campaigns so that an audience member can financially support distribution of a publication to one or more other persons. In addition, the Executive Director may, with appropriate oversight by the Board of Directors, apply unrestricted funds to support work on publications.

VI. Post-Publishing

Before the signing of any release, HMHB makes reasonable efforts to communicate with contributors and outside professionals to ensure their understanding that they will not be able to withdraw, “pull back,” or request editing of a published item after publishing has occurred. HMHB will make reasonable efforts to track the HMHB outlets in which a submitted item has been published (e.g., LIFTS magazine, blog), and will only share published materials to be re-published by an external entity if the contributor and/or outside professional have authorized such sharing.