Author's response to reviews

Title: Stress-related eating, obesity and associated behavioural traits in adolescents: a prospective population-based cohort study

Authors:

Anne Jääskeläinen (Anne.Jaaskelainen@ttl.fi)
Nina Nevanperä (Nina.Nevanpera@ttl.fi)
Jouko Remes (Jouko.Remes@ttl.fi)
Fanni Rahkonen (fannira@hotmail.com)
Marjo-Riitta Järvelin (m.jarvelin@imperial.ac.uk)
Jaana Laitinen (Jaana.Laitinen@ttl.fi)

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear BMC Public Health Editor,

Thank you for the additional comments regarding our manuscript “Stress-related eating, obesity and associated behavioural traits in adolescents: a prospective population-based cohort study” (ID#1293366199945455). We have made further amendments to the text according to your suggestions. We now discuss the role of food availability outside the home and related policy implications (p. 14-15) and have rephrased the statement on the validity of the single item (p. 15).

Thank you again for the suggestions to improve our manuscript further. We look forward to hearing your final decision and also welcome any further questions and comments.

Sincerely,

Anne Jääskeläinen
Corresponding Author
Stress-related eating, obesity and associated behavioural traits in adolescents: a prospective population-based cohort study Anne Jääskeläinen, Nina Nevanperä, Jouko Remes, Fanni Rahkonen, Marjo-Riitta Järvelin and Jaana Laitinen BMC Public Health

Editorial comments:

I have re-reviewed this manuscript. Wendy Oddy is satisfied with the changes, but I notice that some of the issues raised by Georgina Trapp have not been addressed. For example, the authors still suggest that the single item in this study is a valid instrument for health examinations at schools, which is challenged by the reviewer. Similarly, the manuscript would be strengthened if the authors would comment on the policy implications for the food supply within Schools and other places serving young people (for example canteens at sports clubs or sporting events). The study suggests that stress related eating often involves consumption of unhealthy food choices, but if the food choices available were healthier choices, then there would be less availability. Could you authors respond to first the second reviewers specific comment about the single item; and secondly consider the issue I raised (which builds on the issue raised by Dr Trapp related to commenting on the policy implications).

Authors’ response:

1) We have replaced the word ‘valid’ with ‘applicable’ in the sentence on page 15: The results also indicate that the single item used in this study to assess stress-related eating behaviour is an applicable instrument for use in, for example, health examinations at schools, to recognise high-risk subjects who could benefit from intensified counselling on healthy eating and weight management as well as support for health behaviour changes.

2) We added the following sentences in the discussion section (p. 14-15): In addition to the home environment, many other environments, such as schools, sports clubs and sporting events, can influence adolescents’ food choices; these places often provide easy access to snack-type foods and sugary drinks. Thus, health policies and programmes should be aimed at ensuring the supply of healthy, affordable foods and beverages as well as limiting the availability of energy-dense, low-satiety snacks in these surroundings. For example, modifications in the school food environment have been found to affect adolescents’ food choices both in and outside of school [54].