Reviewer's report

Title: Do computer use, TV viewing, and the presence of the media in the bedroom predict school-aged children's sleep habits in an eighteen-month follow-up?

Version: 1 Date: 29 March 2013

Reviewer: Susan Sisson

Reviewer's report:

Thank you for the time invested in the preparation of this manuscript. It has useful information that is timely and relevant to the field. This is an interesting study that addresses gaps in the literature. The purpose was to examine electronic media use and sleep habits/duration cross-sectionally as well as longitudinally (18 months) in school-age children. The content is timely and relevant and study design is sound. There are no major scientific issues but I would recommend English language/grammar review. There were several word choice and order issues throughout. The authors also need to relate their sample to previous research to a greater degree. Specific comments have been noted.

Abstract: As the background and purpose are written it alludes to only using the 2008 data not both 2006 and 2008. Consider adding terms like cross-sectional and longitudinal, rather than follow-up.

Abstract results: Please provide some actual data. Duration of use? Time? Something more descriptive as well as your experimental statistics is needed.

Abstract conclusions: the 2nd sentence is redundant with the 1st, or so it seems. If a different point is being made, it is not clear to this reviewer.

Background, 3rd paragraph: Are these studies in children or adults? Please make sure these distinctions are clear.

Methods:

Please provide more information. Were all 4th and 5th graders in the schools recruited? Were there other exclusions? Is 74% of all the possible children in the correct grades in the involved schools?

Measures: Please make clear that you are looking at your measures continuously, rather than categorically, as you’ve written the irregular sleep habits, I thought it was a category, until I read on into the analyses and results. I think just some clarification and details would be helpful in making the clear.

Results:

You present no data in the results section and simply refer readers to the tables. While you do not want substantial overlap, I would like to see something said about the sample in the results section.
Discussion:

In the sentence for future research, you should include something to the effects of a better variety and objective measurement of behaviors, not just self-report. You address this in the discussion previously, but do not include it in the areas of future research.

Please provide in the discussion a comparison of your sleep duration, TV viewing time, computer use and presence of a bedroom TV with other studies of children of similar ages. While there may be done in the Finnish population, there are several in other groups. It would be helpful for readers to understand these youth and perhaps explain your findings in a more thorough way, especially as others start to use similar methods and compare back to your findings. For example, the prevalence of bedroom TV is approximately half that of the U.S. This is relevant and necessary information that needs to be presented for your paper.

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