Author’s response to reviews

Title: Promoting parenting strategies to improve tooth brushing in children. Design of a non-randomised cluster-controlled trial

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BMC Oral Health

Dear Editor,

Thank you and reviewer Peter Milgrom for taking the time to review a revision of our manuscript. Please see our responses to the comments below.

Editor comments:

1. Please address the reviewer’s comments at the end of this email.

We have addressed the comments of the reviewer. Please see the response to the reviewer’s comments below.
2. Please ensure that all figures/tables and supplementary files are cited within the main text (this does not include the declarations). Any items which are not cited may be deleted by our production department upon publication. Currently, appendix 4 is not cited. Could you please also upload an English language version of appendix 4.

We have included citations to all figures and supplementary files in the main text, including Appendix 4 (which is now Appendix 1, given the chronological order of appendices in the text). We have also included an English version of the information letters in Appendix 4.

3. Please remove the SPIRIT checklist document from the end of your manuscript file as this is no longer needed in the publication process.

The SPIRIT checklist has been removed.

4. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Figures (and additional files) should remain uploaded as separate files.

A clean version has now been uploaded.

Reviewer 1: Peter Milgrom

The revised paper is acceptable to me with the following changes:

1. Page 8, line 17. Spell out the name of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

The name of the Vrije Universiteit has now been spelled out (see Design and study setting, page 8).
2. Page 10, power calculation. Provide the mean dmfs from the Dutch population, ref 26.

The mean dmfs has now been provided, in addition to the standard deviation (see Power calculation, page 10).

3. Page 15, line 24. Clarify how the 25% reduction is related to the power calculation on page 10 (. I suggest deleting the second paragraph. The primary outcome measure has been clarified in the paragraph before this and in the abstract.

We have added that a 25% reduction in dental caries equals a reduction of ~1.5 to 2 dmfs. This was used as a parameter for our power calculation (see Outcome measures, page 15). The paragraph on the Outcome measures has been shortened to remove duplicate text.

4. In the references:
   a. Ref 1 add a space between the last name and first initial of the first author.
   b. Refs 18, 30, 31 and others citing books. Adopt a single style for the location of the publisher and publisher name.
   c. Ref 20 replace the comma after BF with a period.
   d. Update all the references to websites to be sure they are active. Consider using WebCite (https://www.webcitation.org/) or similar free service to archive the content.

We thank the reviewer for spotting the errors in the reference list; these have now been corrected accordingly. The websites have all been checked to be sure they are still active.