ABSTRACT

Background: Indoor air pollution due to the burning of biomass fuels has been associated with acute respiratory infections amongst children less than five years old in developing countries. Very little is known about the relationship between child indoor pollution exposure and time spent near indoor fires.

Aim: To describe the relationship between the amount of time that children spend close to indoor fires and carbon monoxide exposure.

Methods: Cross-sectional study based in rural North-West of South Africa. Secondary analysis of caregivers' estimates of their children's time-activity budgets and children's exposure to carbon monoxide (N=100).

Results: The time spent by children near indoor fires is non-significantly related to their CO exposure (regression coefficient -0.030 to -0.036) after adjusting for explanatory variables.

Conclusion: It is important to be cautious about encouraging caregivers to keep children away from indoor fires at the expense of other established intervention strategies.