Reviewer’s report

Title: Does parenting style matter? - Predictors of suicide attempts in a representative sample of adolescents

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Reviewer: Paul L. Plener

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Review for BMC Pediatrics
Donath et al.: Does parenting style matter? – Predictors of suicide attempts in a representative sample of adolescents

The paper’s focus is on the interplay between parenting behaviors and suicide behaviors and assesses several risk factors for suicide attempts and suicidal ideation. Authors showed an authoritative parenting style to be protective against suicide attempts, whereas a rejecting-neglecting parenting style was described as a risk factor. The findings about migration background and ADHD as a risk factor seem particularly interesting, since they have only been addressed in few studies so far. A huge strength of this paper is clearly the large sample size: to my knowledge, it is the first time, that these questions are answered based on a representative sample of this size. One weakness of the study is the use of a measure for suicidality and parenting style which, as far as I understood, has not been tested in other studies before. I have a few comments or questions about further details (see below). In Summary this is a well written study, using an impressive sample to answer clinically relevant questions. This paper is of high importance to the field of suicidology and will possibly have a large impact on suicide research. I recommend to accept the manuscript after some minor changes:

1. Since it has been shown, that the way an assessment is carried out can hugely influence the outcome, I would urge the author to include more details about the study procedure.

How was the study announced to the students? Was the study announced as study on suicidality? Who informed the students? Were they only informed per mail, or was there an announcement in the classroom. Was there an incentive for participating in the study?

2. I find the classification of countries somewhat confusing (like for example: where would Bosnia end up, which is both a former Yugoslavian state but the culture is essentially influenced by Islamic theology with 44% muslims representing the largest religion group?) What was the rationale for choosing this classification?

3. Number of non-profit volunteer activities is described as predictor of suicide attempts, but not discussed in the paper, although it’s mentioned as a possible
option for intervention earlier in the paper. These finding seems counterintuitive. Can the authors discuss this finding?

4. The recently publishes work by Brent et al. (2013) in the Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry 52(12):1260-71. doi: 10.1016/j.jaac.2013.09.009, presents an overview about interventions on adolescent suicidality, showing that the involvement of family is an important point. The findings underline the authors’ conclusion and might be a good contribution.

5. Furthermore the findings of the authors are in line with research from a longitudinal study by Wichstrom et al. (2009) (Arch Suic Res 13: 105-122), who showed, that attachment to parents was a protective factor for adolescent suicidal behavior.

**Level of interest:** An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.