Reviewer's report

Title: The development and evaluation of the Australian Child and Adolescent Recommended Food Score: a cross-sectional study

Version: 4 Date: 8 August 2012

Reviewer: Anna Stahl

Reviewer's report:

I agree to most revisions, but have still some objections.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Comment 21: The sentence in line 92-93 is not clear (handling of missing values in FFQs with >5 and #5 unanswered items).

Comment 24: The authors wrote in line 133-139 that they adjusted in the multiple regression analysis for variables that were potentially associated with food intake and included two health related variables (sedentary behavior, BMI) and age. However, there might be other variables of interest (e.g. sex, SES). In my opinion, the authors should explain their reasons for the exclusion of the confounding factor sex, report the regression coefficients of all independent variables (add to line 210), and report the result of a sensitivity analysis including energy intake as independent variable. I agree with the authors that reporting bias cannot be eliminated by adjusting for energy intake. However, higher energy intake might facilitate meeting the food intake recommendations (see line 237-238).

New:

The authors wrote that “ACARFS utilises a subsample of questions in the ACAES“ (line 104), but the number of questions regarding some food groups is higher in the ACARFS (reported in lines 107-110) than in the ACAES (reported in lines 82-85): 11 or 12 questions to fruits? 9 or 12 questions to breads/cereals? 9 or 10 questions to dairy foods? The sum of the reported questions of the ACARFS is not equal 70 (line 107).

Minor Essential Revisions

Comment 30: The correction is incorrect (“The ACARFS haseight sub-scales …“).

Comment 32: The correction is incorrect (“The data is this study is from a cross-sectional …“).

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.