Reviewer's report

Title: Adequate sleep among adolescents is positively associated with health status and health-related behaviors

Version: 1 Date: 30 December 2005

Reviewer: Tonya M Palermo

Reviewer's report:

General

This is an interesting manuscript describing the relationship among sleep and health status and health-related behaviors in Taiwanese adolescents. The topic is important and relevant. The design and analytic plan are generally appropriate for the study aims.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The primary limitation of the manuscript is in the lack of information concerning how sleep was assessed. Moreover there is insufficient justification for how sleep times were defined. Specific comments are below:

1. Could the authors clarify their definition of adequate sleep? The description of 6-8 hours of sleep is less than the optimal sleep requirements that have been previously reported for adolescents. For example, Carskadon et al. (1980) have found that 9.25 hours of sleep is optimal for adolescents. The authors should clearly justify on what basis 6-8 hours is considered adequate sleep for an adolescent and/or use a different descriptor to refer to sleep that is at least 6 hours per night.

2. A critical piece of missing information is the method in which sleep times were assessed. How did adolescents report on their typical sleep patterns? What was the response scale? From Table 1, it appears that adolescents may have reported on how often they obtained adequate sleep from never to always rather than reporting on actual sleep duration. Can the authors provide any evidence of reliability or validity of their method of assessing adolescent total sleep time? Were teens provided with a description of adequate sleep?

3. The conclusions about the short sleep times of Taiwanese adolescents needs to be balanced by discussion of the limitations of using this particular method of assessing total sleep time. The authors should discuss the potential role for using more objective measures of sleep time such as actigraphy.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.