Reviewer's report

Title: Parent and child perceptions of school-based obesity prevention in England: a qualitative study

Version: 2 Date: 21 September 2015

Reviewer: Laura Terragni

Reviewer's report:

The article is well written and the aims are clearly stated. The title and the abstract properly convey the content of the article. The integration of a qualitative approach is also of relevance. I liked the article and I will like to read it in a published form. However, I have some remarks, mainly concerning methodology, which I mean authors have to consider and respond to.

1) Major Compulsory Revisions

The first regards focus groups with children. I agree that this is an appropriate research method, however, interviews/focus groups with children require special attention and and data interpretation has to be evaluated carefully. In your article you did not really addressed this topic at all.

What I ask you is to describe more specifically 1) how focus groups with children were conducted (in methods). 2) The dynamic during focus groups among participants and between participant and researchers, reflections on the data you have gathered through this source (in discussion)

The second comment is on data analysis: you said that there were three overarching themes emerging form the data. However, at least two (impact and sustainability), are topic which are already part of the interview guide. I think that the organization of the results works well, but please specify better which topic/themes were decided on beforehand (i.e. impact) and which ones were “emerging” (i.e. “improved knowledge and skills”).

2) Recommendations for improvement

When it comes to results, I’ll suggests the authors to “dig” more in the richness of their data material.

For instance. By reading your results, I found it very interesting that the kids seemed to have become more curious and less afraid to experiment with new, healthy food. I think that is an original finding, as it is reported in literature that children are conservative (noephobia). You may elaborate more on that (also using a “new emerging theme”). Other times I would have liked that you used more actively the qualitative material you have. Qualitative data, as you clearly pointed out in the introduction, helps as understand better why people do what they do. In some instances you just report “quotes” from parents or children, without focusing on essential parts that could be enlighten by qualitative methods. For instance: line 193-195 p.10, I’d like you to reflect more on why is
“OBVIOUS” that one goes back to old habits? Why is obvious? What have we learned from our interviews that will make this less obvious? The same may apply also to other parts of the text. Of course, this is partially due to the chosen methodology (descriptive-interpretative), but I am sure that you could have got much out of your data.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.