

December 25, 2021

Dear Jin-Lei Wang, Reviewers and *Editors of World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics*,

RE: **Manuscript 81432**

**Title: Higher rates of autism and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder in American children: Are food quality issues impacting epigenetic inheritance?**

**Reviewer#1**

**Comments:** Authors reviewed that in the United States, children receiving special education services under the autism category increased 242% during the same period. The demand for special education services for children under the developmental delay and other health impaired categories increased by 184% and 83% respectively. Allowable heavy metal residues remain persistent in the American food supply due to food ingredient manufacturing processes. For example, food colors made from petroleum are expected to contain trace amounts of heavy metals. Dietary heavy metal exposures, especially inorganic mercury and lead may impact gene behavior across generations. Among etiology of autism and ADHD, an epigenetic perspective on heavy metal exposures and poor diet. Authors speculated that emerging transgenerational epigenetic inheritance patterns might explain increasing autism and ADHD. Authors called on Congress may act now to mandate the health warning label on foods containing allowable heavy metal residues.

**Answer:** We appreciate the reviewers' positive responses to our manuscript and their recommendations for publication. Thank you everyone for your thoughtful comments!

**Reviewer#2**

**Comments:** This paper is reviewing a very important and increasing issue. The rise of autism and ADHD rates needs to be addressed and handled quickly to reduce the alarming prevalence of these two epidemics. The paper is well-organized and well-written.

**Answer:** We appreciate the reviewers' positive responses to our manuscript and their recommendations for publication. Thank you everyone for your thoughtful comments!

The Company Editor requested that we submit the figure files in power point. We prepared the figure files in power point. The system allowed us to upload these files as image files but would not accept the naming of our files (Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3). Hopefully there will be no confusion as to which figure is which. Also, in response to the comments from Jin-Lei Wang we have made the changes to the tables and have uploaded these tables in a tables file.

We received permission via email from the US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics to publish Figure 1. We have uploaded the email communication as a pdf supplementary file.

Thank you so much for your patience, guidance, and continued support.

Respectfully,

Dr. Renee Dufault

[rdufault@atsu.edu](mailto:rdufault@atsu.edu) 1-808-345-6864