Reviewer's report

Title: Longitudinal Outcomes of a School-based Universal Resiliency Training for Adolescents: A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial

Version: 2 Date: 12 August 2014

Reviewer: Alison Calear

Reviewer's report:

The current paper presents secondary analyses of a trial testing the effectiveness of a universal depression prevention program in schools. The following changes are recommended.

Major Compulsory Revisions:
1. Please make the aims of the study clearer in your abstract and introduction. In particular, please make it explicit that this paper focuses on secondary analyses and is not the main outcomes paper.

2. Please revise your 'Background'. At present, it is hard to follow and repetitive in parts. It is also presenting a selective overview of previous research in the field. There have been a number of comprehensive reviews of school-based depression prevention programs that would be more meaningful, and provide a more balanced overview, than selectively reporting on a few studies and giving the impression that this is the state of the field.

3. Please provide a more balanced discussion of your results in light of previous research. Many school-based depression prevention programs have found significant effects and no iatrogenic effects. In addition, the most recent comprehensive review of depression prevention programs, which you referenced in your paper (Ref 20, Merry et al. 2011), found evidence for the effectiveness of universal programs. Thus, your statement that "Currently, it is questioned whether universal prevention is an effective way to prevent depression" is inaccurate.

Minor Essential Revisions:
1. In your discussion of the mechanisms of change in CBT in the background, please make it clearer as to the population reviewed and intervention type.

2. Please revise your manuscript for spelling and grammar. At present, this makes the paper difficult to follow and disjointed in places.

3. Please provide more detail regarding what your sample size calculations are based on? What was the estimated ICC and how did this affect the calculations?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests
Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests