



## Writers Guidelines

### Writing for Momsense Magazine

#### Audience and Distribution

Our audience consists of more than 90,000 mothers of preschoolers (infants through kindergarten). Most of our readers are married women between 25 and 40, who attend local MOPS groups, although we welcome and encourage content for mothers outside these demographics.

MomSense seeks to meet the needs of every mom, moms with different lifestyles who all share a similar desire to be the very best moms that they can be. Moms who read MomSense may live in cities, suburbs or rural areas. They may be married, single, teen moms, older moms, working moms or stay-at-home moms.

#### Content

Each issue of MomSense is theme-based, so the content you submit should be appropriate to that issue's theme. However, we also accept articles that are not related to the issue's theme but provide inspiration or practical ideas with either a mom-focus or a woman-focus. We typically receive many more mom-focused submissions and need more articles that emphasize topics that speak to our readers as women, including personal growth topics. See descriptions of themed and non-themed articles below.

Themes are decided annually in April and are available in mid-May at [MOPS.org/write](http://MOPS.org/write). MomSense is planned four months in advance, so please submit articles according to the due dates listed below. We don't accept submissions for our regular columns (Raising Great Kids, Let's Play, The View From Here, UpClose, Family Connections, MOPS in Action and Better Moms, Better World).

MomSense does not publish: devotions, product reviews, fiction, book reviews or individual opinions on controversial subjects that divide our readers. These include doctrinal, political and social subjects, as well as parenting issues that bring up strong emotions. While the decisions you have made for your family may come up in your submission, do not assume that all readers will see things the same way.

#### Article Needs for Each Issue

Intro to the theme article: An article written by a mom for mothers of preschoolers. The article explains what the theme looks like in everyday life. (450 words)

Theme-related article (woman-focus): A practical or inspirational piece related to the theme written with a woman-focus. We are looking for humorous, inspirational or thought-provoking personal stories or well-researched practical information appealing to a wide variety of women and informing them on subjects relevant to their lives. (450 words)

Theme-related article (mom-focus): A practical or inspirational piece related to the theme written with a mom-focus. We are looking for humorous, inspirational or thought-provoking personal stories or well-researched practical information appealing to a wide variety of women and informing them on subjects relevant to their lives. (450 words)

Non-theme article (woman-focus): A practical or inspirational piece not related to the theme and written with a woman-focus. We are looking for humorous, inspirational or thought-provoking personal stories or well-researched practical information appealing to a wide variety of women and informing them on topics including marriage, relationships, how-to pieces, nutrition, health, exercise and finances. (450 words)

Non-theme article (mom-focus): A practical or inspirational piece not related to the theme written with a mom-focus. We are looking for humorous, inspirational or thought-provoking personal stories or well-researched practical information appealing to a wide variety of women and informing them on topics including parenting, single-parenting, how-to pieces and other issues related to raising preschoolers. (450 words)

Real-mom article: A personal essay using real-life examples about how a mom overcame something, learned a life lesson or found a unique perspective about a relationship. (350 words)

Humor article: Humorous first-person pieces, including funny stories about family life with young children. (Maximum of 450 words)

#### Writing Tips

- Use real-life mom examples that engage the audience.
- Include age-appropriate applications for kids (preschool age: infant through kindergarten).

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- Write submissions from a biblical, but not doctrinal, perspective.
- Incorporate ideas that challenge and help women regardless of where they are in their spiritual journey.
- Avoid Christian jargon and use biblical quotes sparingly.
- Use the New International Version for most biblical references; note if another Bible version is used.

**Submitting an Article**

- Submit a complete article in an electronic Word document. Articles should be double-spaced. On the first page include: author's name, mailing address, email address, phone number and the word count of the article.
- Most articles published in MOMSense Magazine are one page with 450 words. If accepted, articles will be edited by MOPS International editorial staff to fit the language, flow and size of MOMSense Magazine.
- MOMSense buys first rights to material. This includes the right to re-use the material in a MOPS anthology reprint or in electronic form (online).
- MOPS International may keep what you submit on file for up to two years to consider using in a future issue. We respond to most submissions within 12 weeks.
- Please submit your two-sentence biography that includes previous writing experience and credits, if you attend a MOPS group, as well as the ages of your children, if applicable.
- Please also include complete bibliographical references documenting sources you've quoted (if any).
- All submissions are received on speculation. A contract is sent after the assignment is made or article is accepted, although we cannot guarantee publication. The writer receives a byline and bio on each article, along with copies of the issue and payment upon publication. Articles cannot be published without a signed contract and cannot be paid without an invoice that includes your name, address, email address, phone number, payment amount, magazine issue date and title of article.
- E-mail submissions to [MomSense@MOPS.org](mailto:MomSense@MOPS.org).

**MOPS International Theme for 2013/14**

A Beautiful Mess: Embrace Your Story

Verse: Ephesians 2:10 (New Living Translation)

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

Addressing the felt needs of moms through this theme:

Moms live in messes. The toys, crumbs, and spit-up are their natural surroundings. Moms often feel like a mess. They are exhausted, under-showered and hormonal. Their past and present circumstances and decisions can leave them feeling inadequate for God's love and purposes.

A Beautiful Mess — reminds moms that beauty can come out of their difficult spots. The grime of preschoolers brings the beauty of motherhood. The bruises of life can bring God's redemption.

Embrace Your Story — reminds moms that their past, present and future can be used for good. God knows where each of us has been, where we are today and has set in motion where we are headed.

Many of the article ideas below highlight a life principle; the articles that work best for MOMSense use a personal story to illustrate the principle, so the emphasis is on compelling story rather than teaching on a principle.

Nov/Dec/Jan – What's My Story?

Big Idea: My story's not perfect and that's OK. Help readers to understand, recognize and acknowledge their stories.

**Felt Needs**

- Permission to be imperfect.
- Acceptance. How to deal with comparisons and the past.
- Insecurity.

**Article ideas**

- What is a beautiful mess? Introduce the concept of self-acceptance
- I am shaped by my past, but I'm living in the present.
- Giving myself the courage to be who I am.
- Dealing with perfectionism and comparisons.
- Modeling apologizing to others when I've made a mistake.
- The art of self-forgiveness; forgiving myself for past mistakes.
- Letting your kids see your mistakes
- Every mom has a story: Becoming a student of me.
- Life Map — how to map my life story.
- Building resilience: Sharing my mistakes with my kids.
- Plastic people crack: How to be authentic.
- Why being perfect can hinder relationships with my kids and others.
- Dealing with circumstances outside of my control.
- How my pre-mothering self impacts my mothering.

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Submissions due: June 14

February/March/April Redeeming Your Story

Big Idea: Beauty and Redemption: Redeem your story by sharing and seeing its beauty.

**Felt need:**

- Does my story matter?
- Am I OK? Worthiness: Am I enough?
- Sharing my story with others.

**Article ideas:**

- The now of my story: the parenting element.
- Why is my story important? How does that impact my relationships?
- If my childhood felt out of control; I do have some control in my life now.
- Worthiness: Feeling that I am enough and that I matter.
- How to bring my past into my present; how God uses the layers of my past.
- The power of vulnerability: People earn the right to know my story, who to share with.
- The power of sharing stories: How to embrace and intentionally tell my story.
- Owning my beauty: body image perfection and cultural expectations.
- Knowing when to be vulnerable and how much is OK to share.
- My God story: How to share what God means in my life.
- Being myself, sharing my talents in the midst of mothering.
- The real wife: How to share my story with my husband.

Submissions due: September 13

May/June/July There's Hope in My Story

Big Idea: Shaping plans for you and your family; living a better story. To have hope and be purposeful.

**Felt need:**

- Is there hope?
- What's it all for?
- What's my purpose and my family's purpose?

**Article ideas:**

- The intentional part of making some changes in my life, including my family.
- What are God's plans for my future? Where is my story taking me?
- My hope: Living a better story.
- My story as a mom is more than my kids. I am not my children; my children are not me.
- Telling my family story and creating a family mission statement.
- Going beyond surviving as a mom to thriving.
- My life is more than just mothering.
- Since mothering isn't forever, my plan for my marriage.
- What my past says about who I will become.
- Here's what kind of mom I want to be.
- Being intentional about where I'm going as a mom and a family.
- This is who we say we are as a family; this is how we live it out.
- The legacy of my story.
- Helping my children shape and tell their stories in a tangible way, story books, fun crafts.
- Creating a new chapter with my family now.

Submissions due: November 25.

August/September/October: Organizing My Mess/Shaping Summer Fun

Big Idea: Practical ways to organize my mess, reduce stress and shape summer fun.

**Felt needs**

- Balance: I need structure, but I also need freedom to play.
- Don't stress yourself out.
- Break the rules.
- I feel so overwhelmed with the day-to-day; I need practical tools.

**Article ideas:**

- Relax, have fun and don't be limited by the mess.
- Ways to organize my mess.
- Creative ideas to shape summer fun.
- How to host an organizing party.
- Keep it simple clean-out solutions.
- Top ten organizing tips for any family or any house.
- Taking control of my space.

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- Stress reducer tips for mom.
- How to make moving easy.
- Practical cleaning tips for the real mom.
- Being responsibly irresponsible, let loose this summer.
- Making mothering priorities based on your personality type and identity – practically living out who you are in your mothering story.

Submissions due: March 8

**Writing for Connections Magazine**

Connections is published four times a year (July/October/January/March) by MOPS International, providing leadership resources, encouragement and networking opportunities for local MOPS leaders.

**Audience and Distribution:**

- Approximately 30,000 volunteer leaders in local MOPS groups, most of whom are mothers of preschoolers
- The audience of Connections is Christian, and they are familiar and committed to the mission of MOPS.

**Content:**

- Connections is looking for articles to equip women in Leadership for Life skills, while providing practical tools and ideas to help their local MOPS group succeed and grow. Articles can approach leadership topics from a general perspective or focus on specific issues faced by MOPS leaders.
- Articles should include relevant training or information for local MOPS leaders. Using your own or your MOPS group's experience, share general principles that could have a broad appeal to a diverse selection of MOPS groups: Classic, Teen, Military, MOPS@, MOMSnext.
- Connections also accepts MOPS Makes a Difference stories — how MOPS influences the lives of moms. Please submit those stories to [Stories@MOPS.org](mailto:Stories@MOPS.org). If we decide to highlight your story in an upcoming issue of Connections, you will be contacted by the editor.
- All submissions should be written from a biblical, but not doctrinal, perspective. MOPS is non-denominational and Chartering Ministries represent a wide array of sizes, congregations and denominations. Please be sensitive to your audience.

**Submitting an Article:**

- Word count: Stories and articles should not be longer than 750 words. If accepted, articles will be edited by the Connections editor to fit the language, flow and size of the magazine.
- E-mail submission as a Word document to [Connections@MOPS.org](mailto:Connections@MOPS.org). If your article is publishing in Connections, you will receive author copies.
- Format: Include your name, address, phone and e-mail on the first page of your article. Use Times New Roman font, size 12, and paragraphs should be double-spaced.

Connections Magazine Editor

MOPS International

2370 South Trenton Way

Denver, CO 80231-3822

**Writing for MOPS Blog**

**Q.** How do I submit a recipe, story, tip or idea to MOPS International's *Hello, Darling* blog?

**A.** *We love submissions from you – our audience!* Keep in mind our average reader is a mother of preschoolers (infants through kindergarten) and between the ages of 25 and 40, although we welcome and encourage content for mothers outside these demographics. MOPS International seeks to meet the needs of every mom – urban and suburban moms, stay-at-home and working moms, teen, single and married moms – moms with different lifestyles who all share a similar desire to be the very best moms that they can be.

We're currently accepting submissions for:

- **DIY** – specific directions for crafting, building and re-purposing items that will make a mom's life easier, save her money or just make her world more beautiful. Please include images {at least 720 pixels wide} of each step in the DIY process including the finished product.
- **Inspiration** – humorous, encouraging or thought-provoking personal stories that will nurture the reader as a mother and/or woman and encourage her in her vital role. *Hello, Darling* does not accept devotions. Please avoid Christian jargon and use biblical quotes sparingly. Inspiration submissions should be between 450-600 words.
- **Recipes** – tasty, unique and/or kid-friendly recipes for breakfast, lunch, dinner or dessert. Seasonal, freeze-ahead, slow cooker, baked good and drink recipes also welcomed. Please include image {at least 720 pixels wide} of the dish. Images of each step in the cooking/baking process also appreciated.
- **Tips** – ideas to make a mom's life easier including but not limited to organization, planning, scheduling, parenting, relationships, traveling and budgeting. Tip submissions should be between 200-600 words.

*Hello, Darling* does not publish or promote single opinions on controversial subjects that divide our readers. These include doctrinal, political and social subjects as well as parenting issues that bring up strong emotions. While the decisions that you've made for your family may come up in your submission, do not assume that all readers will see

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things the same way.

Email submissions to [submissions@MOPS.org](mailto:submissions@MOPS.org).

Include your name, address, phone and email on the first page of your submission. If accepted, posts will be edited by MOPS International for length, grammar, content, style and tone. We do our best to respond to all submissions, but be aware we are sometimes inundated. If you haven't heard back from us after 4-6 weeks, please assume we will not be able to use your submission. Compensation for writing for *Hello, Darling* is promotion of you and your blog/website via your bio at the end of your post. Your bio may include up to three outside links.

**Q.** Who can I talk to about a question or concern I have about the *Hello, Darling* blog, my MOPS group or about MOPS International?

**A.** We'd love to talk with you about any questions or concerns you have. Please contact the MOPS Service Team at 888.910.6677 or [service@MOPS.org](mailto:service@MOPS.org).

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