Malawi

Country report card - children

This report card contains the latest data available on the Global Obesity Observatory on overweight and obesity for children, including adolescents (aged 5 to 18 years). Where available, data on common and relevant obesity drivers and comorbidities are also presented.

View the latest version of this report on the Global Obesity Observatory at https://data.worldobesity.org/country/malawi-129/ .

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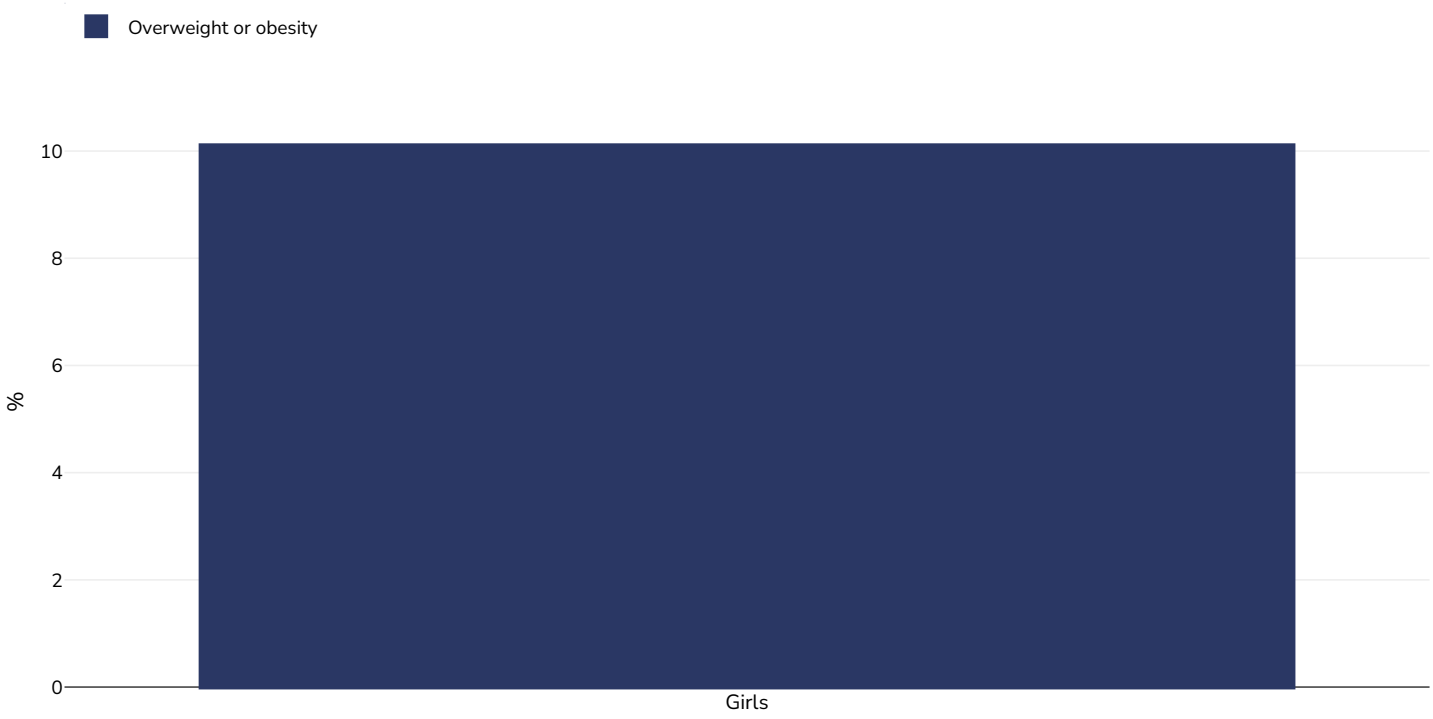
Obesity prevalence

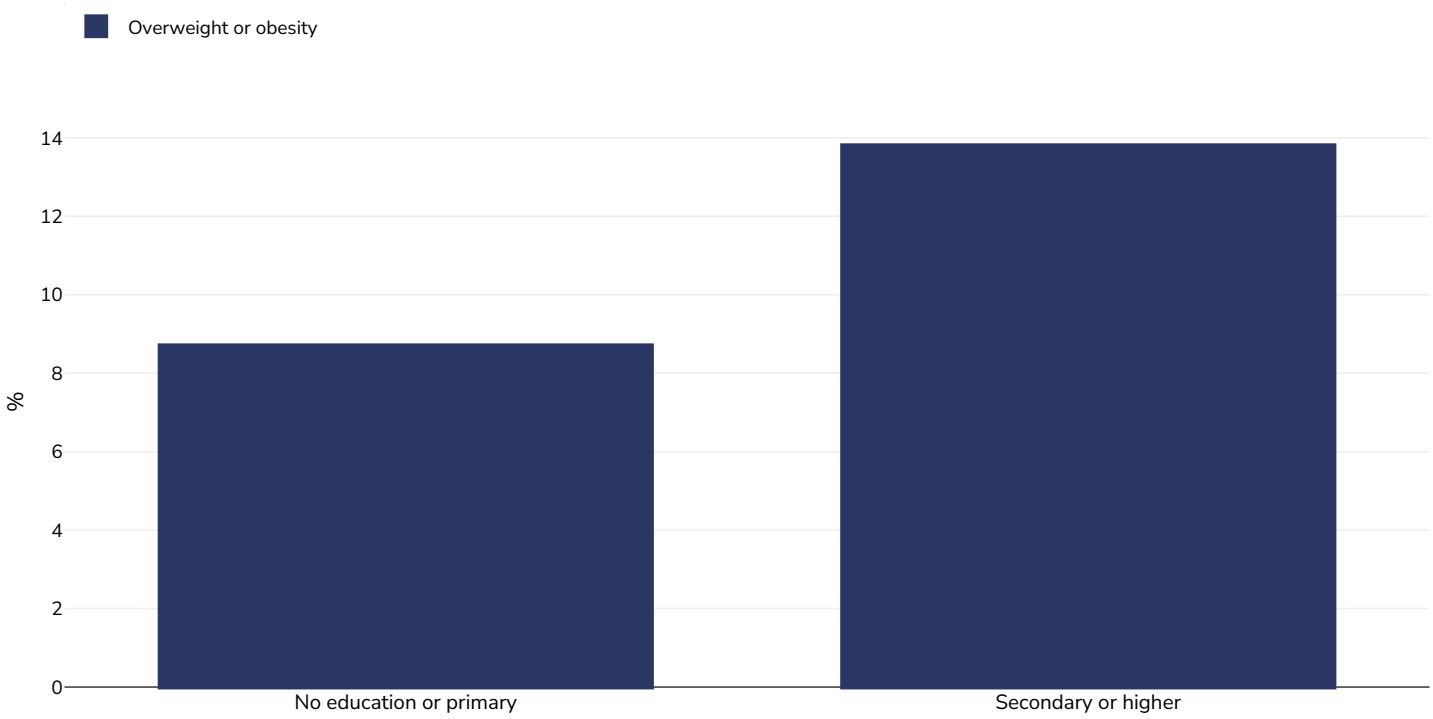
Girls, 2015-2016



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	15-19
Sample size:	1294
Area covered:	National
References:	Benedict, Rukundo K., Allison Schmale, and Sorrel Namaste. 2018. Adolescent Nutrition 2000-2017: DHS Data on Adolescents Age 15-19. DHS Comparative Report No. 47. Rockville, Maryland, USA: ICF. National Statistical Office - NSO/Malawi and ICF. 2017. Malawi Demographic and Health Survey 2015-16. Zomba, Malawi: NSO and ICF.
Definitions:	BMI for age: between +1 SD and +2 SD is overweight and greater than +2 SD is obesity
Cutoffs:	WHO 2007

Overweight/obesity by education

Girls, 2015-2016



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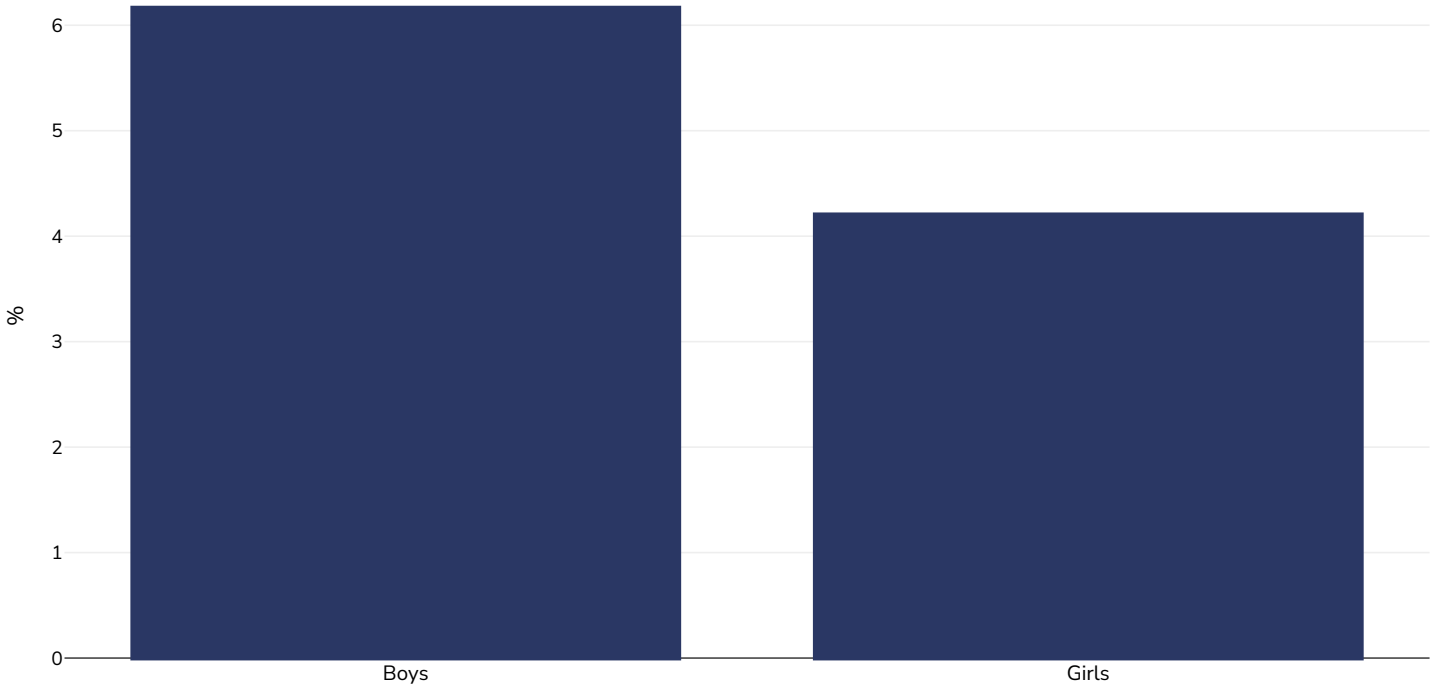
Double burden of underweight & overweight

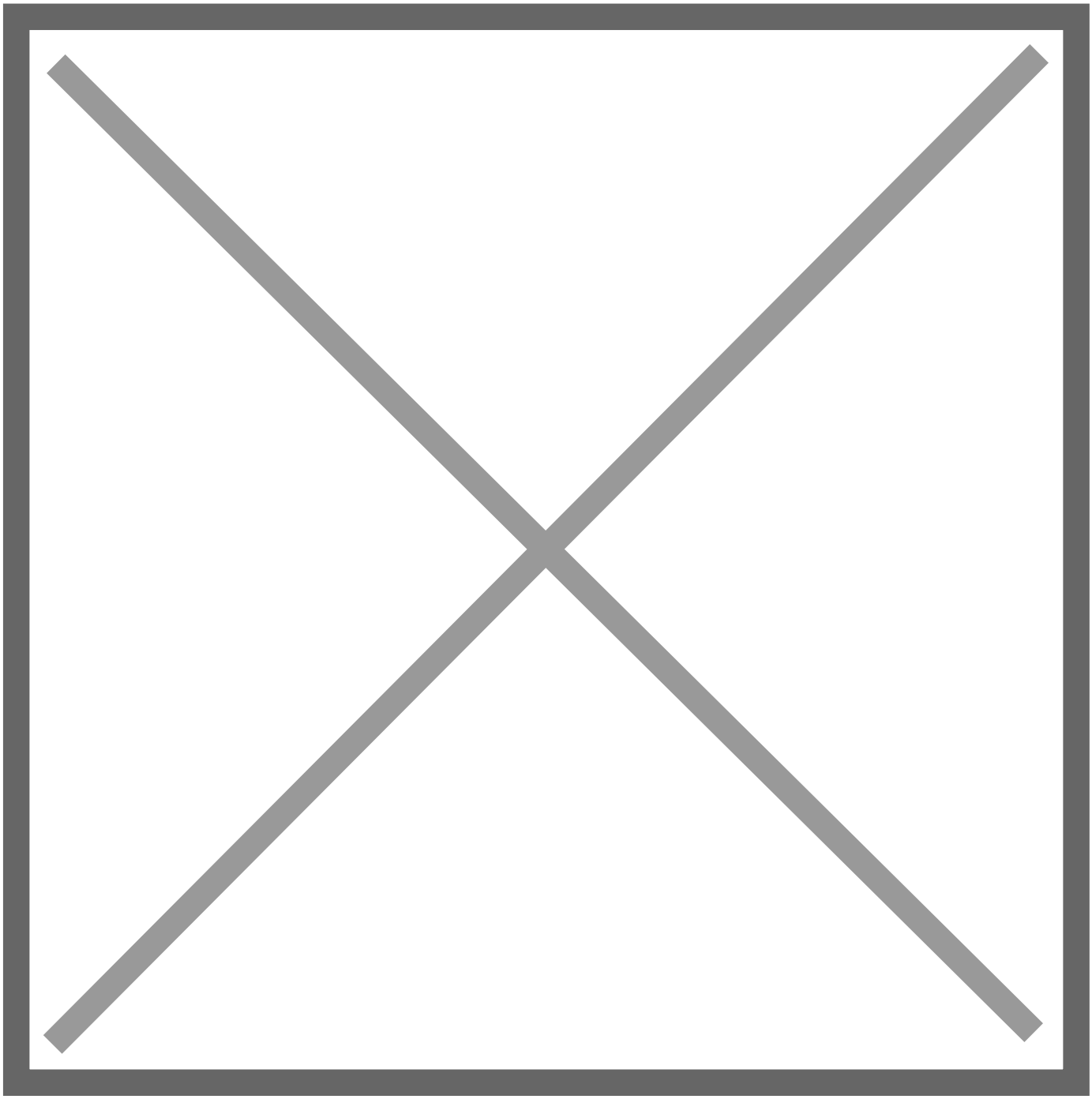
Children, 2022



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-19
References:	NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (NCD-RisC). Worldwide trends in underweight and obesity from 1990 to 2022: a pooled analysis of 3663 population representative studies with 222 million children, adolescents, and adults. Lancet 2024; published online Feb 29. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)02750-2.
Notes:	Age standardised estimates
Definitions:	Combined prevalence of BMI < -2SD and BMI > 2SD (double burden of thinness and obesity)
Cutoffs:	BMI < -2SD and BMI > 2SD

Prevalence of less than daily fruit consumption

Children, 2009

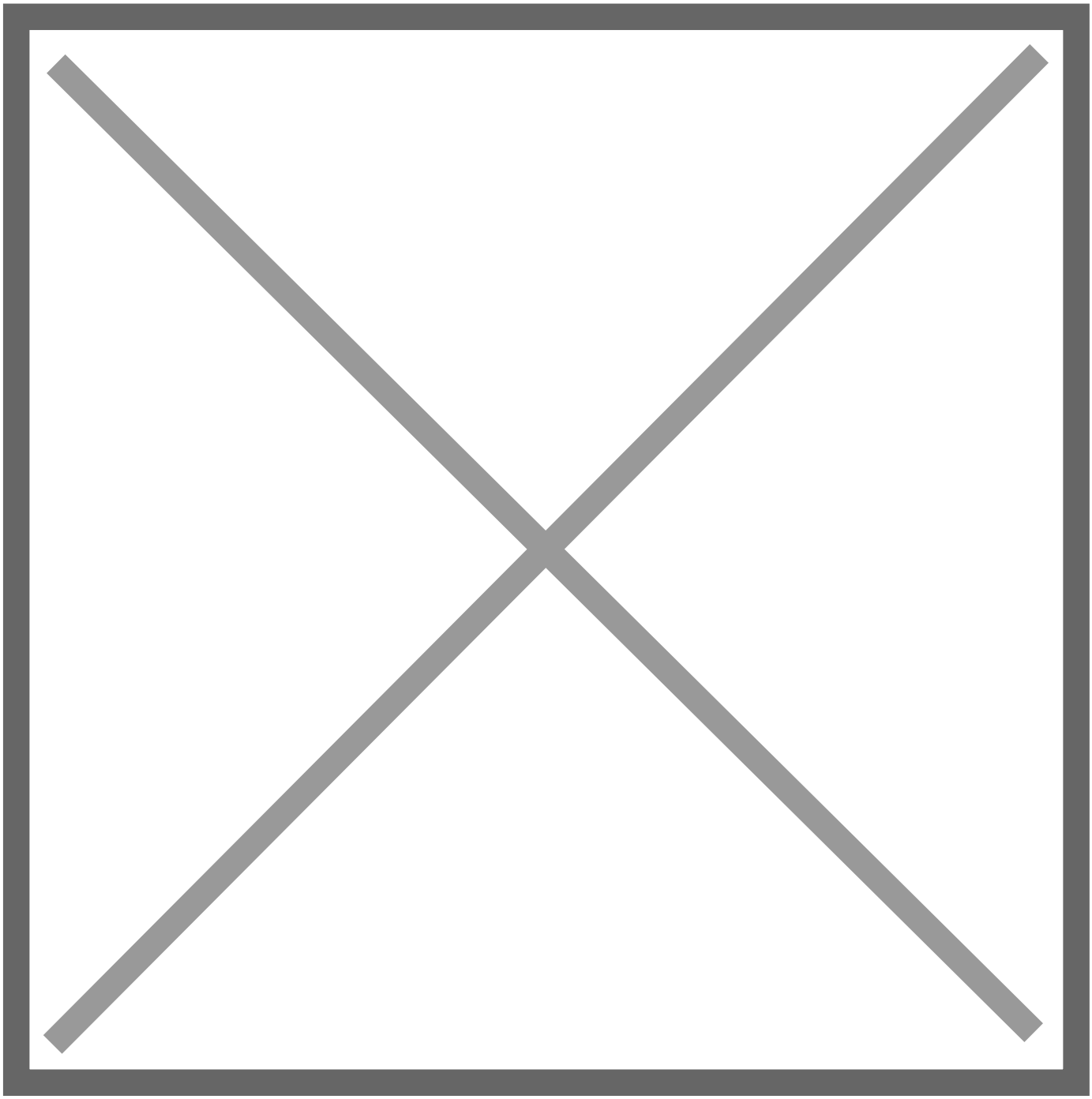


Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	12-17
Area covered:	National
References:	Global School-based Student Health Surveys. Beal et al (2019). Global Patterns of Adolescent Fruit, Vegetable, Carbonated Soft Drink, and Fast-food consumption: A meta-analysis of global school-based student health surveys. Food and Nutrition Bulletin. https://doi.org/10.1177/0379572119848287. Sourced from Food Systems Dashboard http://www.foodsystemsdashboard.org/food-system

Definitions:	Prevalence of less-than-daily fruit consumption (% less-than-daily fruit consumption)

Prevalence of less than daily vegetable consumption

Children, 2009



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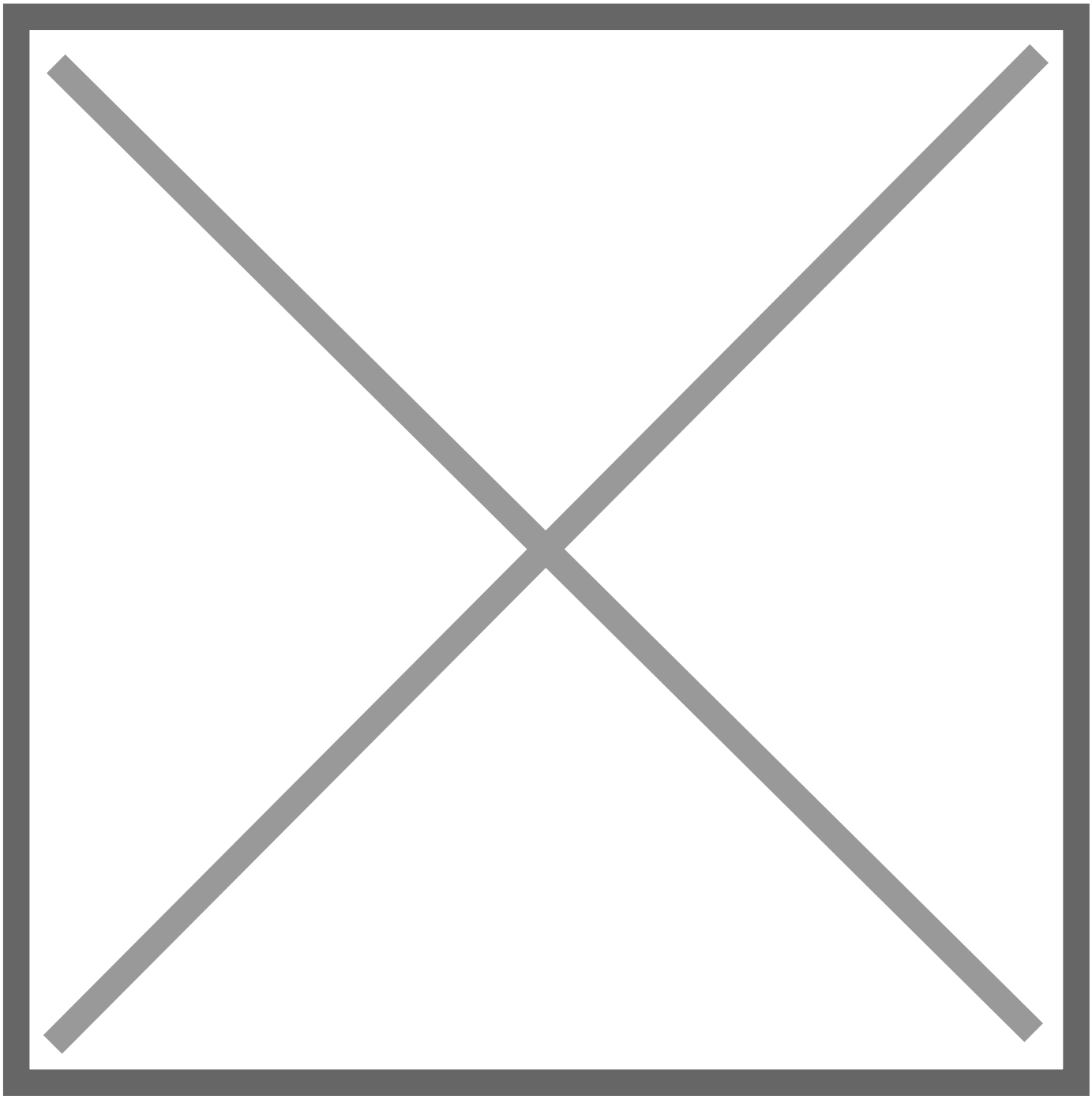
Definitions:	Prevalence of less-than-daily vegetable consumption (% less-than-daily vegetable consumption)

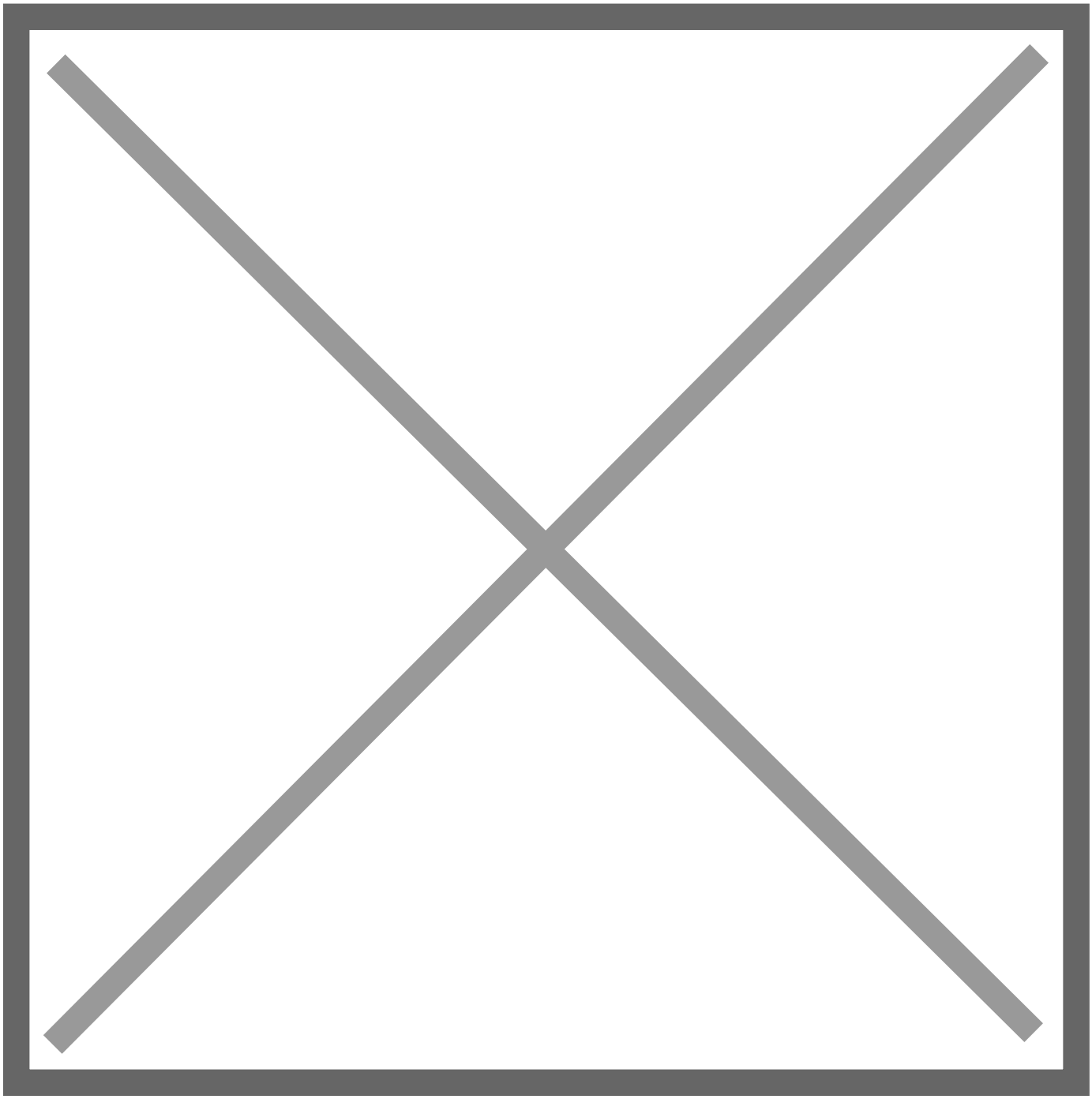
Mental health - depression disorders

Children, 2021



Area covered:	National
References:	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2021. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2023. Available from http://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare. (Last accessed 23.04.25)
Definitions:	Number living with depressive disorder per 100,000 population (Under 20 years of age)

Boys, 2021



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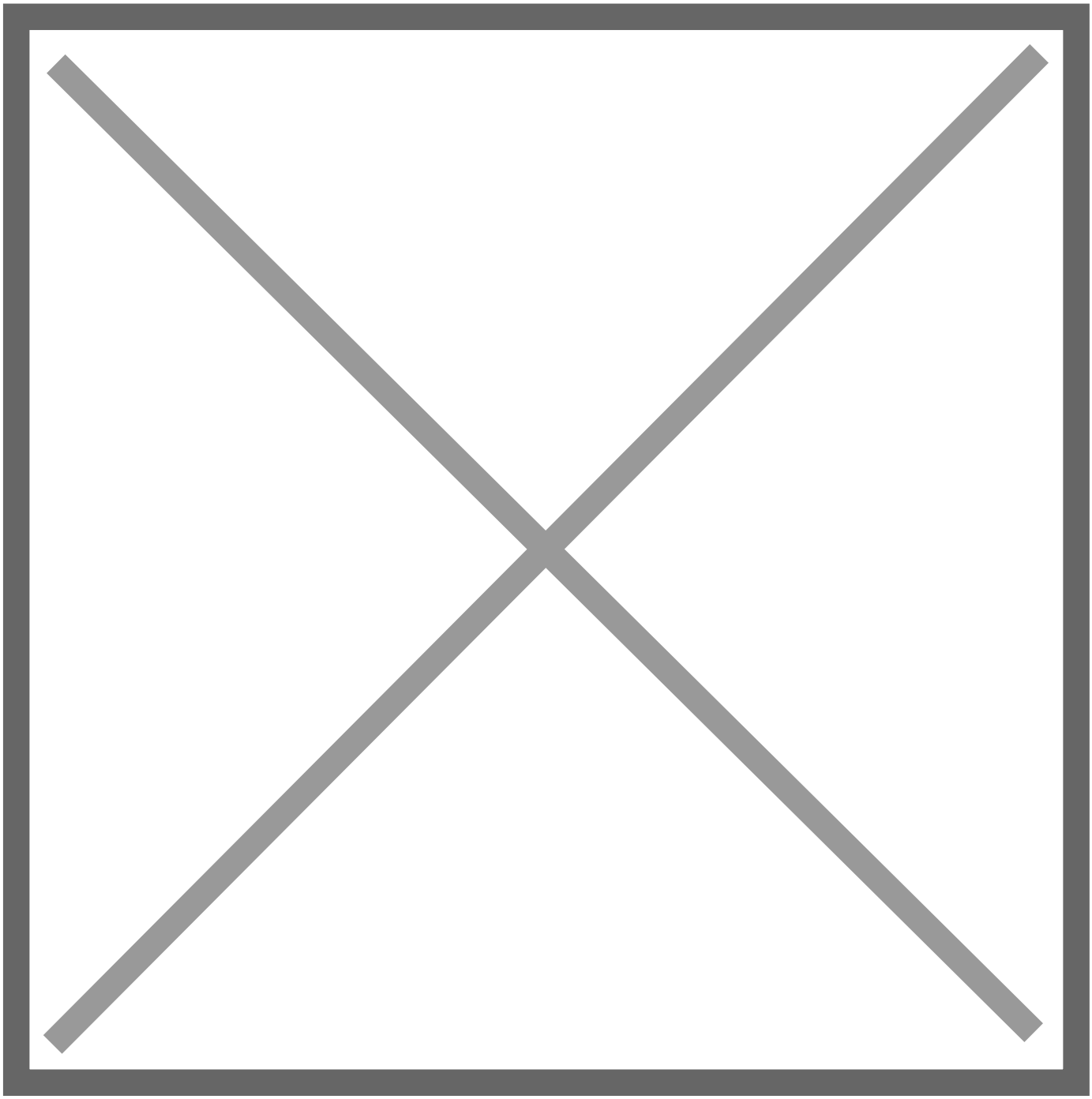
Girls, 2021



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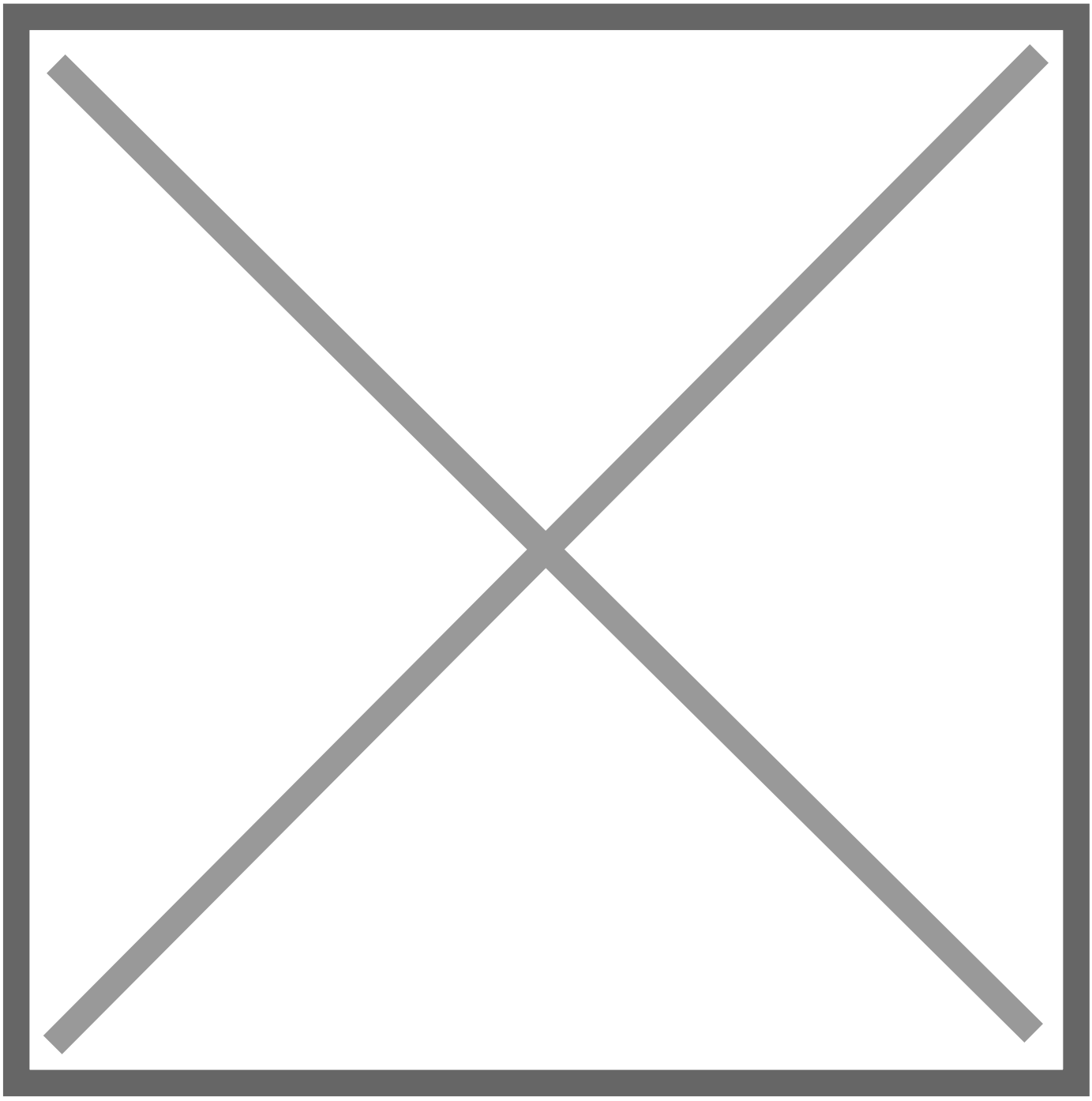
Mental health - anxiety disorders

Children, 2021



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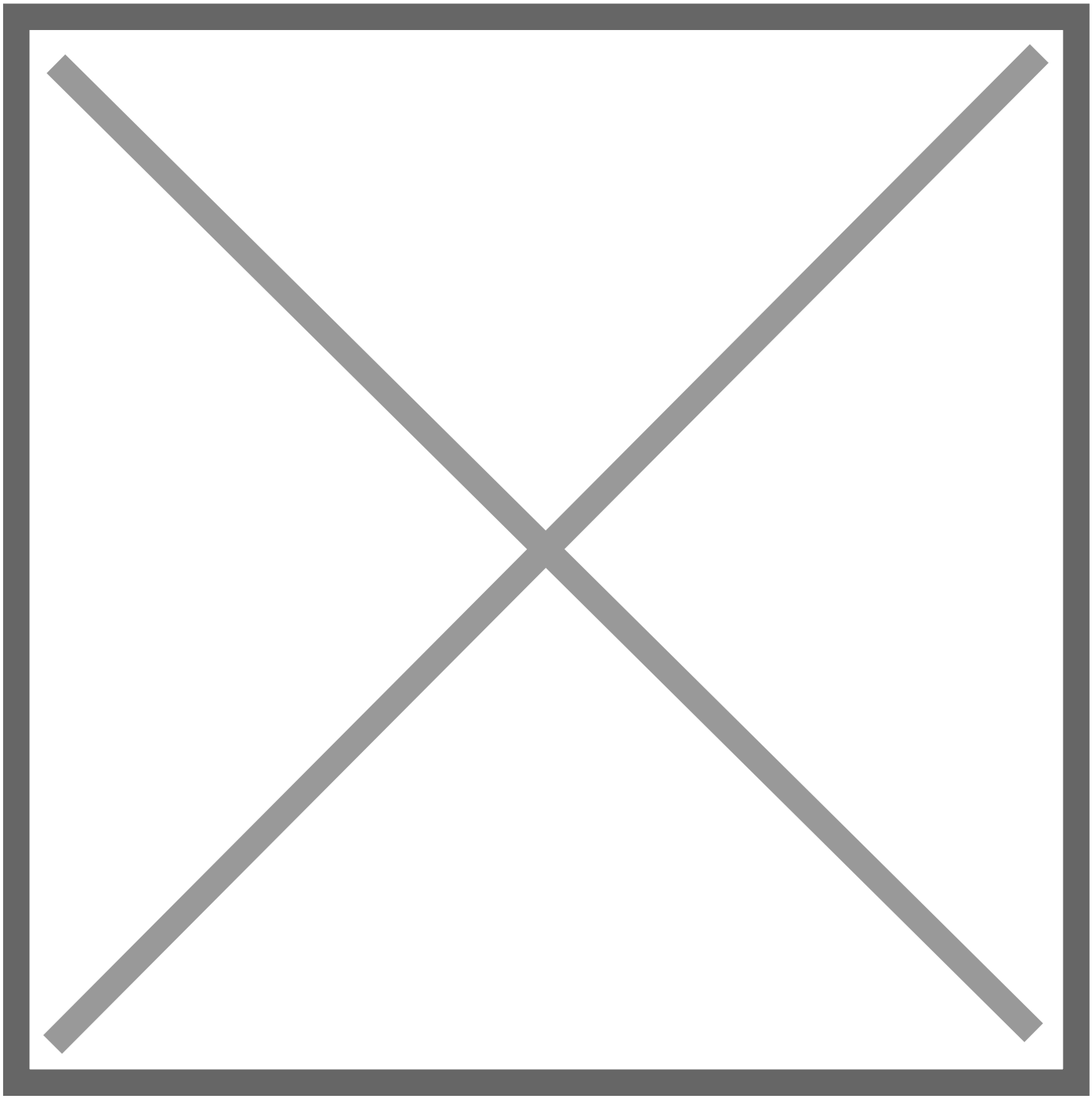

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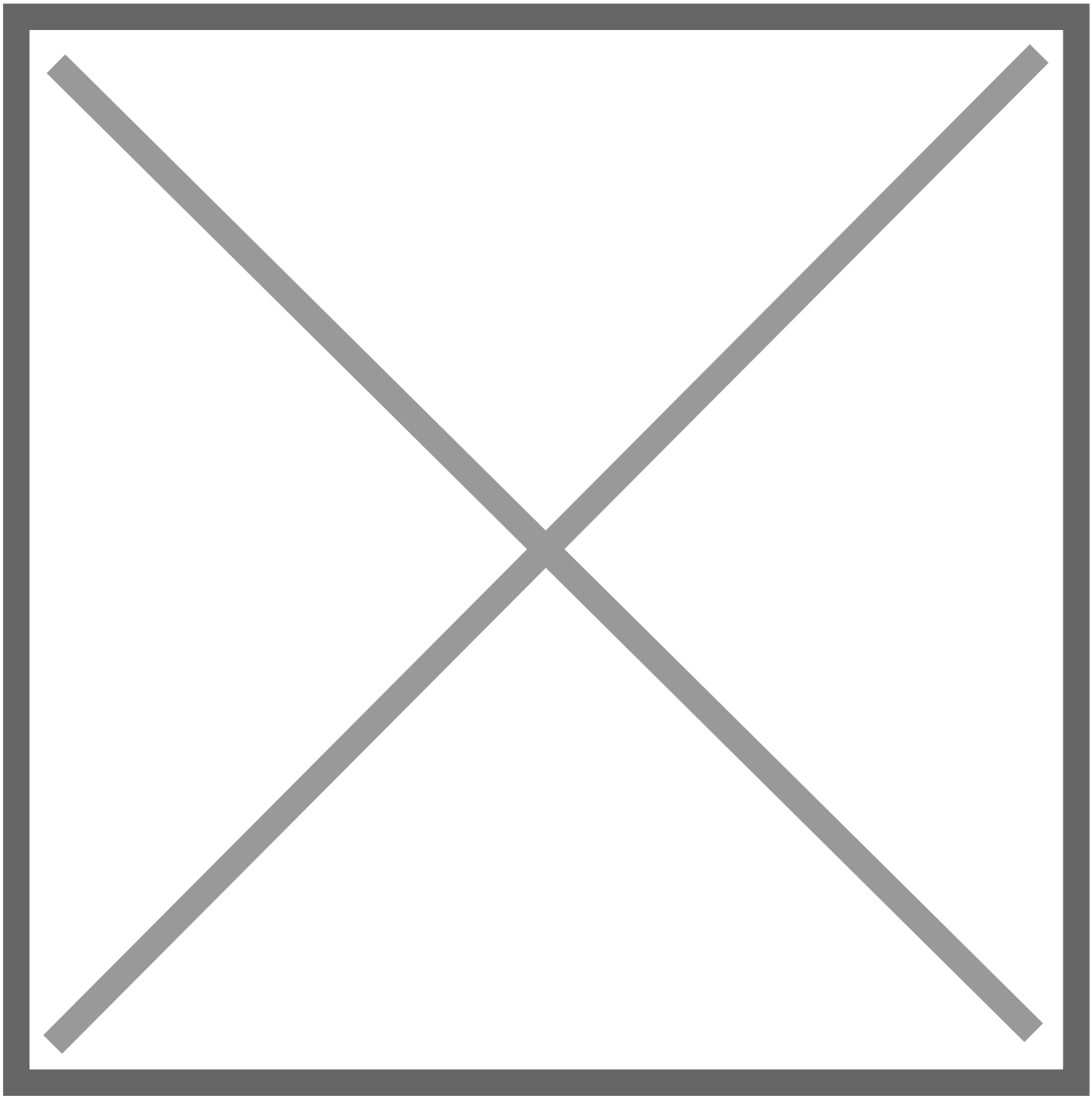

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