Reviewer's report

Title: Associations between factors within the home setting and screen time among children aged 0-5 years: a cross-sectional study

Version: 1 Date: 27 April 2012

Reviewer: Ben J Smith

Reviewer's report:

This study investigates the association between demographic, parental and environmental factors and the television viewing time of children five years of age and under in Ontario, Canada. There is clear justification given for the research question, and the methods of the study are described quite thoroughly. The findings presented add to the research on the correlates and determinants of sedentary behaviour among young children, however the limitations of the study should be taken into account more fully in its interpretation.

Major essential revisions

One issue that deserves more examination is whether the participating parents were demographically and socioeconomically representative, and what implications this may have for interpretation of the findings.

Another matter that should be considered is that only one environmental measure was included, when the study has been based on an ecological model of sedentary behaviour. The presence of televisions in the home is important, but the nature of the environment external to the home will also present barriers or enablers of non-sedentary, active behaviours. Two environmental barriers (climate and safety issues) as examined as parental cognitions, but these were not treated as physical environment measures.

It was not clear why, given that 38% of children participated in video/computer game play, that this was not added to television viewing time to get a total screen viewing time measure, as has been done in other studies of children’s sedentary behaviours. Adding video/computer game time may not have had a significant bearing on the main findings, but this issue could be considered by the authors.

Minor essential revisions

A few further issues for clarification are:

P7, line 82 - confirmation of what type of reliability was demonstrated for the self-efficacy measures in Campbell et al’s study, with the reliability statistic given;

P11, line 173-174 – it is not clear what is meant when it is stated that the linear and logistic regression analyses were repeated for screen time, when the logistic regression procedure for television viewing was just described;
P12, line 185-188 – some explanation could be given for what the regression coefficients are saying about the nature of the relationships between the dependent and independent variables;

P21, table 1 – is it correct that 92% of respondents were male?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**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