Reviewer's report

Title: Do parents' support behaviours predict whether or not their children get sufficient sleep?: A cross-sectional study

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Reviewer: R Spencer

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This paper reports on the relationship between parenting behaviors around sleep hygiene in children (5-17 yrs). The authors suggest that children of parents with rules around bedtime were more likely to achieve recommended sleep while simply encouraging these sleep behaviors was not (negative association). This was true for weekday sleep while parenting behaviors had no impact on weekend sleep.

The primary conclusion was that parent boundaries contribute to child sleep but it depends on the type of support, weekend v. weekday, and age. Interestingly, it takes some digging through the text to interpret these statements. While the results section does clarify the direction of the predictions between enforcing/encouraging and sleep (enforcing=positive; encouraging=negative) and that this is only true on weekends, the role of age group is not discussed here nor in the Conclusions (one has to go to the model). Yes, the authors discuss that fewer adolescents meet the recommendations, but that is not surprising, this paper's focus is the role of parenting across these age groups and the authors do not discuss this interaction much (that the role of parent rule-setting on sleep changes across ages).

Second, an emphasis of this study is to understand when sleep meets recommendations in the Canadian 24-hr Movement Guidelines. The definitions of sleep and ages of study are dictated by this. Yet, important in those guidelines is that sleep be UNINTERRUPTED. Indeed, sleeping for 9-11 hrs uninterrupted is very different than sleeping that amount with sleep fragmented by night time wakings. There seems to be no measure or accounting of this even though it is in their basic definition (Table 1).

Third, the study lacks hypotheses. While the study objective is presented, how the measures were selected and what the hypotheses were is not stated. Importantly, to select just screen time as the one variable on parents' promotion of healthy sleep environment is very limited.

Finally, given that the difference between motivation and enforcement is key to the results, it seems important that the respondents agreed to the definitions of 'encourage' and 'enforce rules'. How does one define 'enforced rule'? Must it have a consequence? Or does this simply mean 'I have a specific bedtime' (as opposed to an encouraged bedtime)? This is absolutely important as this paper seems to encourage rule enforcement around bedtimes when we know this to be
absolutely detrimental to pre-teens and teens as it leads to stress and anxiety prior to bed (which leads to insomnia). Parents could respond positively because they do more than encourage a set bedtime (they tell the child to go to bed now) but 'enforced rule' implies a punishment (as opposed to bringing them back to bed calmly should they get out).

In regards to the analysis, the paper needs to be consistent in groupings. The definition separates 5-13 from 14-17. Table 3 separates 5-9 and 10-17. But figures treat age as a continuous variable. If analyses are done as a continuous variable, to interpret figures as they are, it is important to know the sample size, gender distribution, etc, for each age.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**  
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**  
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Yes

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Yes

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