Reviewer's report

Title: Watch Me Grow: A garden-based pilot intervention to increase fruit and vegetable intake in preschoolers

Version: 3 Date: 6 February 2013

Reviewer: Karrie Kalich

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions- none noted

Minor Essential Revisions:
Line 32: how were the 6 centers selected?
Line 77: How were the four activities spaced throughout the month? Did all activities get implemented? How was this measured/ensured? Who implemented the activities – center staff or the health educator?
Line 78: How did you encourage staff to serve as positive role models?

Discretionary Revisions

Do the researchers have any thoughts as to why the amount of fruits and vegetables served to the children changed from pre to post?

Did all of the intervention activities prove to be age-appropriate? For example, were the children able to graph and chart? These activities seem possible for 5-year olds but difficult for 3-year olds. This information will be useful to other pursuing this type of intervention.

Why were 3 different children observed at each time point versus observing for change in the same children over time? This seems difficult as it does not allow for control over individual dietary preferences, level of food neophobia, etc. With a small sample size, this could explain why the intervention did not prove to have more of an impact. Perhaps 3 “adventurous” eaters were observed at baseline and 3 “picky” eaters as post-intervention.

This manuscript makes an early and meaningful contribution to the limited research on garden-based interventions focused on young children. While the sample size is small, the researchers are forthcoming with sharing their lessons learned and methodology.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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