Author’s response to reviews

Title: Manuscript Do negative childhood conditions increase the risk of somatic symptoms in adolescence? – A prospective cohort study

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Editor and reviewers,

Thank you for your relevant comments. Below the replies and changes to the manuscript are described for each comment.

Abstract

“Relevant” in the first line of the abstract might be replaced by “important.” Also in the abstract, the third sentence under Background, that starts with “The results…” might be removed, as the results do not need to be stated in Background. Also in the abstract under Methods, the phrase “who provided questionnaire information” is awkward and might be replaced with “who responded to the survey on their somatic symptoms.

Reply

We agree on the suggested changes and they have all been followed.

- On Page 6 Line 6, “prospective” should be replaced by “prospectively.”
- On Page 7 Line 14 “from which it was possible to gather data” might be removed.
- On Page 13 Line 3 and Page 14 Line 11, we “identified” might be replaced by “found.” By convention, “identify” is reserved for a different purpose in research reporting.
- On Page 13 Line 24 and Page 14 Line 42 (and possibly in the rest of the paper), “follow-up” study might be replaced with “prospective” study.

Reply
We agree on the suggested changes and they have all been followed. Changes from "follow-up study" to "prospective study", has been made throughout the text.

More importantly, the authors should refrain from comparing effect sizes, dropping claims of “stronger” associations or associations “attenuated.” The measures are not comparable across the predictors or even between the two somatic symptoms scales. The authors might simply report what was significantly associated with what outcome at what age, and whether the same pattern of association was observed consistently at the two different ages, etc.

Reply

The following changes has been made throughout the text:

p. 3 line 9: changed "..strongest.." to "..strong.."

p. 11 line 33: "…showing the strongest…” changed to “…including the association between"

p 11 line 48: "….most strongly…” changed to "….showing strong associations with…”

p 12 line 31: “…most strongly…” changed to "… showing strong associations with…”

p13 line 9: "….strongest… changed to "….strong…”

p 13. line 32: "… the overall strongest association…” changed to "a strong association…”

p.14, line 35: "….showed the strongest.." changed to " …were associated with…."

p.14, line 50: "… strongest.." changed to "…strong…."

p 14, line 50-53: "..whereas the association attenuated.." changed to "..the association was less strong.."

p.15, line 14: "… the strongest.." changed to " …strong…."

p.15, line 15-19: "….The strength of the associations attenuates…” changed to "..was moderate…”