Reviewer’s report

Title: Beverage patterns and trends among school-aged children in the US, 1989-2008

Version: 1 Date: 17 July 2011

Reviewer: Vasanti Malik

Reviewer’s report:

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

Please provide rationale for why was 1% used as the cut-off for low fat milk? Could 2% be considered low fat?

The cut-off for considering a beverage as high sugar was 6% of total sugar, based on how many calories?

Please provide a reference for the federal policy threshold and the percentages for classifying income level.

It is difficult to differentiate between the shades of gray in figure 3. Please add patterns or more contrast between shades.

Page 4 of the background mentions the American beverage association/Clinton foundation approach of capping calories in beverages and that the present study highlights trends in SSB consumption in the period before and after introduction of this approach. When was this approach introduced? Since this point is raised it would be of interest if it is revisited in the discussion or policy considerations section.

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

In background, first paragraph, please be specific about what type of juice i.e. 100% fruit juice or fruit juice with added sugar.

Please edit top of page 4- i.e. nations ban sodas… from schools and edit for typos.

Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)

In the statistical analysis section, you could be more explicit about survey commands?

Can remove STATA commands from abstract
Would be good to give an example of a sugar sweetened beverage, caloric nutritional beverage and low calorie beverage is in the background

A potential limitation of the dietary assessment method is also use of a proxy

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**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