Reviewer's report

**Title:** Promoting effective child development practices in the first year of life: does timing make a difference?

**Version:** 1  
**Date:** 27 January 2014

**Reviewer:** Beth Wildman

**Reviewer's report:**

“Promoting effective child development practices in the first year of life: Does timing make a difference?” compares the impact of providing parent education about the impact of providing an educational video to first-time parents about child-rearing practices and appropriate stimulation of infants either during their first or seventh month of life. The intervention appears to be cost-effective and appropriate for population-based intervention. The findings suggest that both time periods may be useful, with the earlier time increasing knowledge and the later time changing attitudes. Unfortunately, the manuscript did not include data concerning parenting behaviors and whether the video changed parenting practices.

While the study has the potential to inform practice, additional information would be useful. For example, it would help if the authors explained how they choose 1 month and 7 months for the video. As the manuscript mentions, it is possible that, by the 7th month, parents have learned much of the information in the video and, therefore, did not show increased knowledge. Information about parent practices is needed in order to ascertain how helpful the video intervention was. It is possible that changing attitude is more related to behavioral changes than knowledge.

The manuscript does not state hypotheses. A statement of hypotheses and the rationale for the hypotheses would be helpful.

In the Results, the authors present the findings clearly in the text and table. However, they appear to draw conclusions from the percentages reported. In order to interpret the findings, appropriate statistical tests that can reveal the significance of the findings are needed.

The first sentence of the Conclusions section states that the findings are limited to knowledge and intentions. There is a body of literature suggesting that intention to change behavior is related to changing behavior. Presentation of the changes in intention and discussion of its probable relationship to behavioral change would strengthen the manuscript. Given that interviews occurred two weeks after viewing the video, any information gathered about changes in behavior would enhance the importance of the findings. In addition, discussion of the timing of the video would be interesting. Are there any data to suggest that parents are more amenable to the information in the video when the child is older?
and beyond the first month of life, when the parents are adjusting to having a baby?

Finally, the manuscript requires editing for language and grammar for publication. While the content is clear, the writing style requires revision.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'