Reviewer's report

Title: Impact of physical activity on energy balance, food intake and choice in normal weight and obese children in the setting of acute social stress: A randomized controlled trial

Version: 3
Date: 22 October 2014

Reviewer: Jana Strahler

Reviewer's report:

The author did a very nice job with this revision. All of my concerns have been addressed.

I have only very minor essential revisions left:

1. See also Reviewer #1 comment 4: In fact, there has been a manipulation check – HPA and ANS responses - which will be published in a separate paper. Please inform the reader that this psychobiological data will be published elsewhere.

2. Children have been classified as pre-pubertal due to age 7 to 11. Normally, girls begin puberty at ages 10-11, boys slightly later – thus, it is likely that some of your subjects already started puberty. Having not measured, e.g. Tanner stages, needs to be mentioned in the study limitations.

3. With regard to “no stress controls” (comment #5): Thanks for your response. No further changes are necessary.

4. Definition of comfort food: Just recently, comfort food giving emotional comfort has been questioned, i.e. “comfort foods led to significant improvements in mood, but no more than other foods or no food” (Wagner, H. S., Ahlstrom, B., Redden, J. P., Vickers, Z., & Mann, T. (2014). The Myth of Comfort Food. Health Psychology). Thus, I would recommend deleting this part and writing “high fat and carbohydrate caloric content food”.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest 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