Reviewer's report

Title: Parental perceptions of barriers and facilitators to preventing child unintentional injuries within the home: a qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 1 December 2014

Reviewer: Juliet McMullin

Reviewer's report:

This paper describes parents’ perceptions of how to prevent unintentional injuries for toddlers under the age of five. Drawing on qualitative interviews the analysis of the data attempts to describe barriers and facilitators to injury prevention. The authors’ discussion of individual perceptions and the context of renters and interrupted supervision is indeed a strength of the article and contributes to the literature on unintentional injury prevention. There are two major weaknesses with the paper as currently presented. The first is the presentation of data and the analysis. The second is the discussion of fatalism.

Major Revisions:

The authors’ present us with numerous quotes that support the categories of perceptions, barriers and facilitators. The discussion, however, lacks depth and context or a sense of how these categories work with each other for the parents. For example, what is the relationship between interrupted supervision and difficulties adapting the home? Might there be an economic dimension to their perceptions? Are parents who are struggling with multiple demands also be the same parents who are renters and cannot adapt the home (see McMullin and Dao 2014).

The recommendation that real life stories be used in prevention training is a positive step in considering how to address unintentional injury as a public health problem. How might the authors use their own data in this recommendation?

Overall the discussion reiterated the categories presented and did not produce a narrative that gave meaning or direction to the contributions or next steps suggested by the authors data.

Question of fatalism – Given the combination of “lack of anticipation” and the sense that individuals can prevent big accidents (and not more minor injuries), the use of fatalism as a category seems to overstate parents’ perceptions of barriers. Fatalism is a concept typically associated with big accidents and a general carelessness with regards to risky behaviors (see Drew and Schoenberg 2011 for a more detailed discussion of fatalism). When applied as an explanation for health behaviors it becomes a way to blame individuals without looking at the larger context in which behaviors occur.

Drew, EM and Schoenberg, NE. Deconstructing Fatalism: Ethnographic


Level of interest: An article of limited interest

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.