Reviewer's report

Title: Contribution of parental and school personnel smoking to health risk behaviours among Finnish adolescents

Version: 1 Date: 12 March 2009

Reviewer: IRENE TRAMACERE

Reviewer's report:

In this study, the authors investigated the role of parental and school personnel smoking on health risk behaviours among Finnish adolescents. This is a well-described descriptive epidemiologic study, based on a large number of participants. The manuscript is well-written and conclusions are interesting. However, below there are some comments that may help to further improve the manuscript.

Major points:

1. The Abstract should be completely revised by authors: the second sentence of the Methods section of the Abstract should be re-written; in the Results section of the Abstract “95% CI” should be added to each occurrence of confidence intervals; OR, COR and CI should be spelled out at the first occurrence. Moreover, the Abstract should be modified according to all the following points.

2. Please add to the Results section findings on smoking prevalence of adolescents, parents and school personnel. Furthermore, please discuss these results in the Discussion section, comparing your findings on smoking prevalence (and for example binge-drinking) with those from previous studies.

3. Please simplify the Measure section in favour of the Data Analysis section of Methods, specifying that the multilevel analysis was used in order to consider both individual and aggregate data.

4. The use of prevalence rate ratio instead of odds ratio would be more suitable. Alternatively, the odds ratio can be used as an association estimate, but it should not be interpreted as a relative risk because of the high prevalence of the outcome. This should be at least discussed in the Discussion section.

Minor points:

1. According to the question on “reporting adult smoking at school”, subjects answering “can not say” should be excluded from the analysis.

2. Please consider to categorize the variable “proportion of pupils at school with low parental education” in four categories instead of five, joining the last two categories (#40%<50% and #50%).

3. Please consider to delete the p-values in Table 1, since, given the large sample size, they are not informative.

4. Please consider to replace CORs with ORs, considering dichotomous
outcomes (for example, according to “smoking during school time” authors could consider ever vs never).

5. Please consider to delete the last paragraph of the Results section, since readers could have difficulties in understanding it.

6. Please rephrase and simplify the 5th sentence of the 4th paragraph of the Discussion section: “Adults’ attitudes towards smoking ... green light for smoking”.

7. In Table 2 and 3 please specify that the odds ratios were estimated by multilevel analyses.

8. Please add to a footnote of Table 2 the list of covariates considered as adjustment in the multilevel analyses.

9. Please carefully re-read the entire manuscript, for the presence of a few typos.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**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