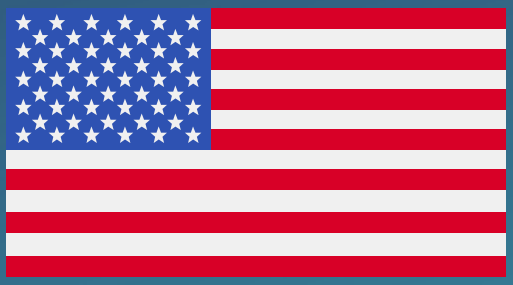
United States



Country report card - children

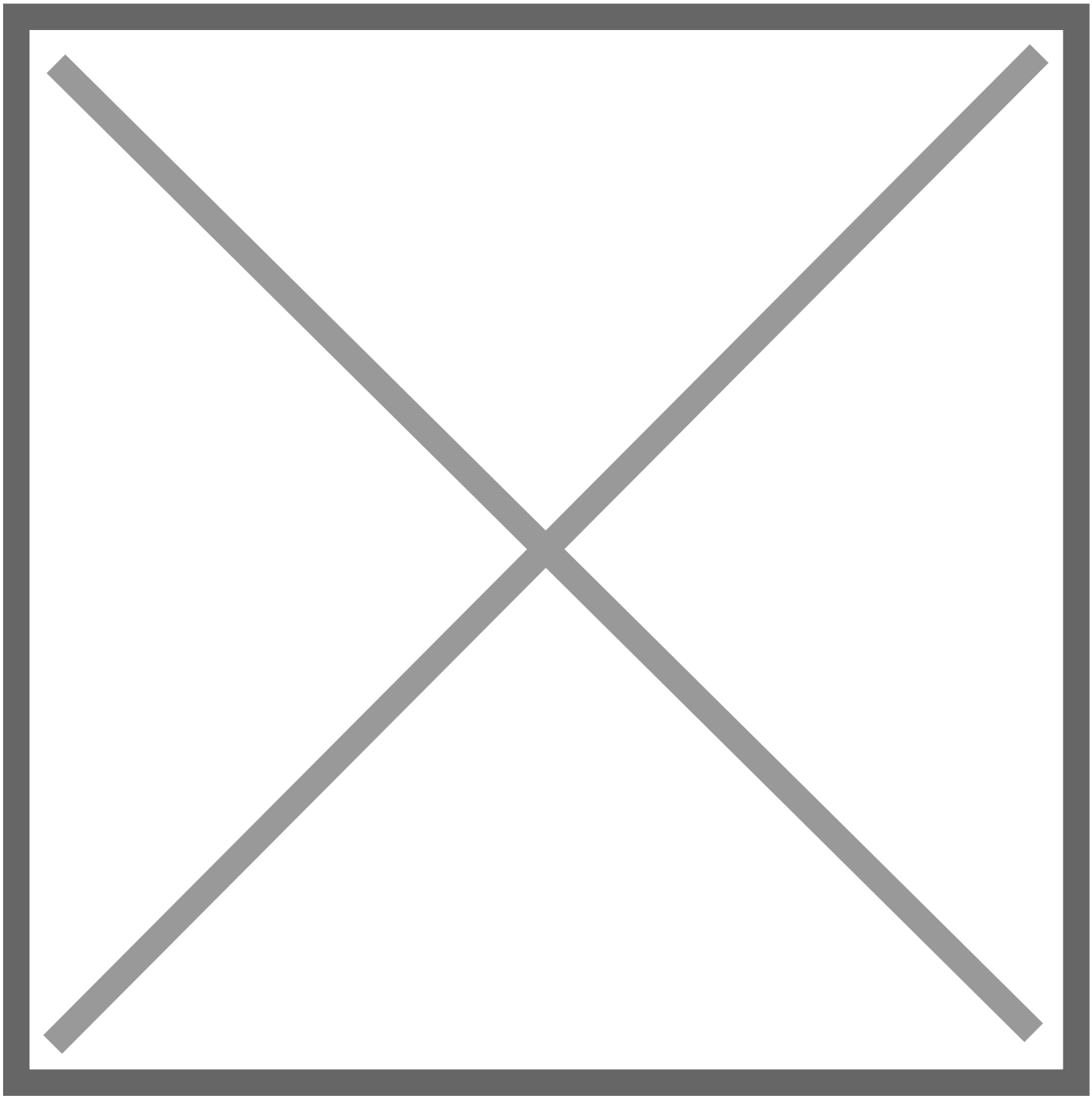
This report card contains the latest data available on the Global Obesity Observatory on overweight and obesity for children, including adolescents (aged 5 to 18 years). Where available, data on common and relevant obesity drivers and comorbidities are also presented.

View the latest version of this report on the Global Obesity Observatory at https://data.worldobesity.org/country/united-states-227/.

Contents	Page
Obesity prevalence	3
Trend: % Children living with obesity in the United States 2003-2021	6
Trend: % Children living with overweight or obesity in the United States 1999-2011	11
Trend: % Children living with overweight or obesity in the United States 2003-2021	16
Overweight/obesity by education	21
Overweight/obesity by age	28
Overweight/obesity by region	31
Overweight/obesity by socio-economic group	34
Overweight/obesity by ethnicity	41
Double burden of underweight & obesity	48
Insufficient physical activity	51
Mental health - depression disorders	58
Mental health - anxiety disorders	62

Obesity prevalence

Children, 2021-2023

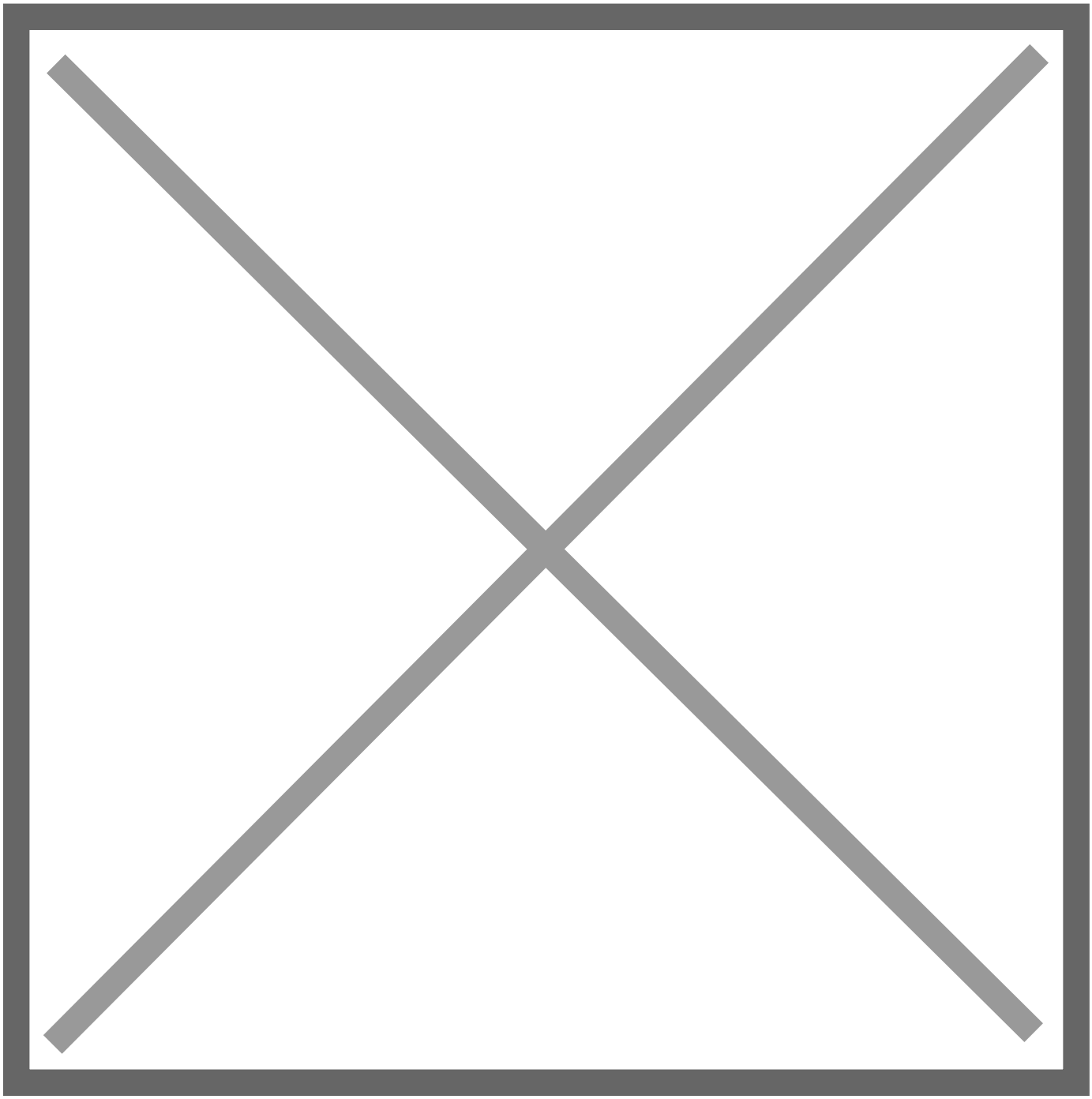


Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1887
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation
Notes:	Weighted

Cutoffs:	IOTF

% Children living with obesity in the United States 2003-2021

Boys

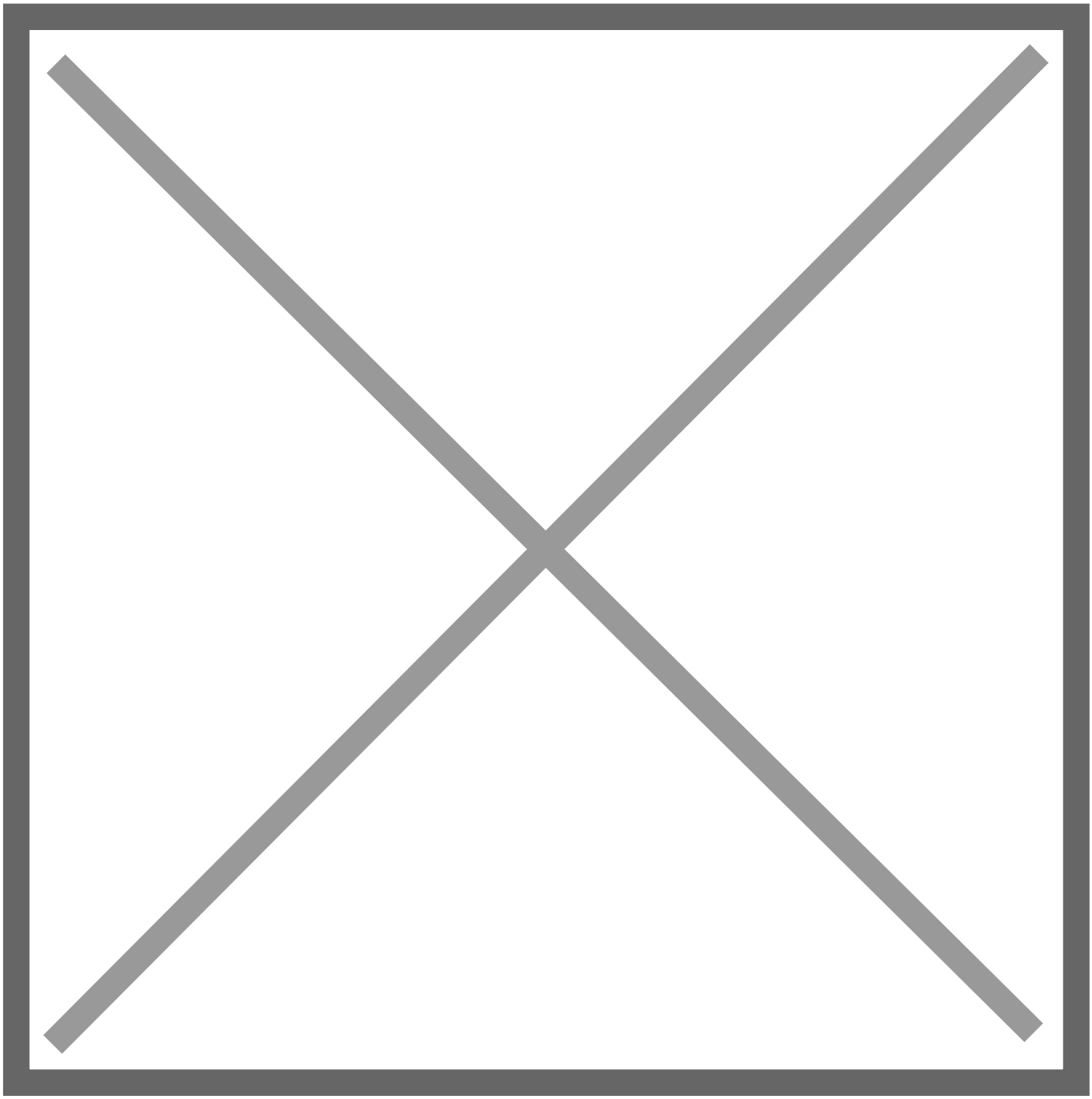


Survey type:	Measured
References:	2003: Lobstein T, Jackson - Leach R. Child overweight and obesity in the USA: prevalence rates according to IOTF definitions. Int J Pediatr Obes. 2007;2(1):62-4. 2009: NHANES IASO analysis 2015: NHANES 2015/16. Analysis conducted by the World Obesity Federation, Caroline Litts, Fiona Montague & R Jackson-Leach 2017 2017: Reanalysis of NHANES 2017/18 by Rachel Jackson Leach, Jaynaide Powis World Obesity Federation 2021: Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation
Notes:	Aged 5-17

Definitions:	IOTF

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

Girls



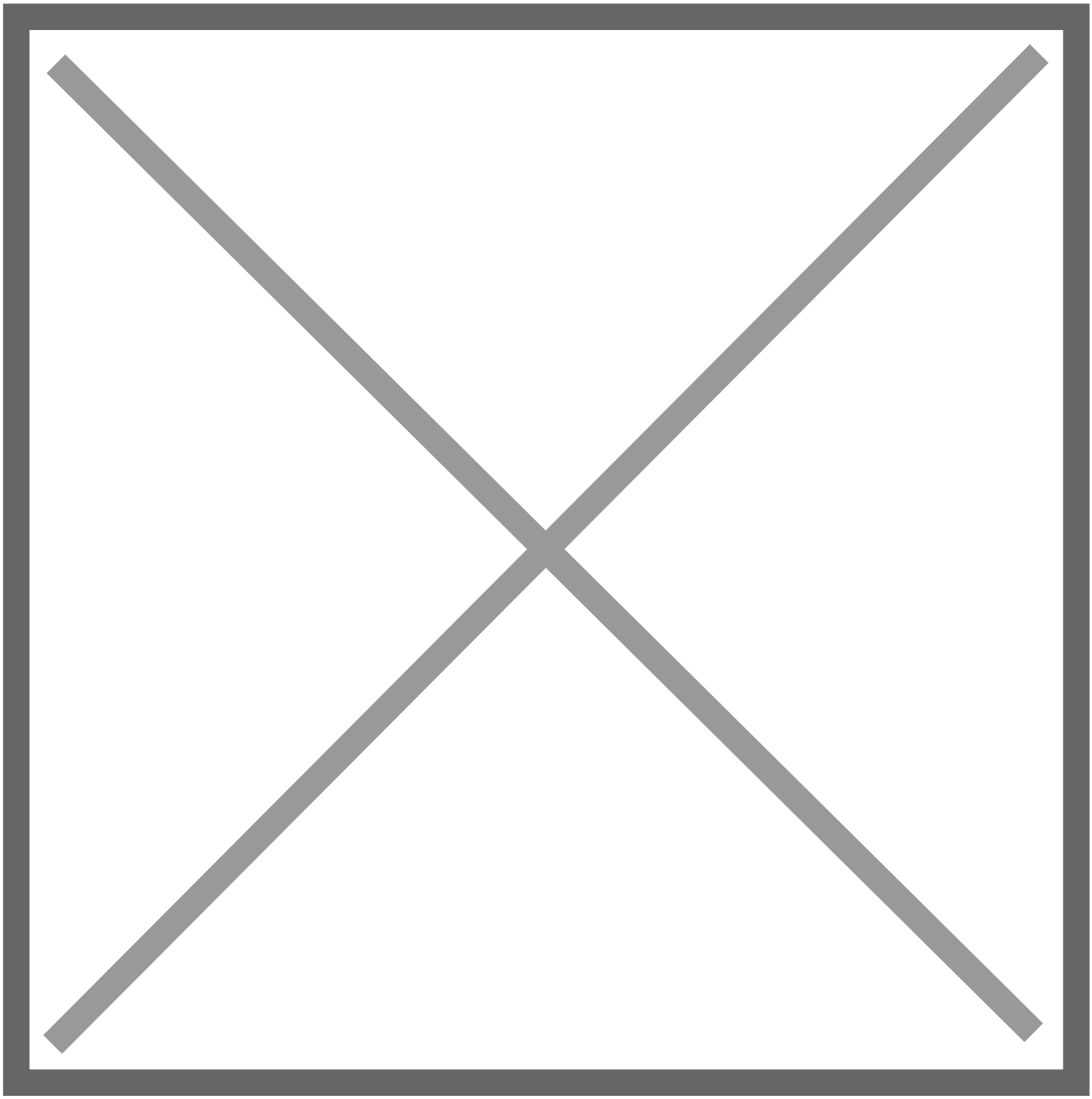
Survey type:	Measured
References:	2003: Lobstein T, Jackson - Leach R. Child overweight and obesity in the USA: prevalence rates according to IOTF definitions. Int J Pediatr Obes. 2007;2(1):62-4. 2009: NHANES IASO analysis 2015: NHANES 2015/16. Analysis conducted by the World Obesity Federation, Caroline Litts, Fiona Montague & R Jackson-Leach 2017 2017: Reanalysis of NHANES 2017/18 by Rachel Jackson Leach, Jaynaide Powis World Obesity Federation 2021: Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Aged 5-17
Definitions:	IOTF

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

% Children living with overweight or obesity in the United States 1999-2011

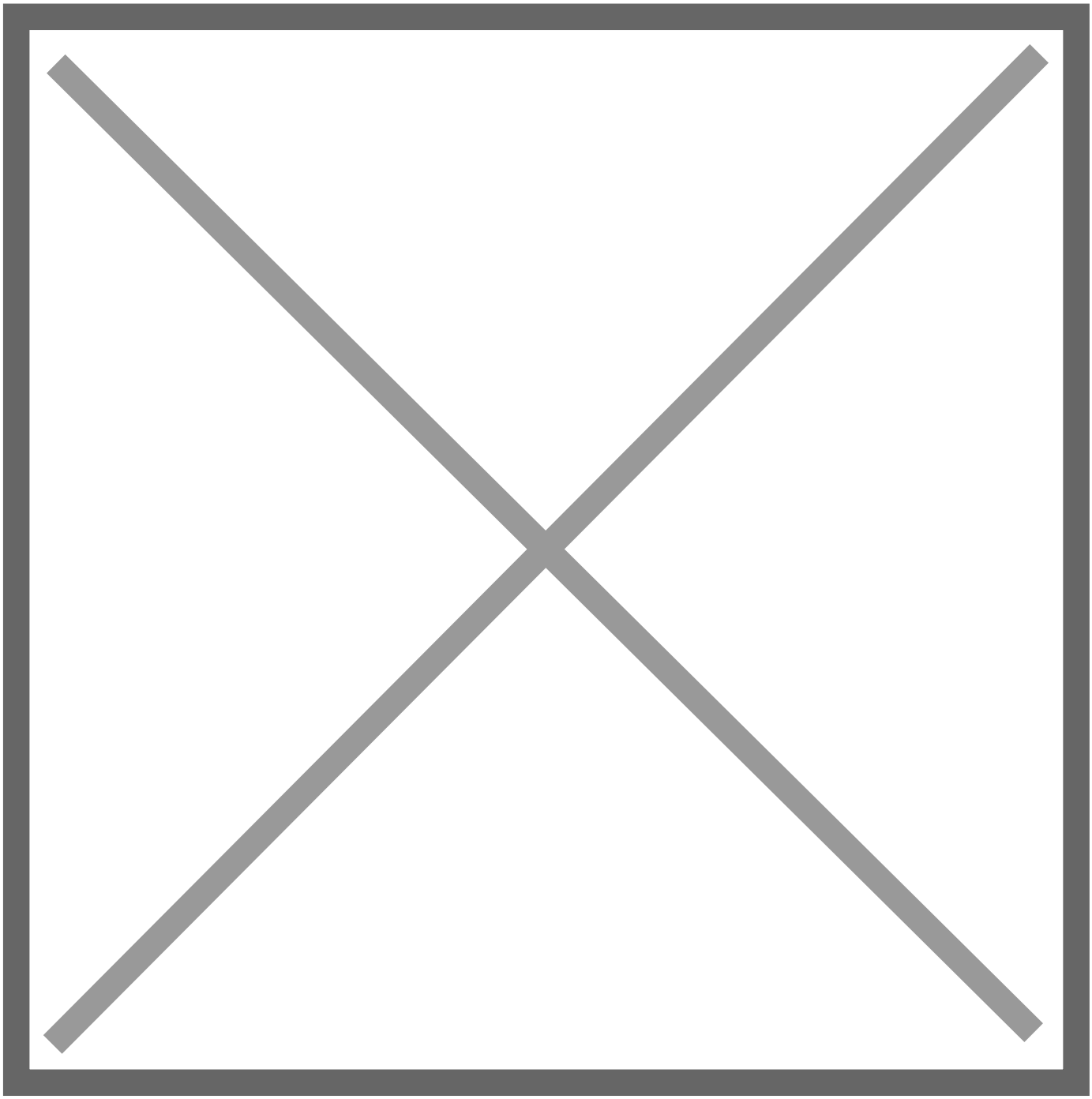
Boys



Survey type:	Measured
References:	1999, 2001: Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Curtin LR, McDowell MA, Tabak CJ, Flegal KM. Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in the United States, 1999-2004. JAMA 2006;295(13):1549-1555 2011: Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Kit BK, Flegal KM. Prevalence of childhood and adult obesity in the United States, 2011-2012. JAMA (2014)26;311(8):806-14.
Notes:	Aged 6-11
Definitions:	85th & 95th Centile CDC cut off

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

Girls



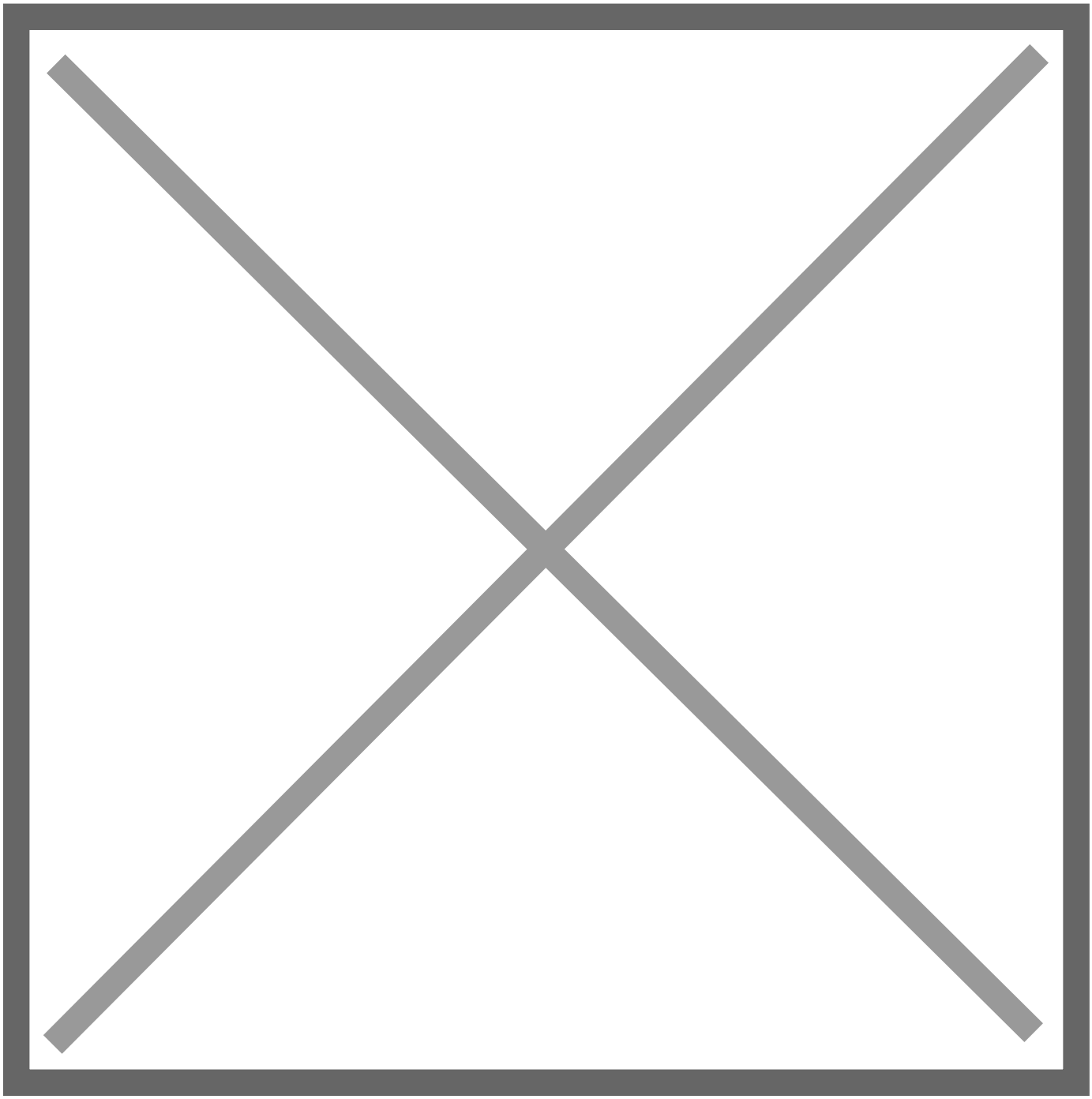
Survey type:	Measured
References:	1999, 2001: Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Curtin LR, McDowell MA, Tabak CJ, Flegal KM. Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in the United States, 1999-2004. JAMA 2006;295(13):1549-1555 2011: Ogden CL, Carroll MD, Kit BK, Flegal KM. Prevalence of childhood and adult obesity in the United States, 2011-2012. JAMA (2014)26;311(8):806-14.
Notes:	Aged 6-11

Definitions:	85th & 95th Centile CDC cut off

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

% Children living with overweight or obesity in the United States 2003-2021

Boys

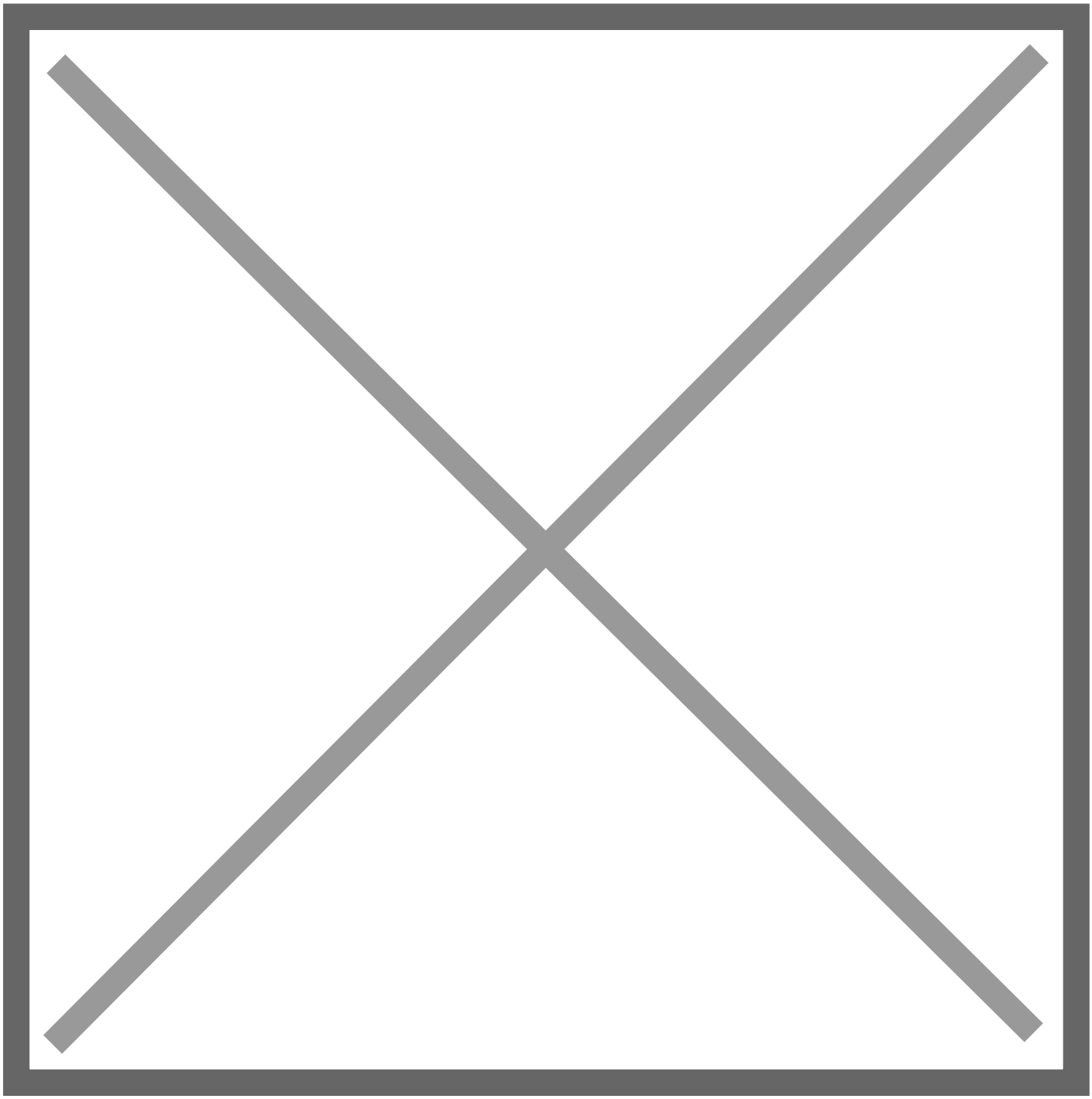


Survey type:	Measured
References:	2003: Lobstein T, Jackson - Leach R. Child overweight and obesity in the USA: prevalence rates according to IOTF definitions. Int J Pediatr Obes. 2007;2(1):62-4. 2009: NHANES IASO analysis 2015: NHANES 2015/16. Analysis conducted by the World Obesity Federation, Caroline Litts, Fiona Montague & R Jackson-Leach 2017 2017: Reanalysis of NHANES 2017/18 by Rachel Jackson Leach, Jaynaide Powis World Obesity Federation 2021: Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation
Notes:	Aged 5-17

Definitions:	IOTF

Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.

Girls

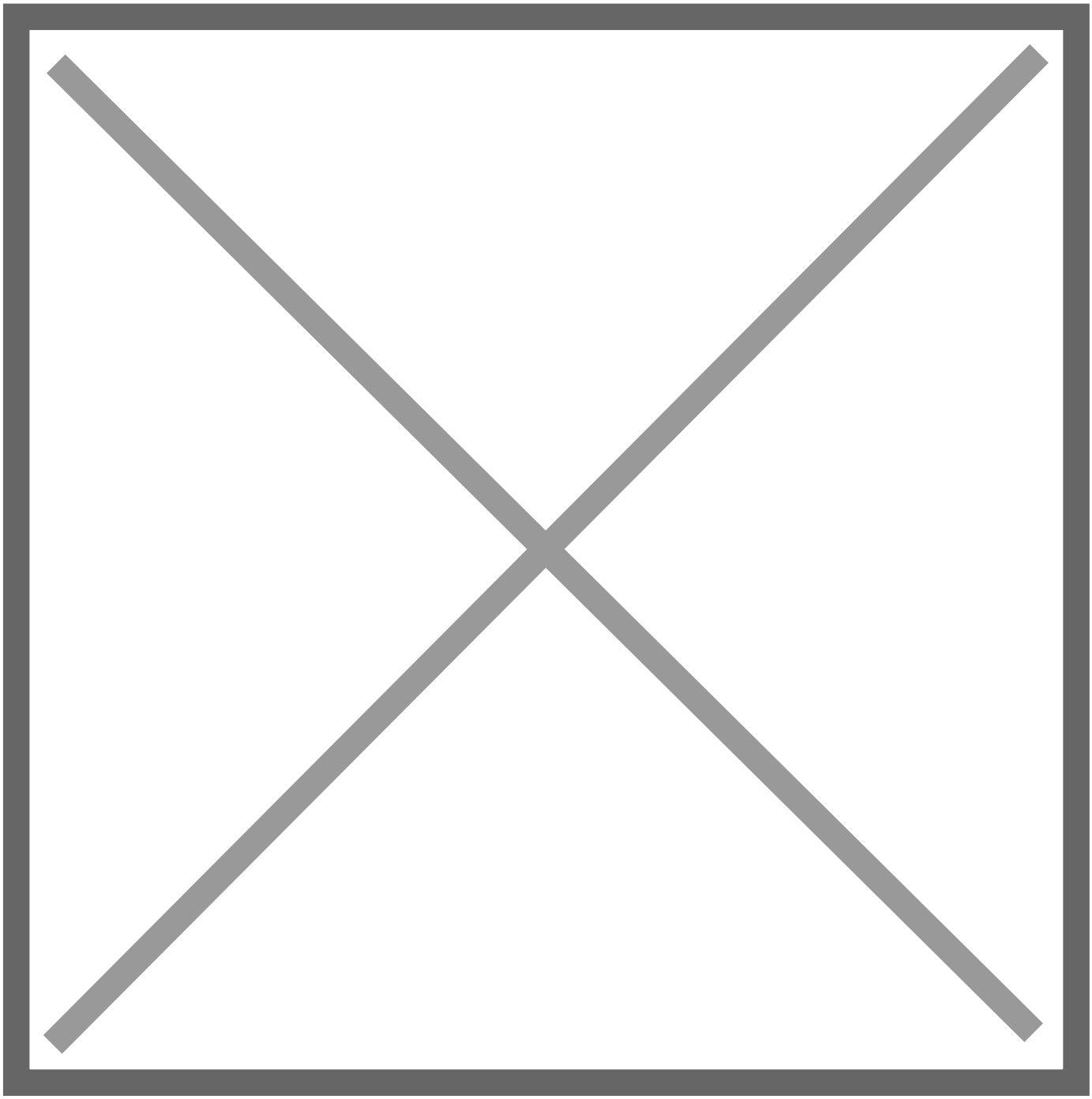


Survey type:	Measured
References:	2003: Lobstein T, Jackson - Leach R. Child overweight and obesity in the USA: prevalence rates according to IOTF definitions. Int J Pediatr Obes. 2007;2(1):62-4. 2009: NHANES IASO analysis 2015: NHANES 2015/16. Analysis conducted by the World Obesity Federation, Caroline Litts, Fiona Montague & R Jackson-Leach 2017 2017: Reanalysis of NHANES 2017/18 by Rachel Jackson Leach, Jaynaide Powis World Obesity Federation 2021: Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation
Notes:	Aged 5-17

Definitions:	IOTF
Different methodologies may have been used to collect this data and so data from different surveys may not be strictly comparable. Please check with original data sources for methodologies used.	

Overweight/obesity by education

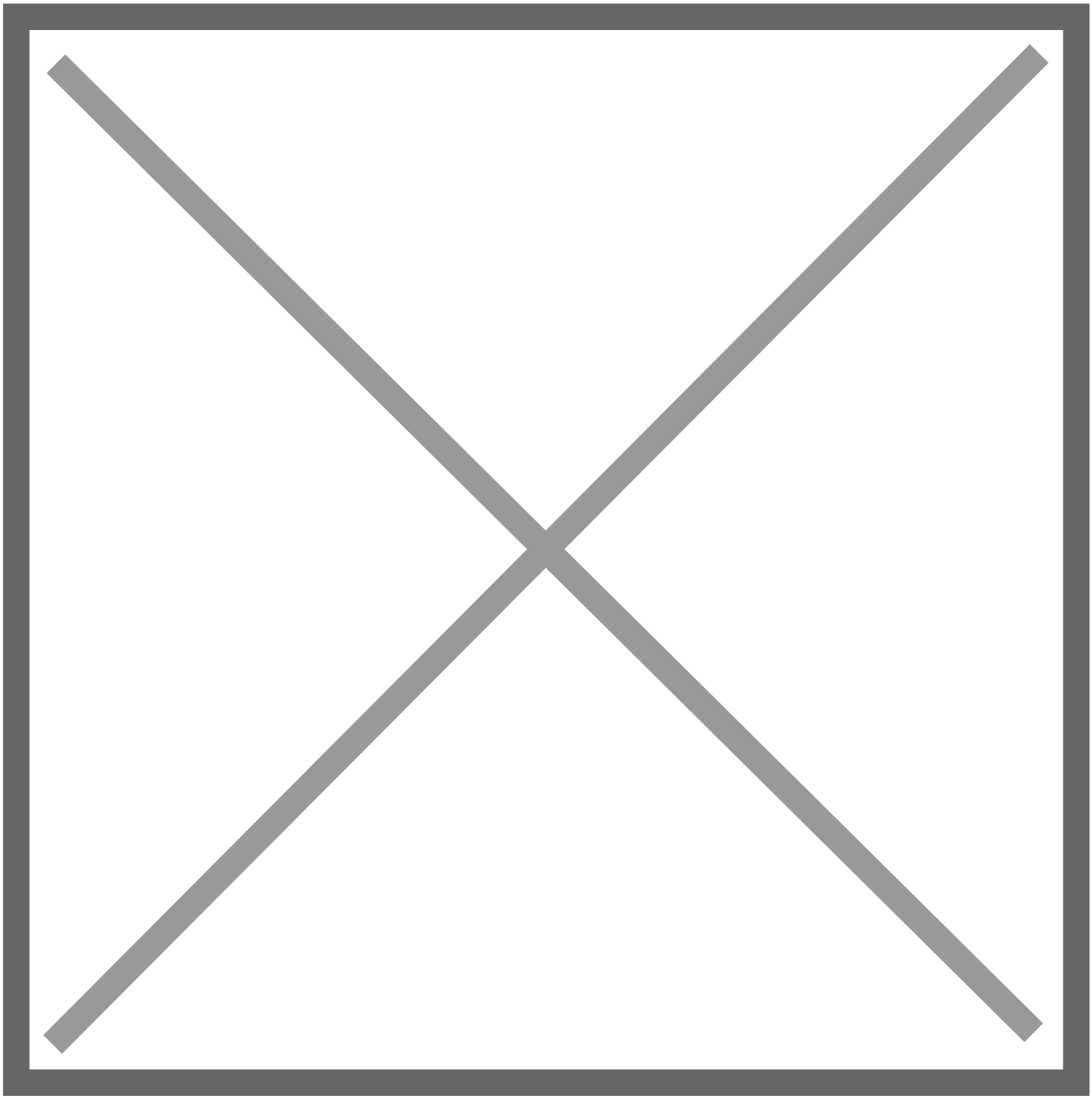
Children, 2021-2023



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1830
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted
Definitions:	Level of parental education, determined by the highest education level achieved by either the household reference person or their spouse
Cutoffs:	IOTF

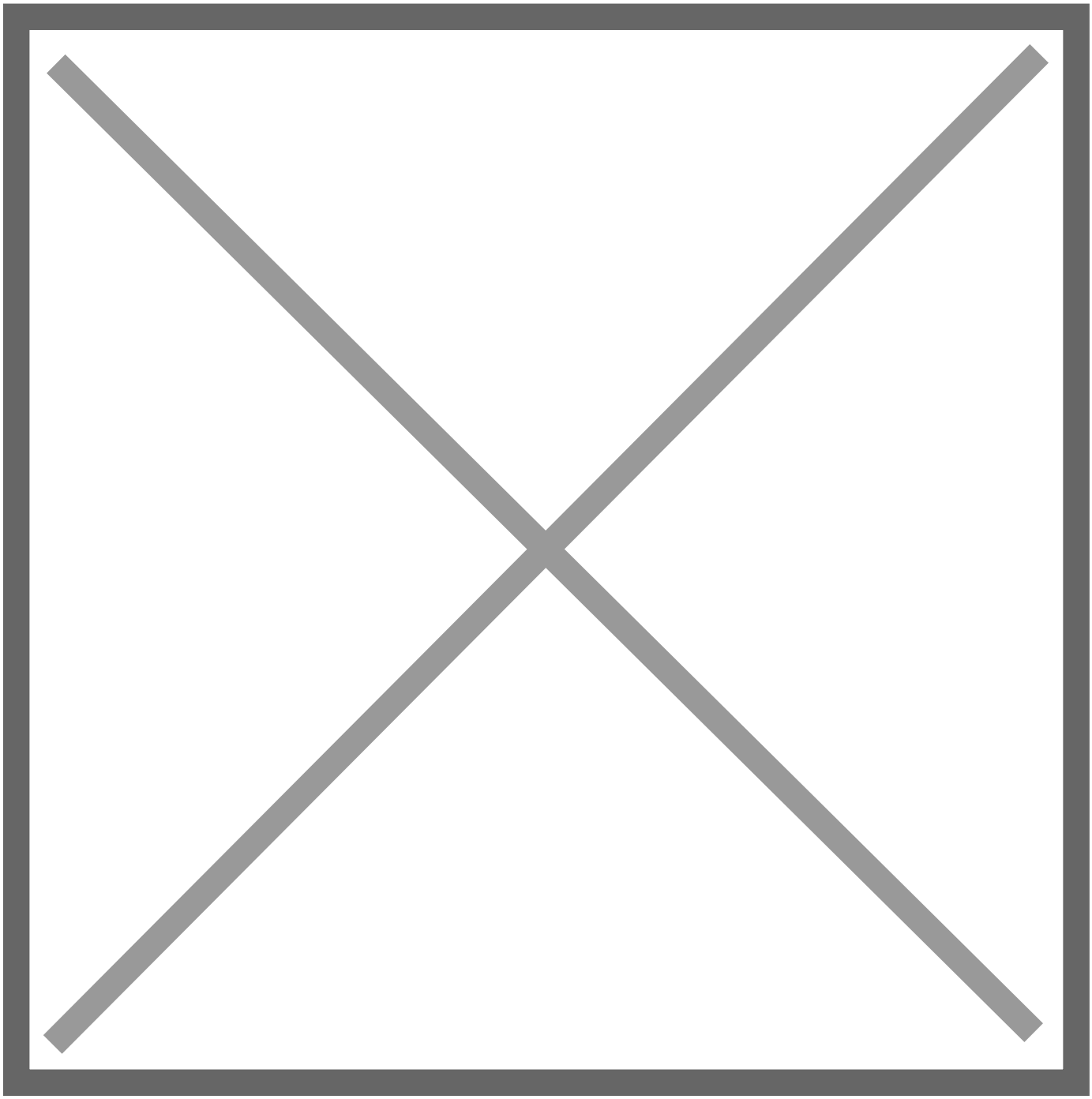
Boys, 2021-2023



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1830
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted
Definitions:	Level of parental education, determined by the highest education level achieved by either the household reference person or their spouse
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Girls, 2021-2023

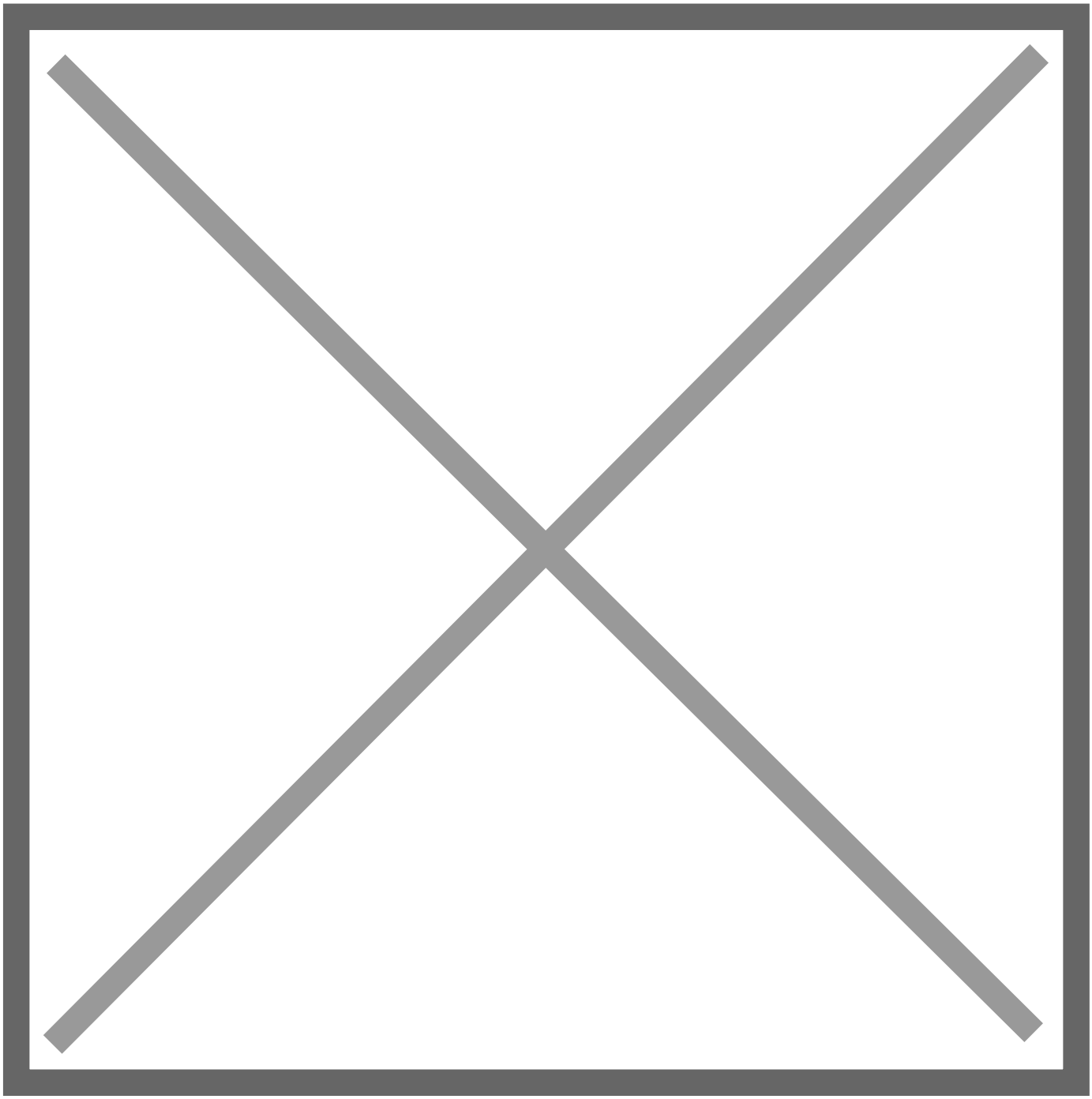


Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1830
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted
Definitions:	Level of parental education, determined by the highest education level achieved by either the household reference person or their spouse
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Overweight/obesity by age

Children, 2021-2023

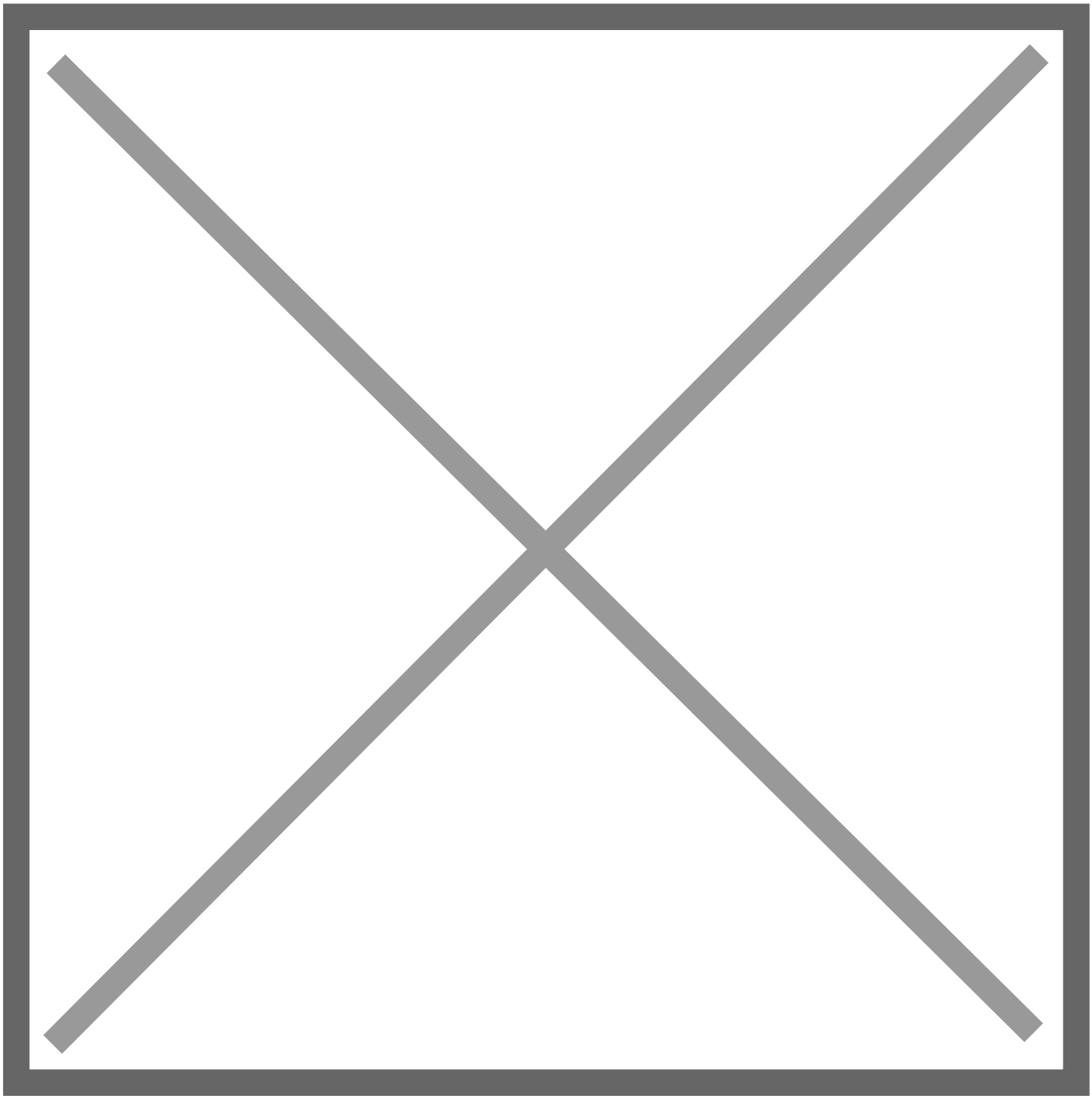


Survey type:	Measured
Sample size:	2226
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation
Notes:	Weighted

Cutoffs:	IOTF

Overweight/obesity by region

Children, 2022-2023

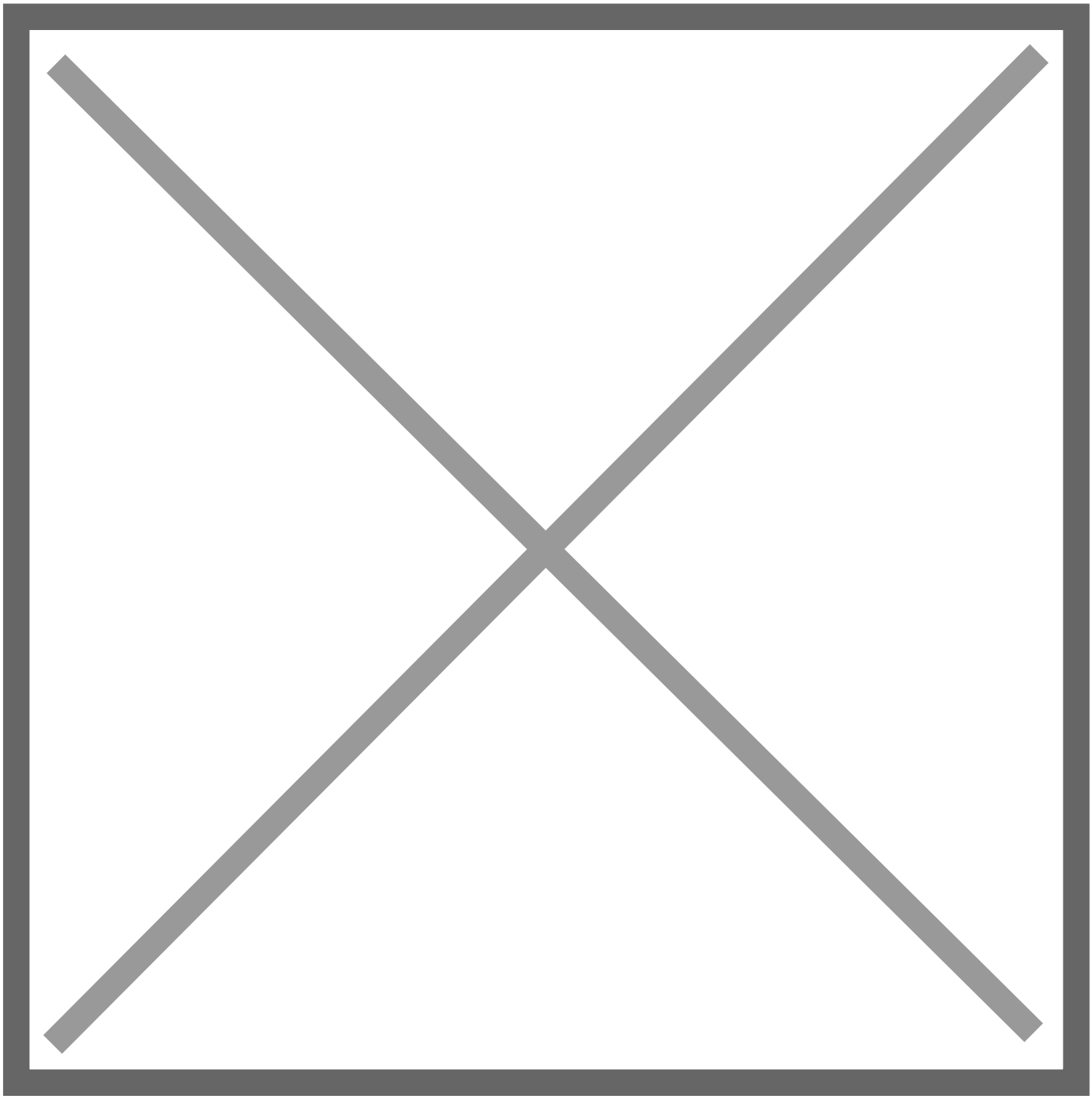


Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	6-17
Area covered:	National
References:	Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. 2022-2023 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) data query. Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). Retrieved [19.05.2025] from [www.childhealthdata.org].

Definitions:	BMI categories for children and teens are based on sex-specific BMI-for-age percentiles from the CDC. BMI-for-age categories are: Overweight - 85th<95th percentile; Obese - =>95th percentile Parents typically overestimate height and underestimate weight of children younger than 10 years of age. Therefore, BMI for children under 10 years of age should be interpreted with caution. States A-M (inclusive)
Cutoffs:	CDC

Overweight/obesity by socio-economic group

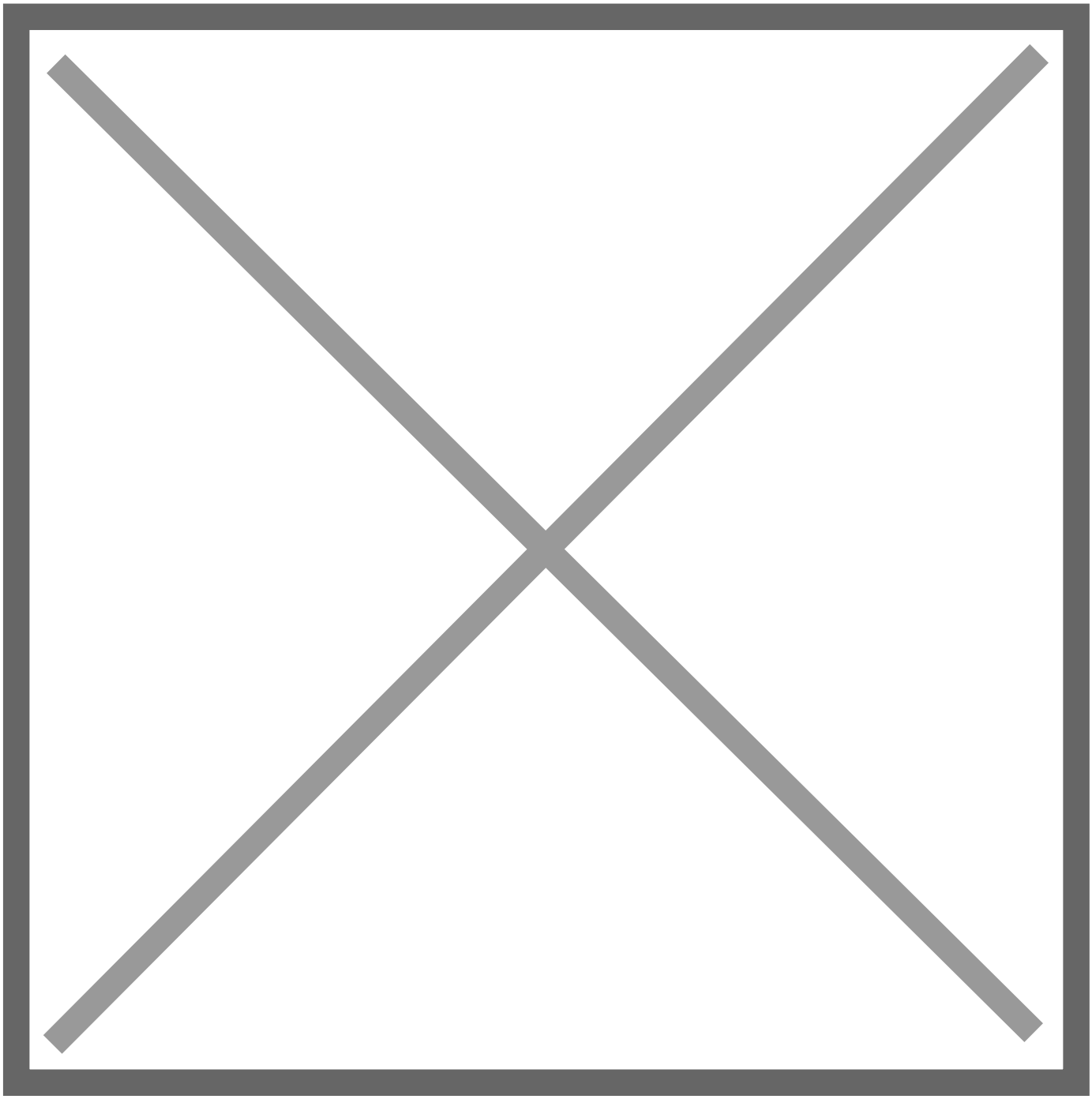
Children, 2021-2023



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1653
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted
Definitions:	Poverty Income Ratio (PIR) = Ratio of family income to poverty level in survey year, reported here as a percentage
Cutoffs:	IOTF

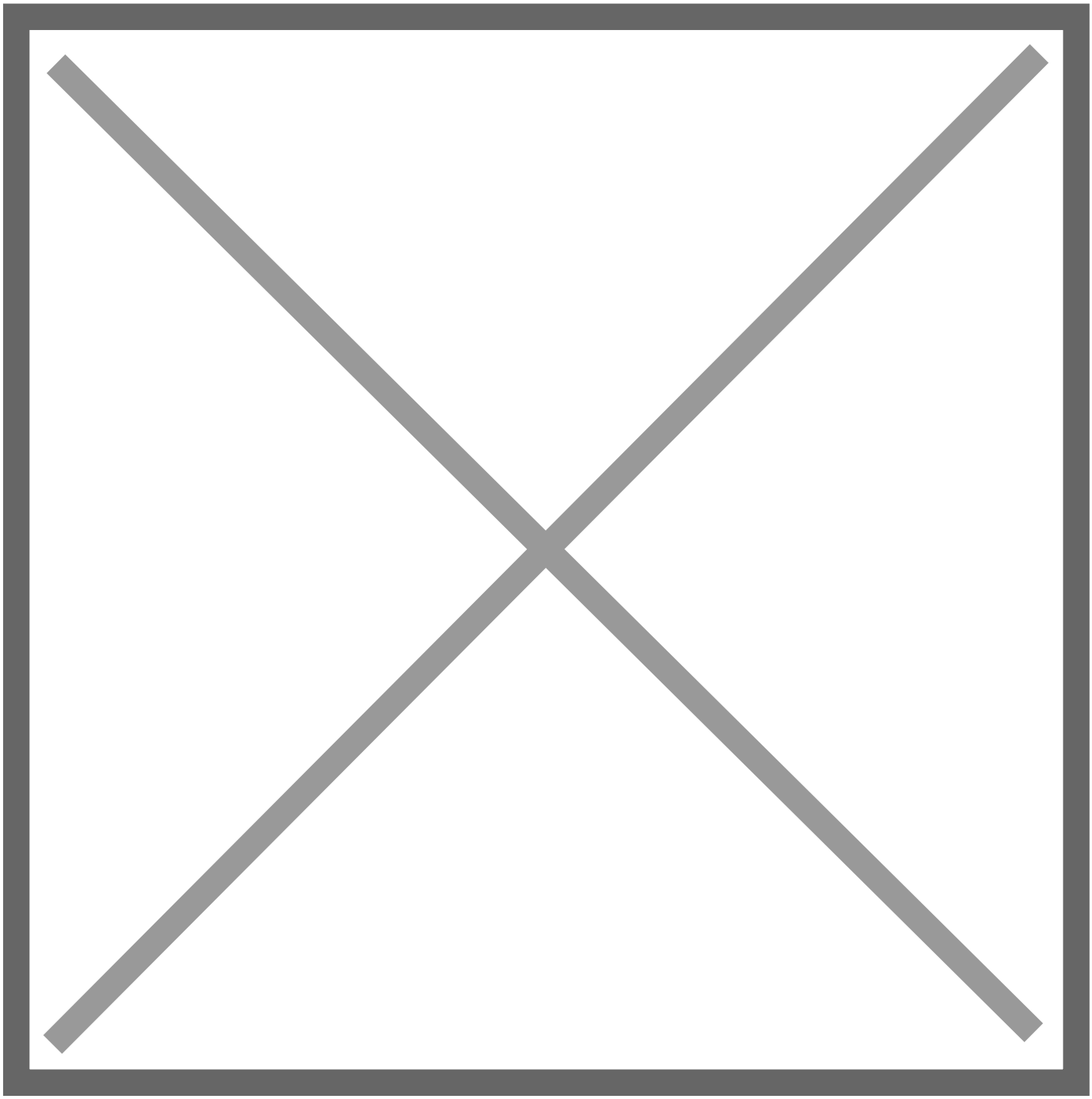
Boys, 2021-2023



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1653
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted
Definitions:	Poverty Income Ratio (PIR) = Ratio of family income to poverty level in survey year, reported here as a percentage
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Girls, 2021-2023



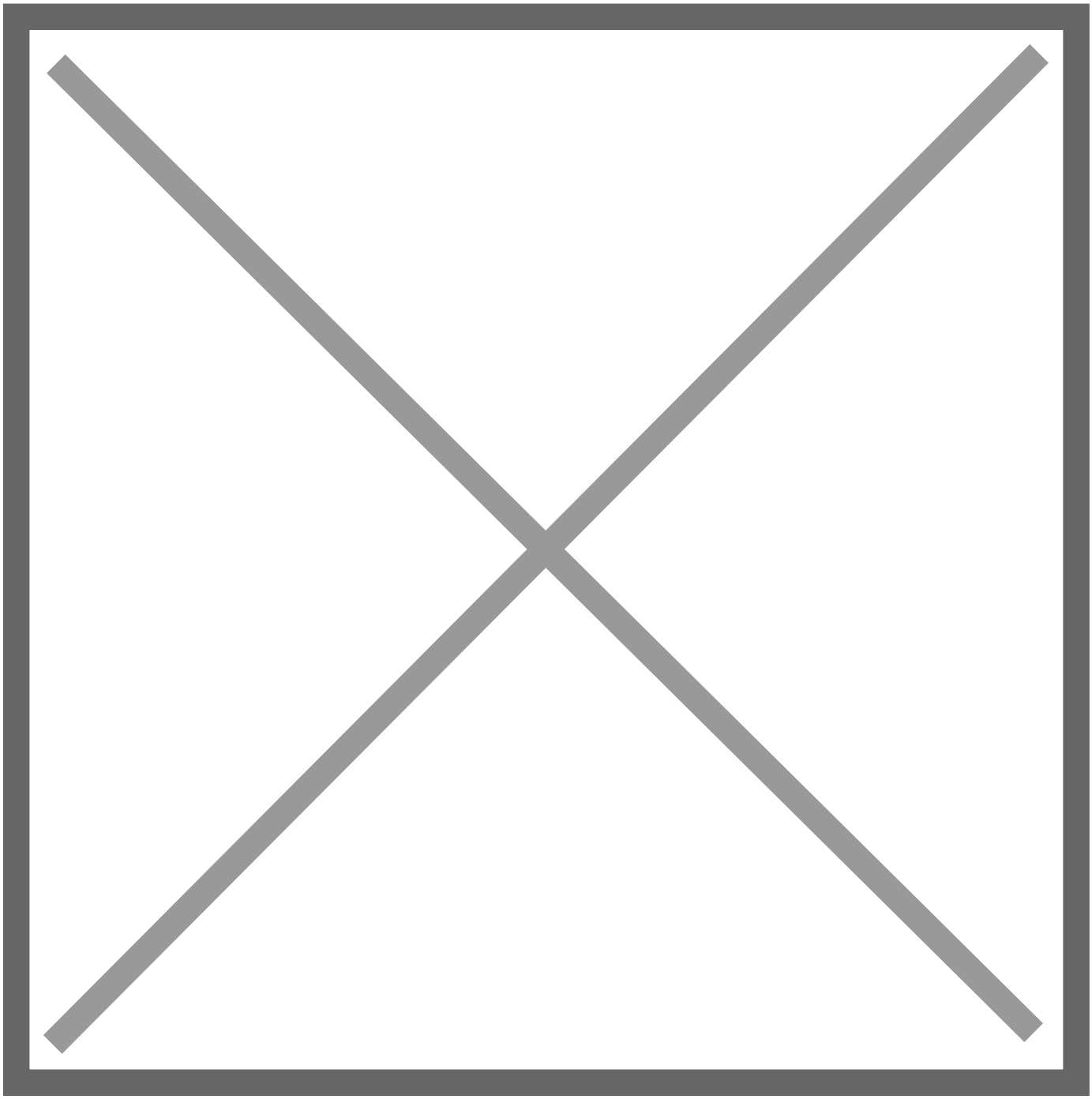
Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1653
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted
Definitions:	Poverty Income Ratio (PIR) = Ratio of family income to poverty level in survey year, reported here as a percentage
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Overweight/obesity by ethnicity

Ethnic groups are as defined by publication of origin and are not as defined by WOF. In some instances ethnicity is conflated with nationality and/or race.

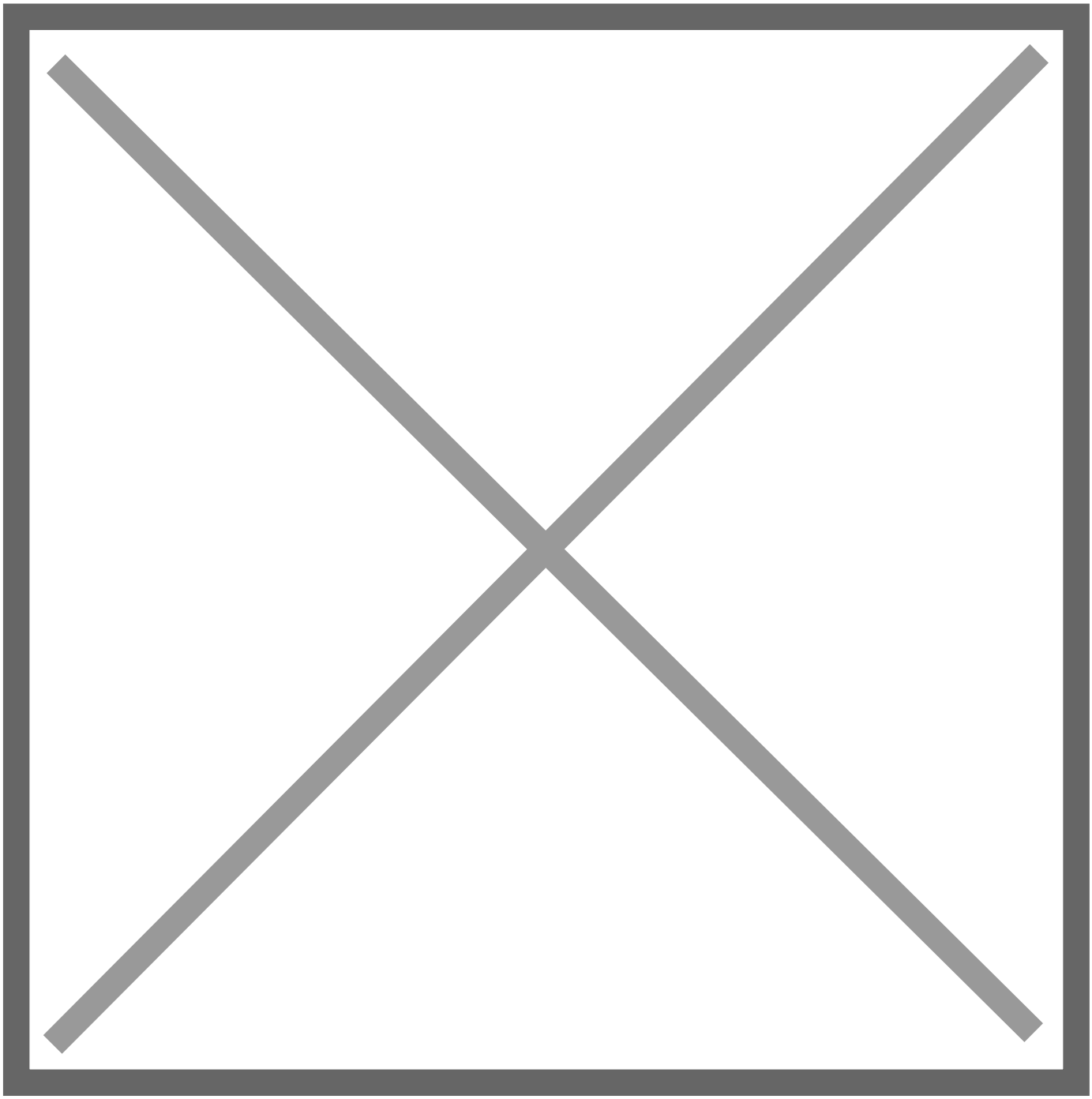
Children, 2021-2023



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1887
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted. NB. Small sample size within groups
Cutoffs:	IOTF

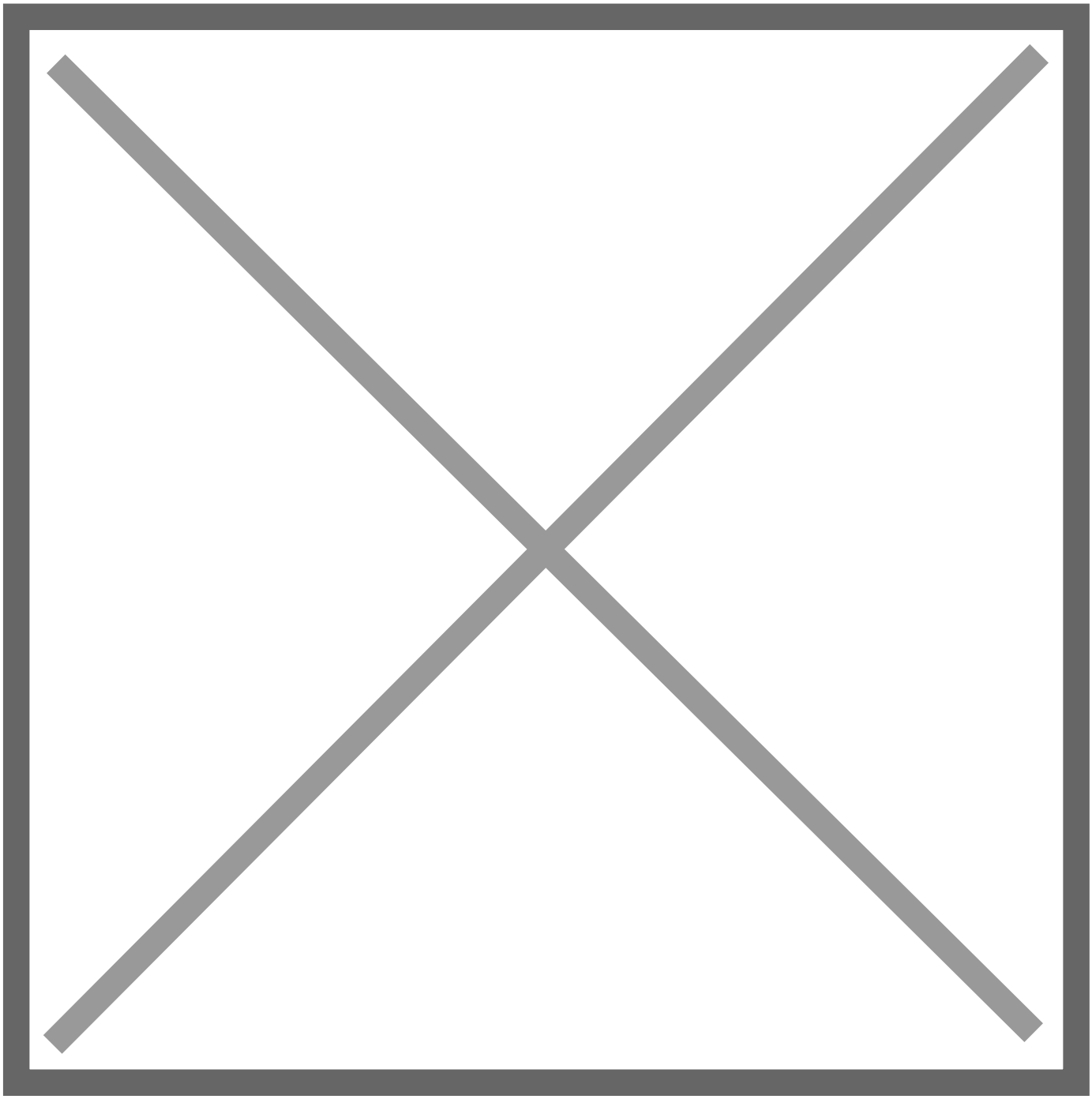
Boys, 2021-2023



Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1887
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted. NB. Small sample size within groups
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Girls, 2021-2023

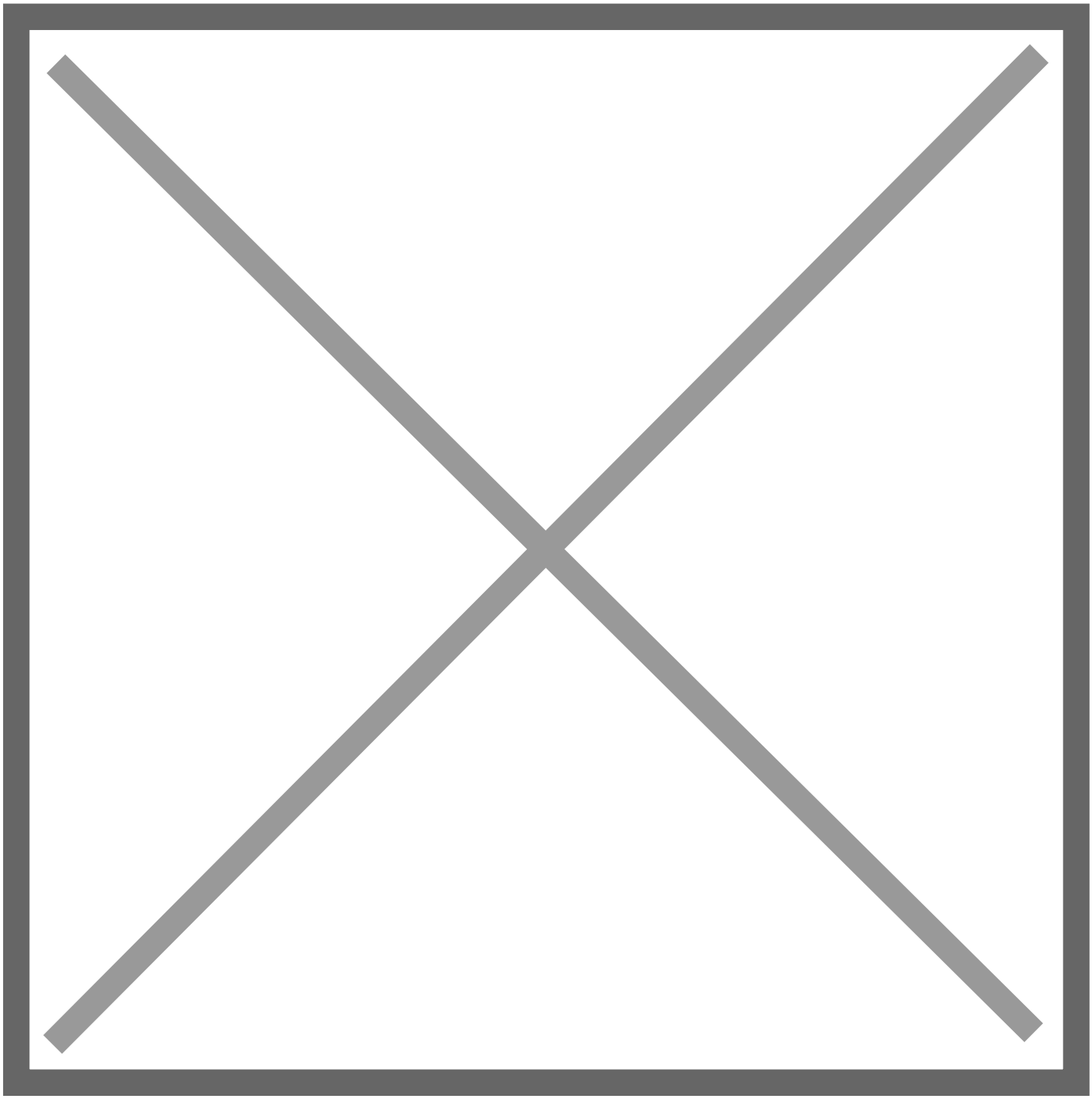


Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-17
Sample size:	1887
Area covered:	National
References:	Reanalysis of NHANES 2021-2023 by Sarah Spreckley, Rachel Jackson Leach, World Obesity Federation

Notes:	Weighted. NB. Small sample size within groups
Cutoffs:	IOTF

Double burden of underweight & obesity

Children, 2022

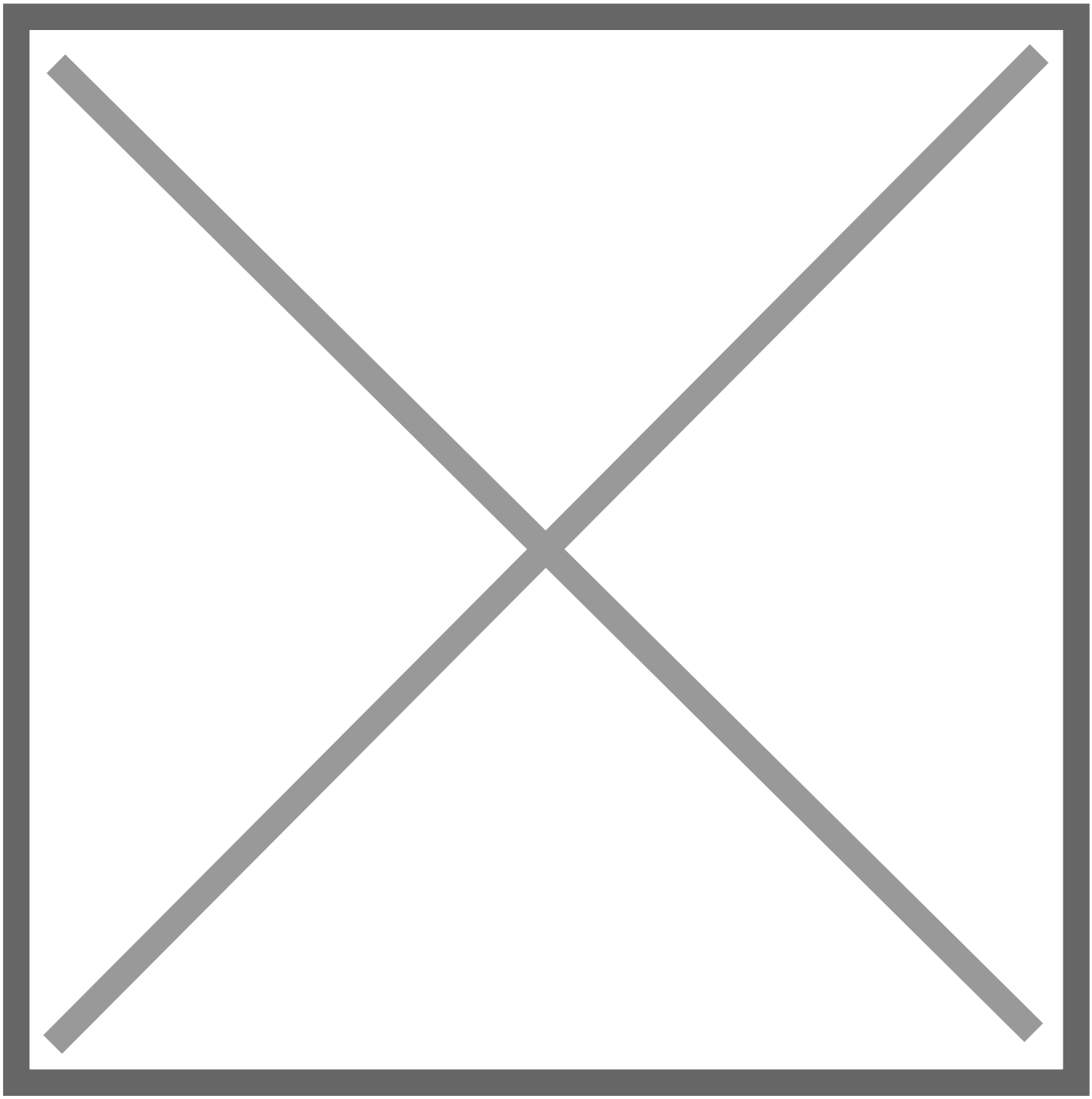


Survey type:	Measured
Age:	5-19
References:	NCD Risk Factor Collaboration (NCD-RisC). Worldwide trends in underweight and obesity from 1990 to 2022: a pooled analysis of 3663 population representative studies with 222 million children, adolescents, and adults. Lancet 2024; published online Feb 29. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(23)02750-2.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

Insufficient physical activity

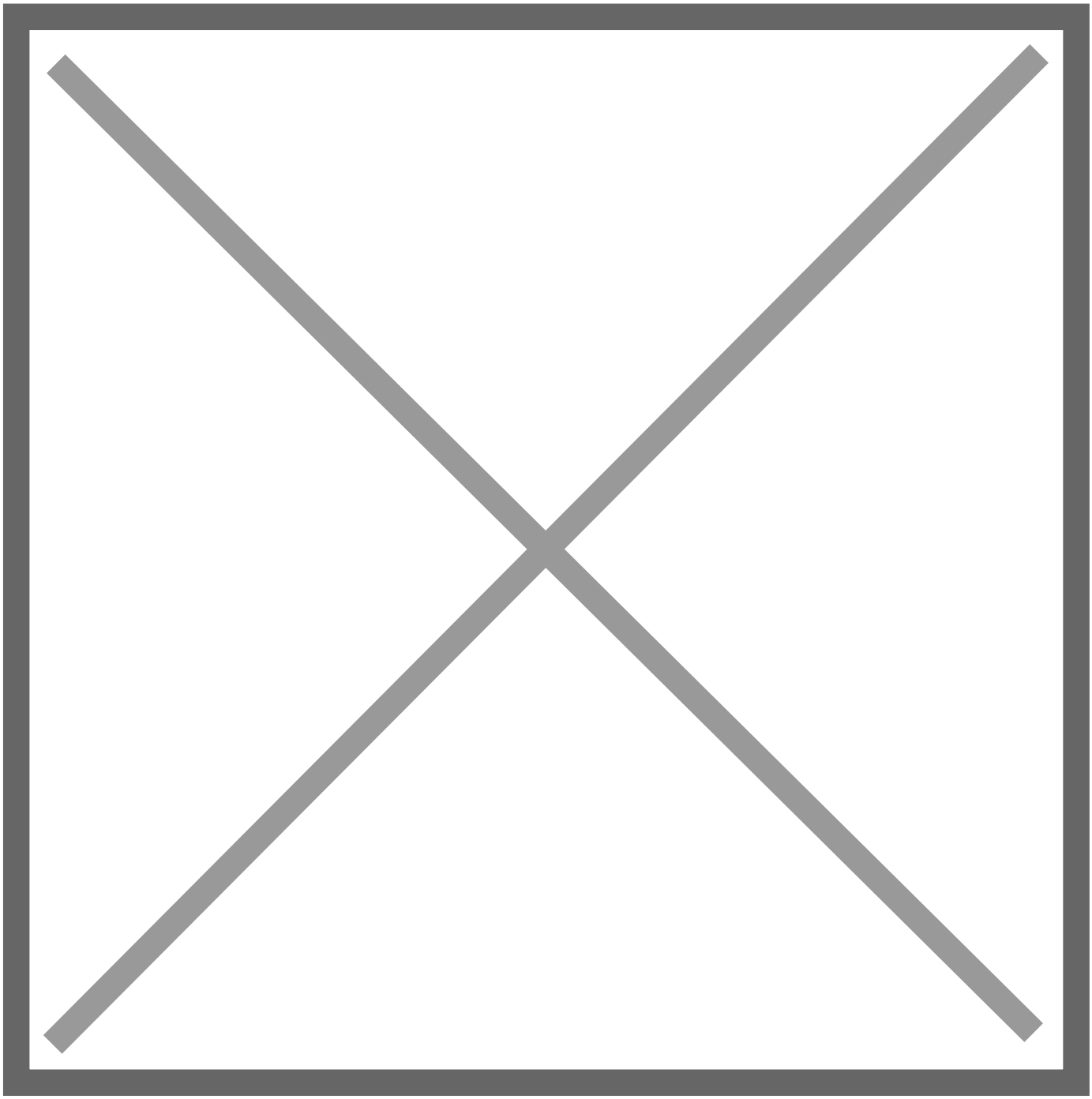
Children, 2016



Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	11-17
References:	Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation, https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A893ADO?lang=en (last accessed 16.03.21)
Notes:	% of school going adolescents not meeting WHO recommendations on Physical Activity for Health, i.e. doing less than 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.

Definitions:	% Adolescents insufficiently active (age standardised estimate)

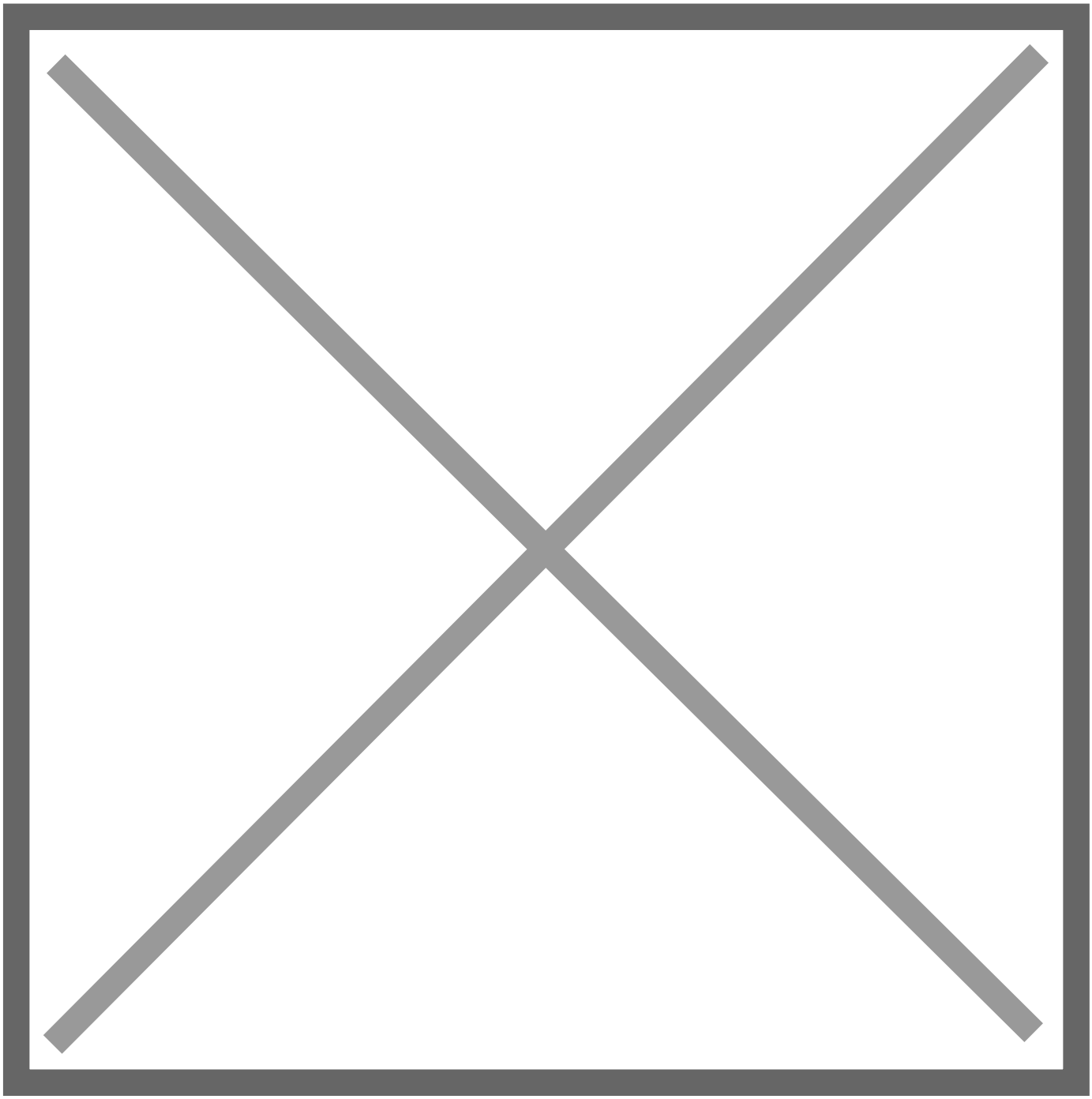
Boys, 2016



Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	11-17
References:	Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation, https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A893ADO?lang=en (last accessed 16.03.21)
Notes:	% of school going adolescents not meeting WHO recommendations on Physical Activity for Health, i.e. doing less than 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.

Definitions:	% Adolescents insufficiently active (age standardised estimate)

Girls, 2016

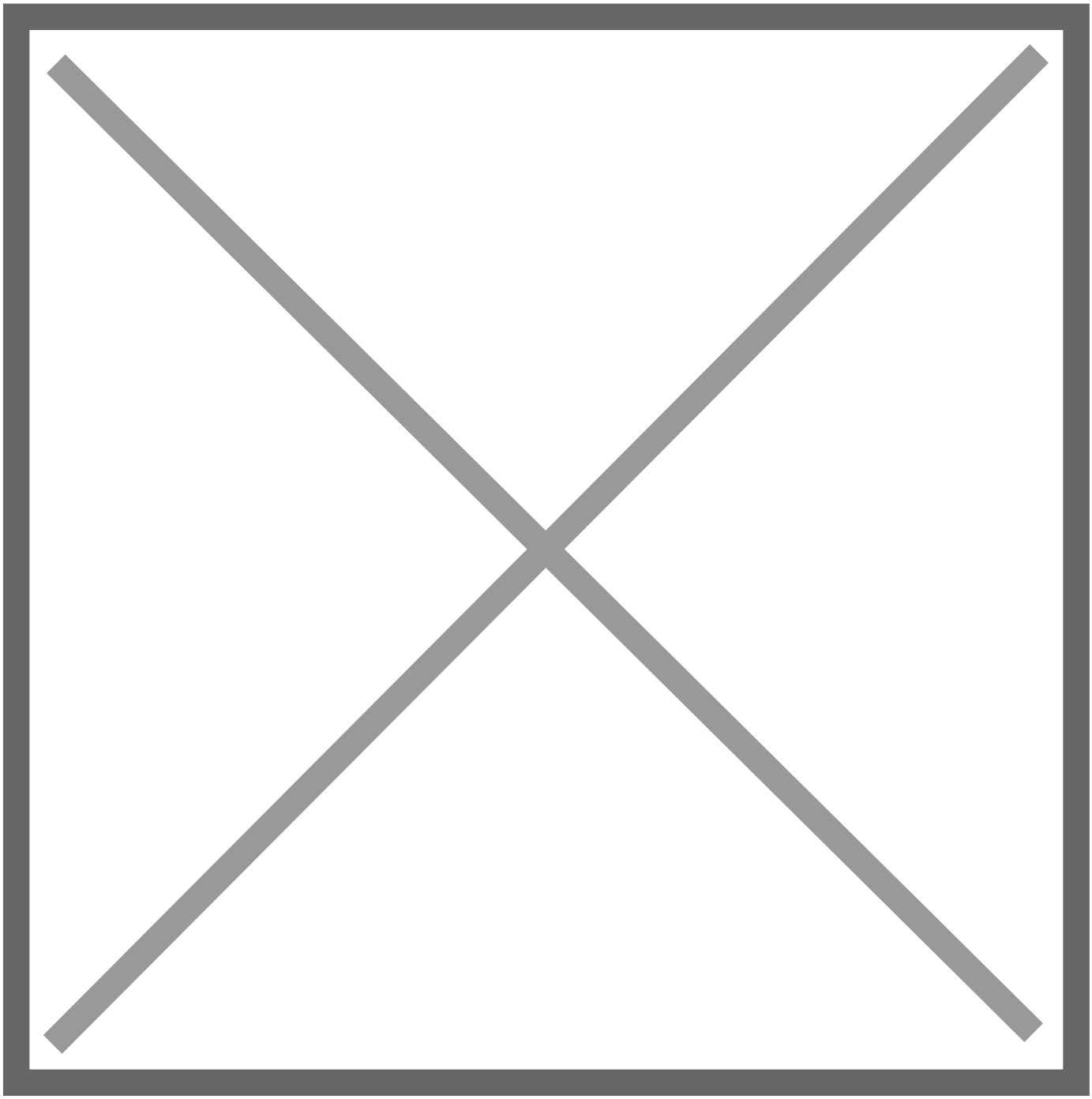


Survey type:	Self-reported
Age:	11-17
References:	Global Health Observatory data repository, World Health Organisation, https://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.A893ADO?lang=en (last accessed 16.03.21)
Notes:	% of school going adolescents not meeting WHO recommendations on Physical Activity for Health, i.e. doing less than 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily.

Definitions:	% Adolescents insufficiently active (age standardised estimate)

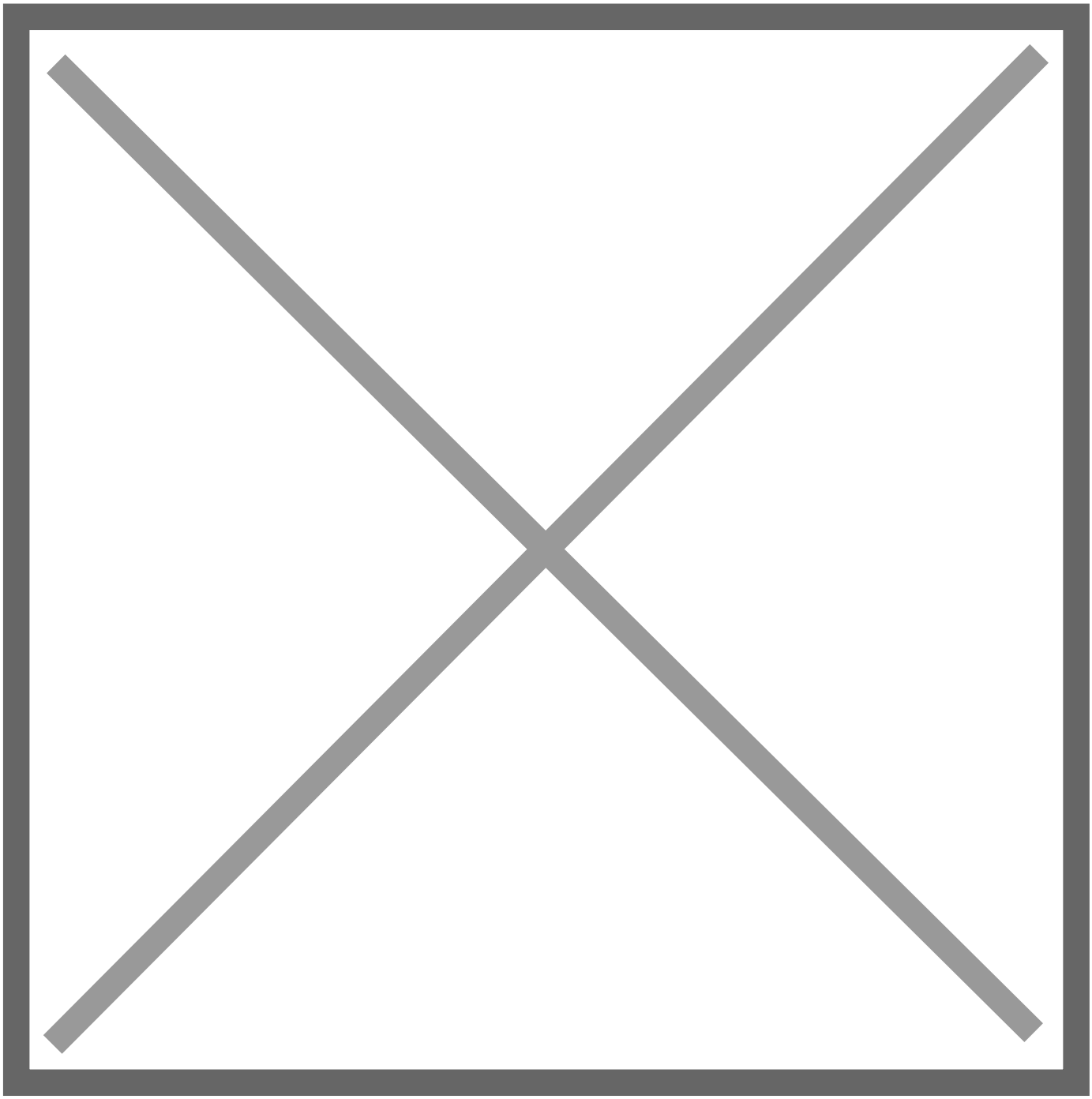
Mental health - depression disorders

Children, 2023



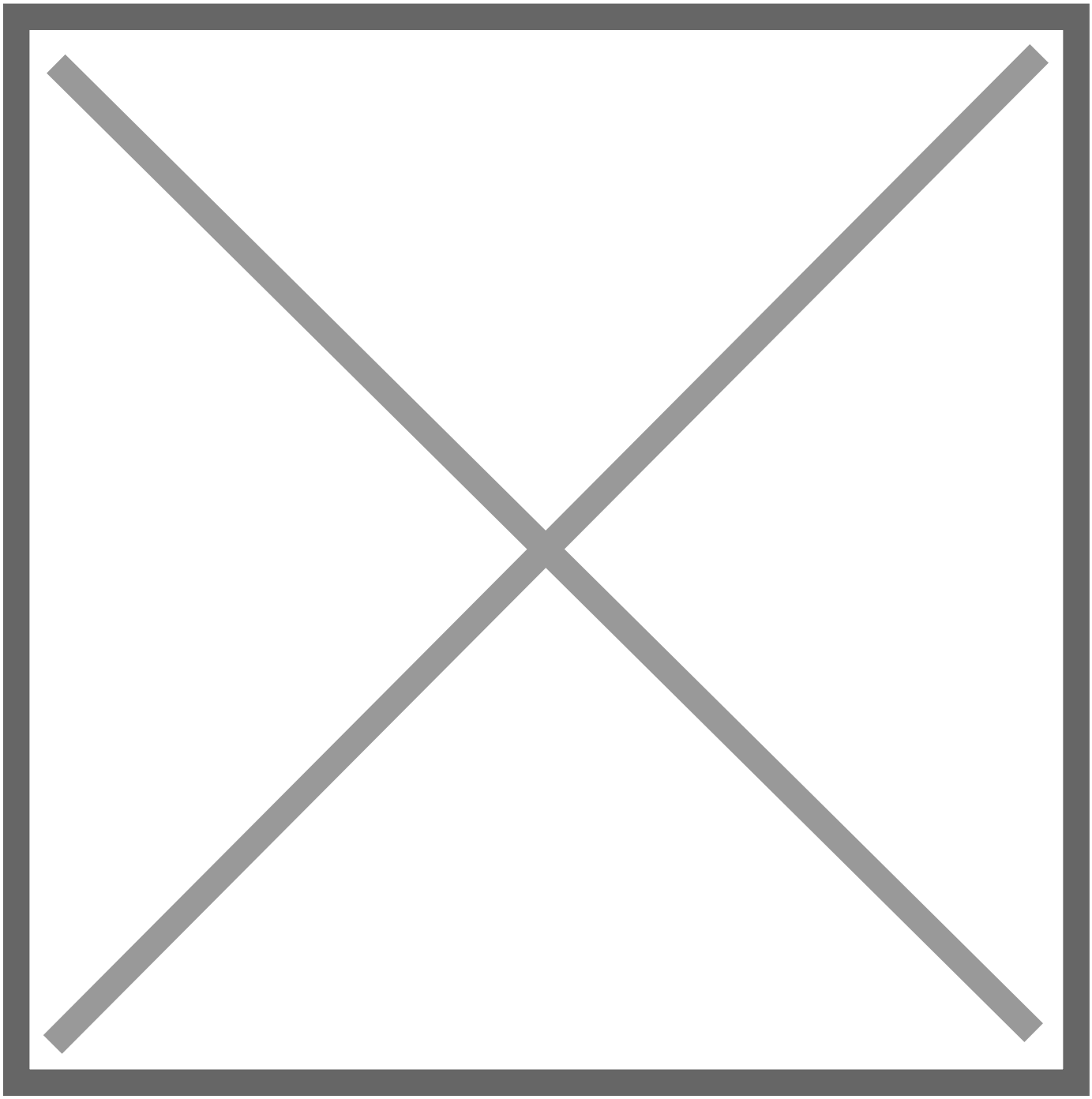
Area covered:	National
References:	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2023. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2025. Available from https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/ [Accessed 17.03.26]
Definitions:	Estimated number living with depressive disorders per 100,000 population (under 20 years of age)

Boys, 2023



Area covered:	National
References:	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2023. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2025. Available from https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/ [Accessed 17.03.26]
Definitions:	Estimated number living with depressive disorders per 100,000 population (under 20 years of age)

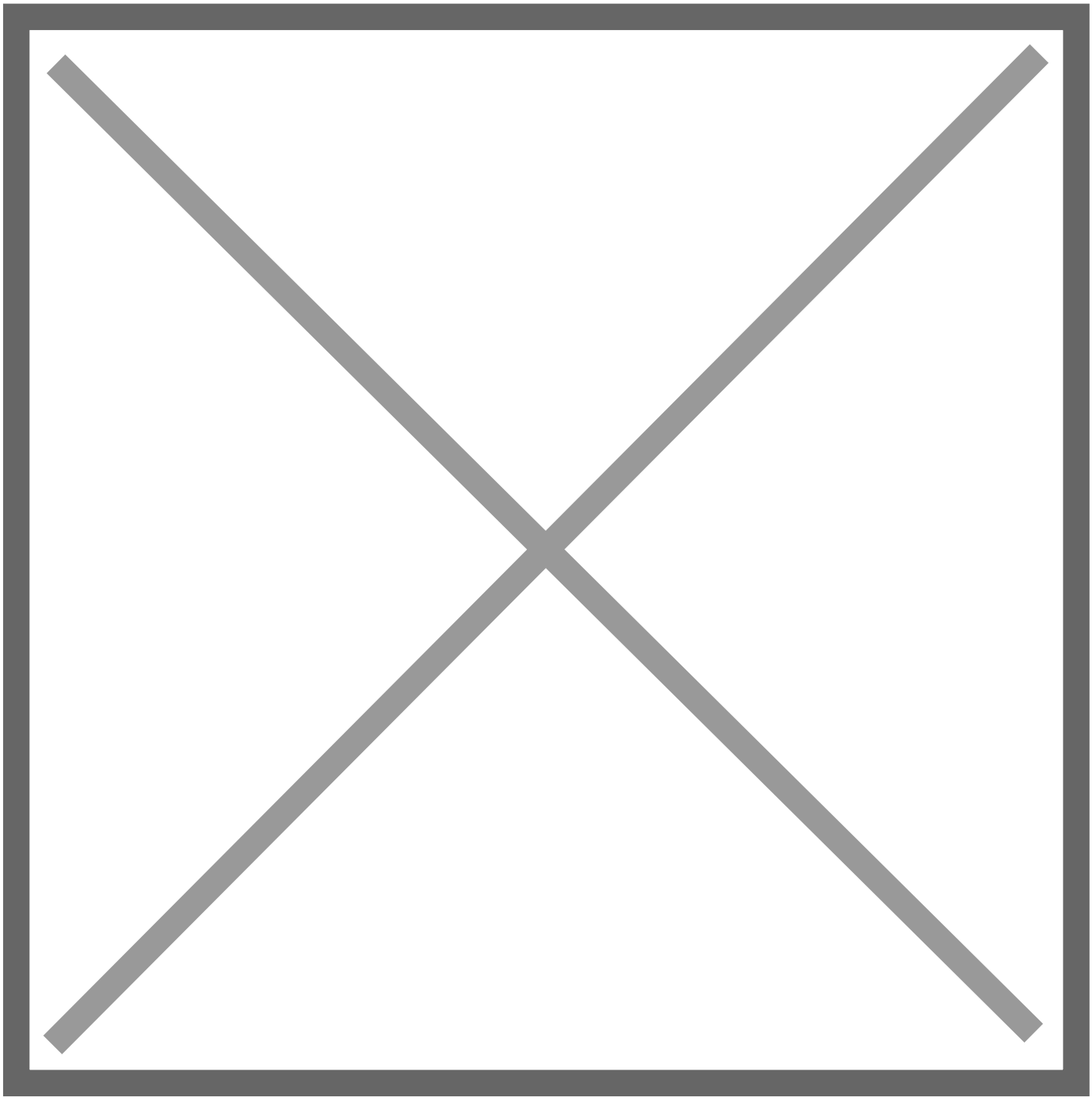
Girls, 2023



Area covered:	National
References:	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2023. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2025. Available from https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/ [Accessed 17.03.26]
Definitions:	Estimated number living with depressive disorders per 100,000 population (under 20 years of age)

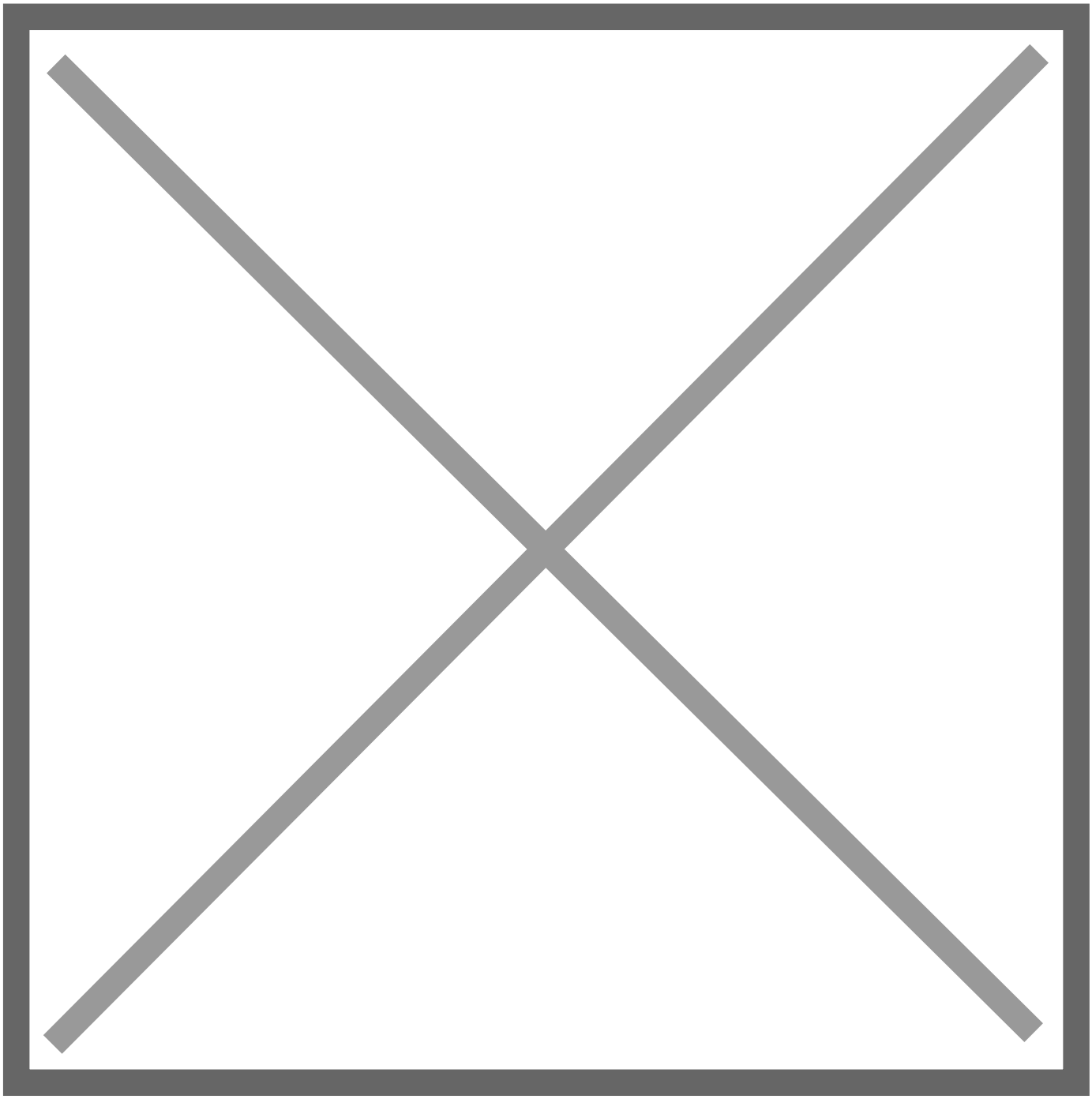
Mental health - anxiety disorders

Children, 2023



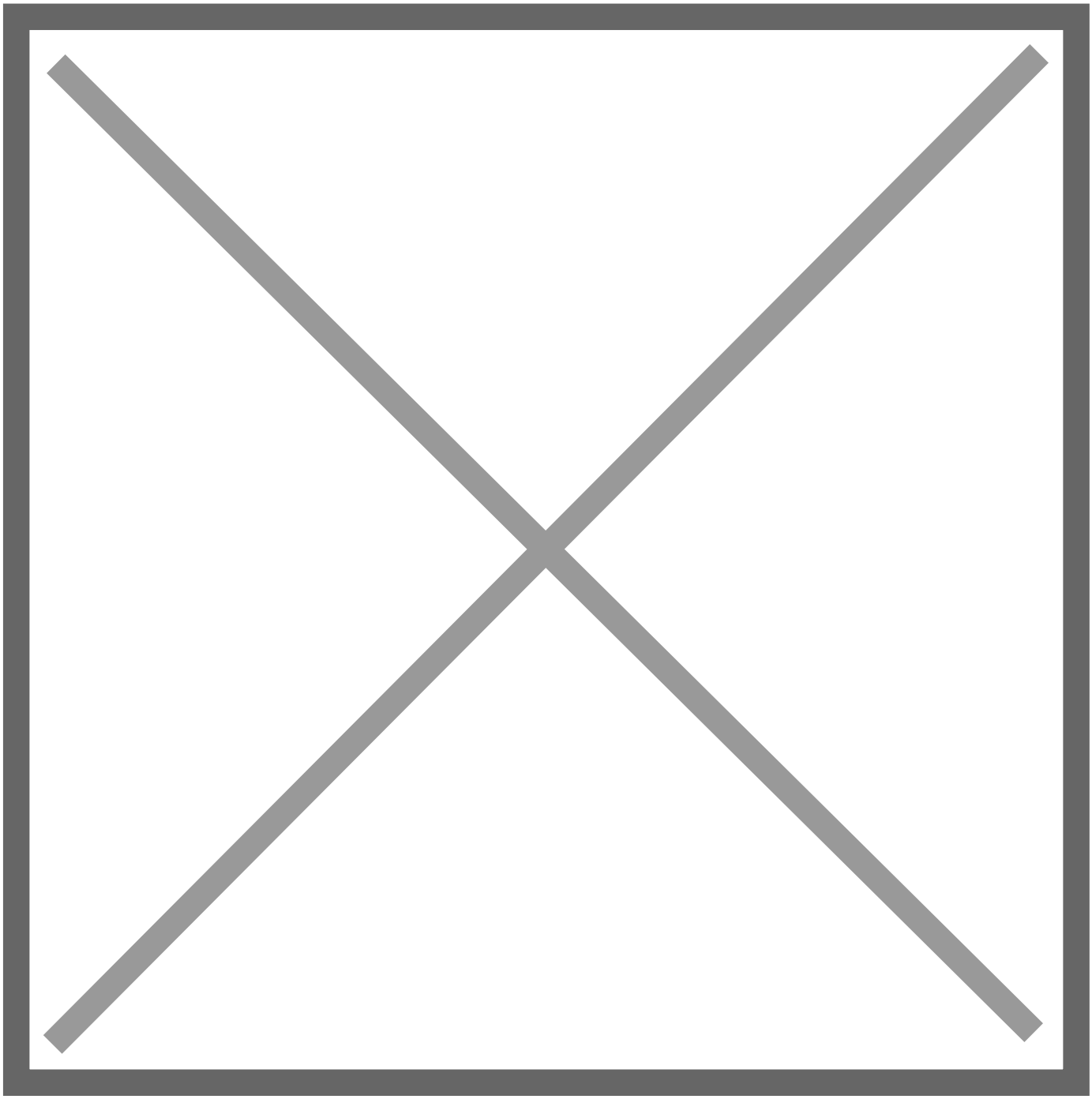
Area covered:	National
References:	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2023. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2025. Available from https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/ [Accessed 17.03.26]
Definitions:	Estimated number living with anxiety disorders per 100,000 population (under 20 years of age)

Boys, 2023



Area covered:	National
References:	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2023. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2025. Available from https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/ [Accessed 17.03.26]
Definitions:	Estimated number living with anxiety disorders per 100,000 population (under 20 years of age)

Girls, 2023



Area covered:	National
References:	Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME). GBD Compare Data Visualization. Global Burden of Disease (GBD) Study 2023. Seattle, WA: IHME, University of Washington, 2025. Available from https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/ [Accessed 17.03.26]
Definitions:	Estimated number living with anxiety disorders per 100,000 population (under 20 years of age)

PDF created on November 4, 2026