



From a napkin sketch to a global platform: A decade of the *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being* – Reflections from SG Publishing

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Milestone anniversaries in scholarly publishing offer more than an opportunity to mark the passage of time. They invite reflection on the communities that shape a journal, the ideas and individuals that bring it to life, and the evolving systems through which knowledge is shared. As the publishing partner supporting the *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being* (JCSWB), alongside the Community Safety Knowledge Alliance (CSKA), the journal's publisher of record, we have had the privilege of watching the journal grow from an early idea about an emerging field into an internationally recognized platform for research, policy insight, and practice-based knowledge.

SG Publishing is especially proud to mark this 10th anniversary through this special issue, *A Decade of Building Safer, Healthier Communities*, which features reflective commentaries from those who have helped shape the journal over the past decade: founders, authors, members of the editorial team, journal partners, mission supporters, and affiliated associations. Their perspectives, along with the remarkable progress of the field itself, make this issue a testament to the collaborative spirit that has defined the journal's journey and to the strength of the community that continues to sustain it.

When conversations about the journal first began, we recognized a gap in the scholarly publishing landscape. Despite growing momentum around community safety and well-being (CSWB) initiatives, particularly in Canada, there was no dedicated Canadian journal focused on publishing research in this emerging field. The opportunity to create a platform to bring that work together was clear.

The idea that a journal could bring these perspectives together, bridging research, policy, and practice, was exciting and bold.

EARLY CONVERSATIONS AND THE VISION FOR A JOURNAL

My own connection to the journal began approximately 14 years ago, in conversations with the co-founders of

JCSWB; my husband, Matt Torigian, Senior Contributing Editor, and Norm Taylor, the journal's Editor-in-Chief. Those early discussions took place in a memorable setting in Cambridge, Ontario, one of those places that invites big thinking and reminds you that ambitious ideas are worth exploring.

As we discussed the emerging field of CSWB, we noted the lack of a dedicated scholarly platform to support its development. At some point during the conversation, the idea of creating such a journal began to take shape. Like many early publishing concepts, it began informally. We sketched out the basic idea on a napkin, mapping what the journal might look like and who it might serve (Figure 1). Over the years, we have often said we wish we had kept that napkin. In many ways, that simple sketch captured the optimism of the moment: the belief that if a thoughtful platform existed, a community of researchers and practitioners would gather around it and contribute to its growth.

Looking back now, it is remarkable how that early conversation evolved into what the JCSWB has become.

A COMMITMENT TO OPEN ACCESS

Accessibility became a foundational principle of the journal from the outset.

Our commitment to open access did not begin with JCSWB. More than two decades ago, we were among a relatively small group of independent publishers who embraced the early principles of the open-access movement. Being a pioneer in this space meant facing uncertainty and risk. There were few established paths to follow, and success was far from guaranteed. At that time, the idea that scholarly research should be freely accessible to readers was gaining support, yet sustainable models for achieving that goal were still evolving.

Our early adoption of open access was guided by a simple belief: knowledge intended to benefit communities should be available to those communities without barriers.

This philosophy aligned naturally with the goals of the CSWB field. Many stakeholders do not have ready access to

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FIGURE 1 The napkin that started it all: An illustration inspired by the early concept for the *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being*, originally sketched during a conversation in Cambridge, Ontario, as the idea for a dedicated scholarly platform for the community safety and well-being (CSWB) field began to take shape.

subscription-based academic journals, yet their work depends on the insights and evidence these journals provide.

Ensuring that the journal's content would be openly available was therefore essential.

THE DIAMOND OPEN-ACCESS MODEL

Over the past decade, the *JCSWB* has operated under a diamond open-access model, meaning that both readers and authors can access and publish research without fees.

This approach has proven particularly well suited to the CSWB field. Many of the most valuable insights in CSWB come from practitioners and collaborative research teams working directly within communities. Author-fee publication models can create barriers for such contributors, potentially limiting their participation in scholarly discourse.

The diamond model offers a different approach. By removing financial barriers for both authors and readers, it ensures that participation in knowledge exchange is based on the value of ideas rather than the availability of financial resources.

For a journal intended to bridge research, policy, and practice, this model has proven both effective and meaningful.

MISSION SUPPORT FROM CSKA AND NICHE TECHNOLOGY

Sustaining this approach has only been possible because of the support of organizations that share the journal's commitment to accessible knowledge.

The *JCSWB* is published under the auspices of the CSKA, which serves as the journal's publisher of record. From its earliest stages, Cal Corley, CEO of CSKA, recognized the importance of creating a dedicated platform for research and knowledge exchange in the emerging field of CSWB. Its early sponsorship and continued leadership helped lay the foundation for the journal's growth.

Niche Technology has also played a critical role in enabling the journal's diamond open-access model. Through its mission support, Niche Technology has helped ensure that the journal remains freely accessible to both authors and readers, benefiting not only the CSWB field but also the broader public safety and research communities that engage with this work globally.

The journal exists not simply as a publishing platform but as a shared effort to strengthen the evidence base supporting CSWB initiatives.

THE PUBLISHING TEAM AND THE JOURNAL

No journal succeeds solely because of its publishing model. Behind every issue lies the generous work of editors, reviewers, authors, and publishing staff who share a commitment to advancing knowledge.

At SG Publishing, we are fortunate to have a dedicated leadership team whose expertise and care have supported the journal throughout its development. The invaluable contributions of Heather Seunath, and Laura Hope, have helped ensure the consistent quality and professionalism that readers and contributors experience with the journal. Their efforts are essential to maintaining the consistency and standards that scholarly publishing requires. We are also grateful to Sheila Dietrich for her creative support and stewardship of the journal's visual design and social media presence.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

When the *JCSWB* was first launched, our expectations were hopeful but measured. Building a new scholarly journal is always a gradual process. It requires the trust of authors, the commitment of reviewers and editorial leadership, and the steady development of a readership.

What has been remarkable over the past decade is how quickly the journal became embedded within the international CSWB community.

Under the editorial leadership of Norm Taylor, the journal has grown into a respected forum for research, policy analysis, and practitioner insight. Norm's thoughtful leadership and commitment to the field have been instrumental in strengthening its voice within the CSWB community. Contributions now come from across Canada and internationally, reflecting the global relevance of the CSWB approach.

The data tell the true story: website traffic, article views, and social media engagement have exceeded our expectations, demonstrating the journal's genuine reach and impact in ways we could not have anticipated.

The journal's development has also been reflected in its increasing visibility within the scholarly publishing ecosystem. In recent years, attributed to upholding scholarly publishing standards, *JCSWB* has been accepted into the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and indexed within EBSCOhost, important milestones that significantly broaden the discoverability and reach of the research published in the journal.

For SG Publishing, the journal's success has exceeded our early expectations. What began as a conversation about the need for a dedicated publication and a rough sketch on

a napkin has evolved into a widely recognized platform supporting the growth of an important and evolving field.

LOOKING AHEAD

As *JCSWB* enters its second decade, the landscape of scholarly publishing continues to evolve. Open access was once considered experimental. It is now increasingly recognized as an essential component of the global research ecosystem.

The *JCSWB* provides an important platform for continued collaboration. By bringing together researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders, it helps foster the exchange of ideas and experiences that drive innovation in the field.

CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

Reflecting on the past decade, one theme stands out above all others: collaboration.

The journal exists because individuals and organizations believed that creating a shared platform for knowledge exchange could strengthen a field dedicated to improving CSWB. What we did not anticipate was the emergence of an incredibly supportive community, the likes of which we have never seen in the publishing field whose encouragement, generosity, and engagement have been instrumental to the journal's success. That belief has proven well founded.

For SG Publishing, it has been both a professional privilege and a personal pleasure to support the journal and the community that has shaped it. We remain deeply grateful to the authors, reviewers, editorial leadership, supporters, and partners whose commitment has made the journal possible.

Anniversaries offer a moment to reflect on what has been built. They also invite us to imagine what comes next. As the field continues to evolve and expand internationally, the need for accessible, collaborative knowledge sharing will only grow.

We look forward to continuing this journey alongside the vibrant community that has helped make the *JCSWB* what it is today. We are excited for what is next and for supporting the ideas, research, and partnerships that will shape the next decade of CSWB together.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES

The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.

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