Author's response to reviews

Title: A youth-led social marketing campaign to encourage healthy lifestyles, the EYTO (European Youth Tackling Obesity) project: A cluster randomised controlled trial in Catalonia, Spain.

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Author's response to reviews:

Dr. Natalie Pafities,
Editor-in-Chief: BMC Public Health

November 10, 2014

Dear Editor,

I am pleased to submit our study protocol manuscript, titled “A youth-led social marketing campaign to encourage healthy lifestyles, the EYTO (European Youth Tackling Obesity) project: A randomised controlled trial in Catalonia, Spain” for consideration by BMC Public Health, with the manuscript number 2029251992146365.

We have sent the forwarded Ethical and Funding documentation by email at BMCSeriesEditorial@biomedcentral.com.

The EYTO project is a youth-led social marketing campaign to encourage healthy lifestyles in the adolescent population of 4 European countries (the United Kingdom, Portugal, the Czech Republic and Spain). The EYTO project works through a peer-led social marketing campaign that is designed and implemented by adolescents of each participating country. Each country involved in the project acts independently; therefore, this protocol describes the participation of the Spanish team specifically.
Our manuscript describes the study protocol of a randomised controlled intervention conducted in Spain in which 2 high schools are assigned as the control group and 2 high schools are assigned as the intervention group. The aim of the Spanish intervention is to improve adolescents' lifestyles, including nutritional habits and physical activity practice, and to prevent obesity in socioeconomically disadvantaged and vulnerable adolescents. From the intervention group, 5 adolescents with leadership characteristics were recruited separately for a training session. These 5 Adolescent Campaign Creators (ACCs) are responsible for designing and implementing a campaign for the improvement of healthy lifestyles between their schoolmates. It is essential that the ACCs use the 8 social marketing principles (customer orientation, behaviour, theory, insight, exchange, competition, segmentation and methods mix) in the design of the campaign. The primary outcomes of the Spanish intervention are as follows: consumption of fruits and vegetables, physical activity practice, and TV/computer/game console use. The secondary outcomes are as follows: breakfast consumption, engagement with local recreation and obesity prevalence. The outcomes will be measured by the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study (HBSC) survey at baseline and at the end of the intervention.

In the control group, no intervention will be implemented, but the outcome measurements will be collected during the same time frame as in the intervention group.

We believe that this manuscript is appropriate for publication by BMC Public Health because this project is a novel methodological approach to fighting obesity among youth that can positively impact the practice of public health and health promotion worldwide.

This manuscript has not been published and it is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. There is any publication published or submitted about this study. We have no conflicts of interests to disclose. The funding body had not peer-reviewed this study protocol.

The protocol conformed to the Helsinki Declaration and Good Clinical Practice guidelines of the International Conference of Harmonization. This randomised trial was conducted according to the extended CONSORT 2010 guidelines.

The Spanish methodological intervention at the EYTO project was approved by the Clinical Research Ethical Committee of the Hospital Universitari Sant Joan de Reus. The parents or guardians of the participant adolescents gave written informed consent to participate in this trial. Additionally, this trial has been registered in the ClinicalTrials.gov: NCT02157402. Registered 28 May 2014.

Currently this study is ongoing, we are analyzing baseline data and the adolescent campaign creators are designing the second campaign for
intervention high-schools. The program will finalize at April of 2015.

In our opinion, this manuscript adds a new methodology to tackle adolescent obesity and to improve lifestyles in this population. As such, it would be of interest to the general public as well as the specialist readers of BMC Public Health. We look forward to your opinion as to its suitability for inclusion in the journal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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