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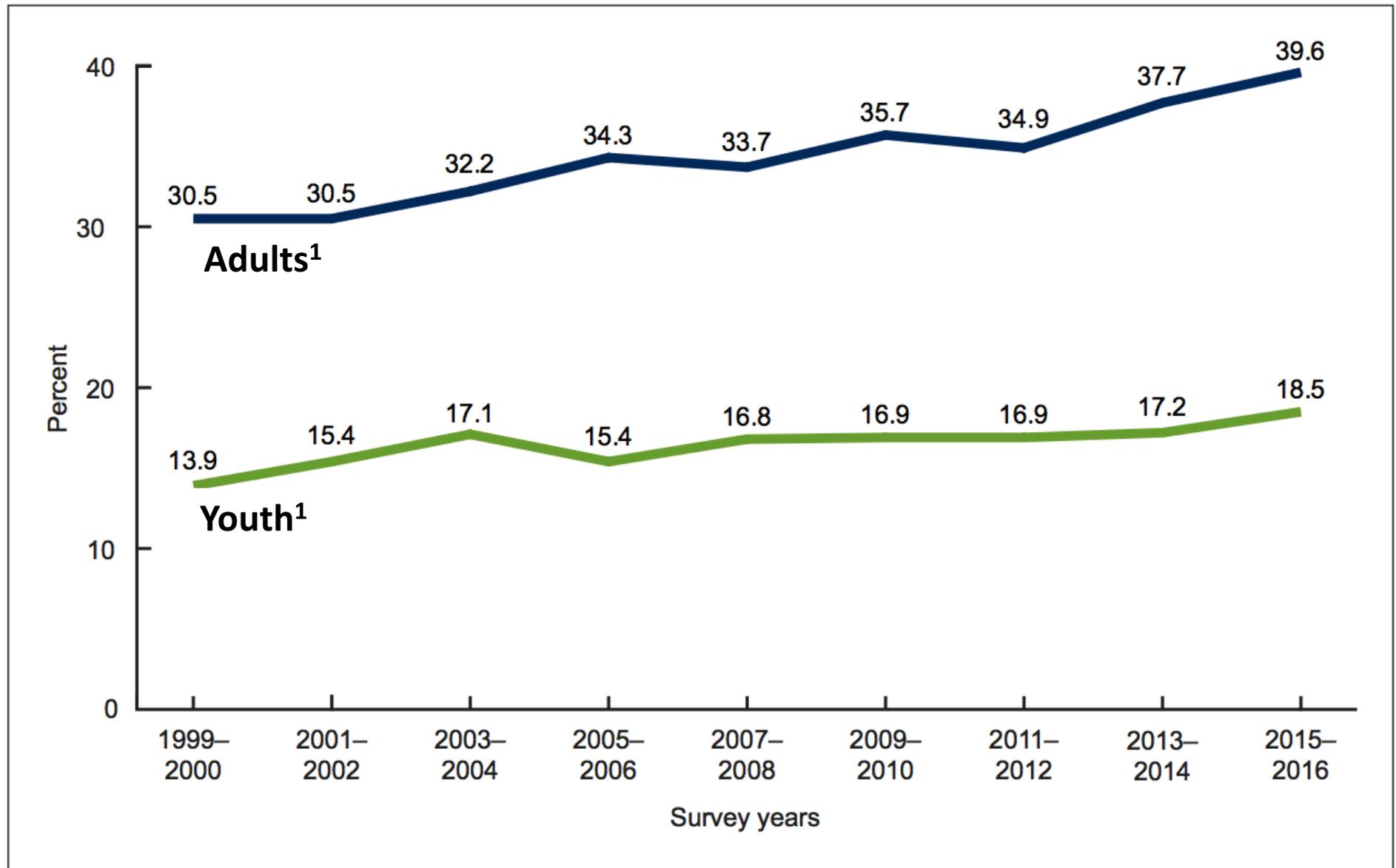
Research for healthy food, people and places

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What are the trends in obesity?

Obesity is increasing in the U.S.

Figure 5. Trends in obesity prevalence among adults aged 20 and over (age adjusted) and youth aged 2–19 years: United States, 1999–2000 through 2015–2016



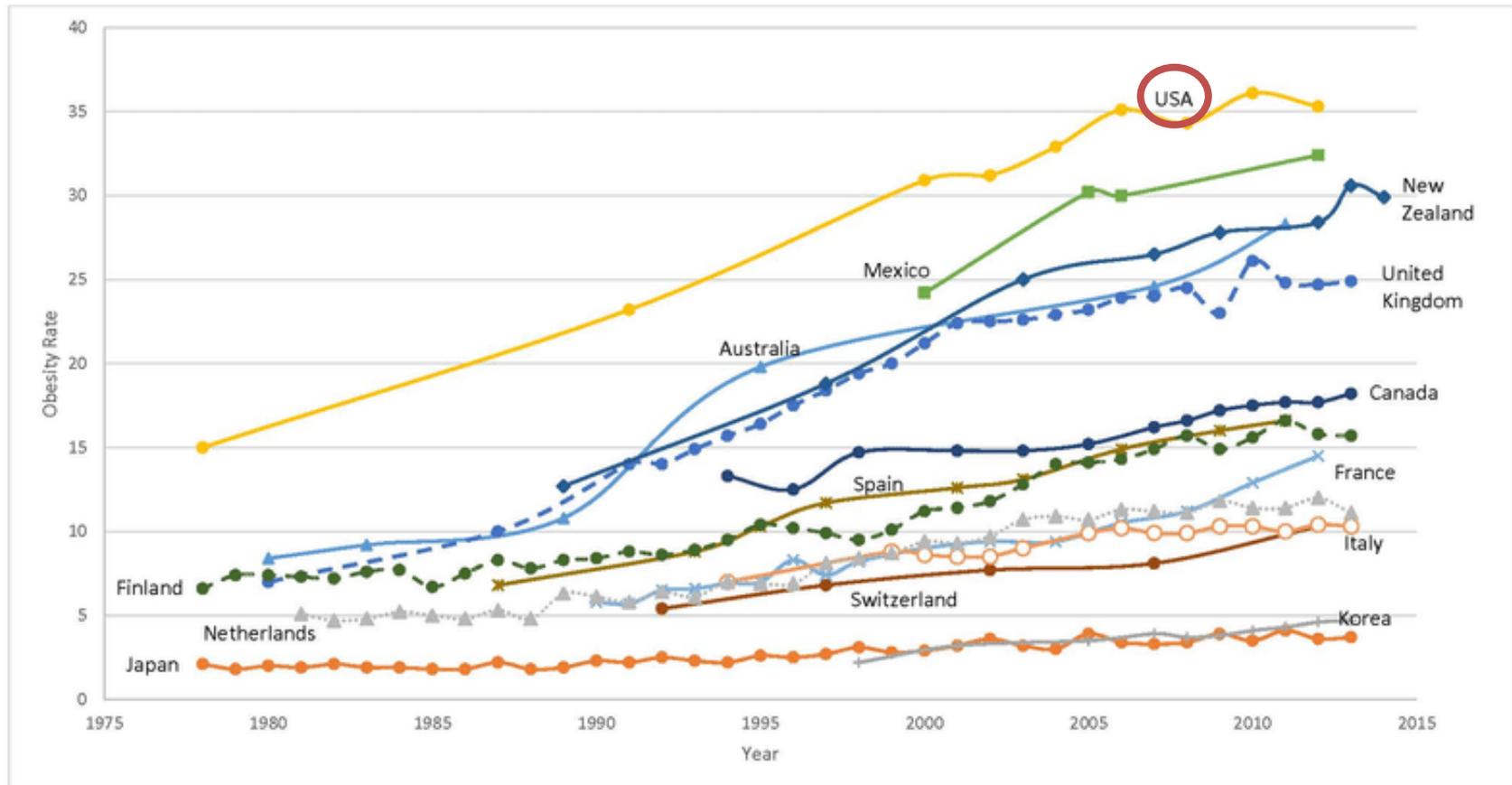
¹Significant increasing linear trend from 1999–2000 through 2015–2016.

NOTES: All estimates for adults are age adjusted by the direct method to the 2000 U.S. census population using the age groups 20–39, 40–59, and 60 and over.

Access data table for Figure 5 at: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db288_table.pdf#5.

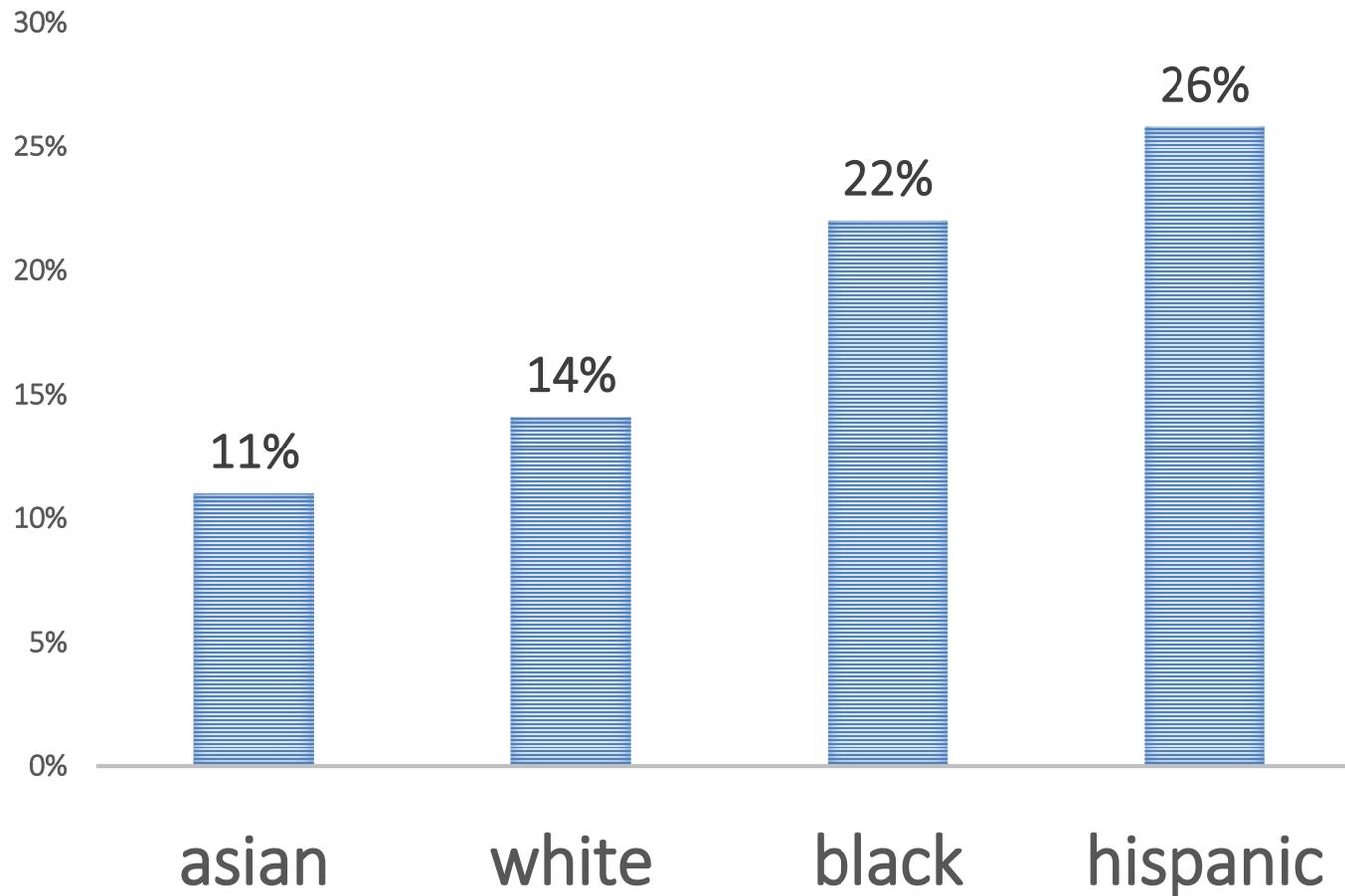
SOURCE: NCHS, National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1999–2016.

U.S. tops other nations in obesity rates



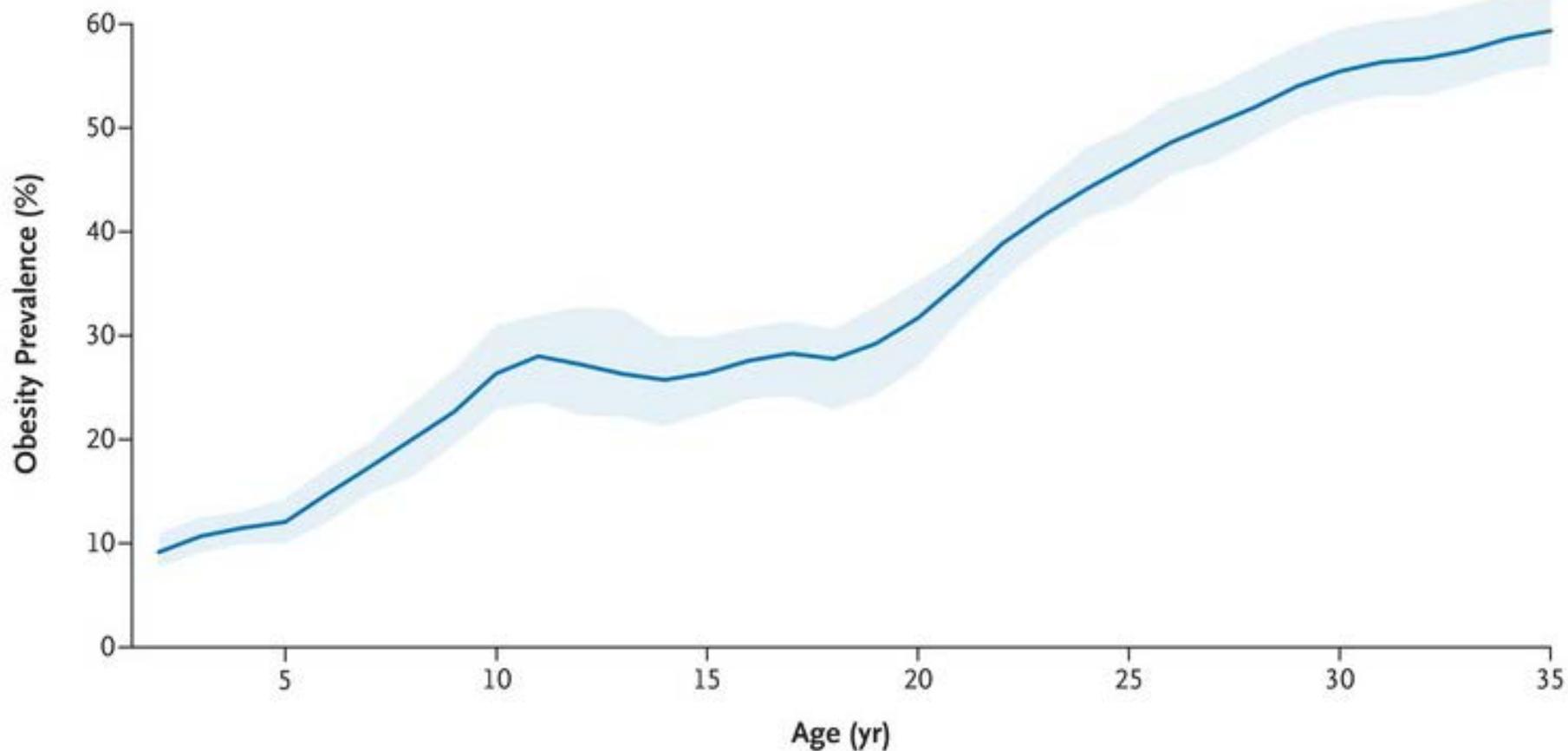
There are large differences in the prevalence of obesity among youth

Obesity among US children 2 to 19 years of age from 2015-2016

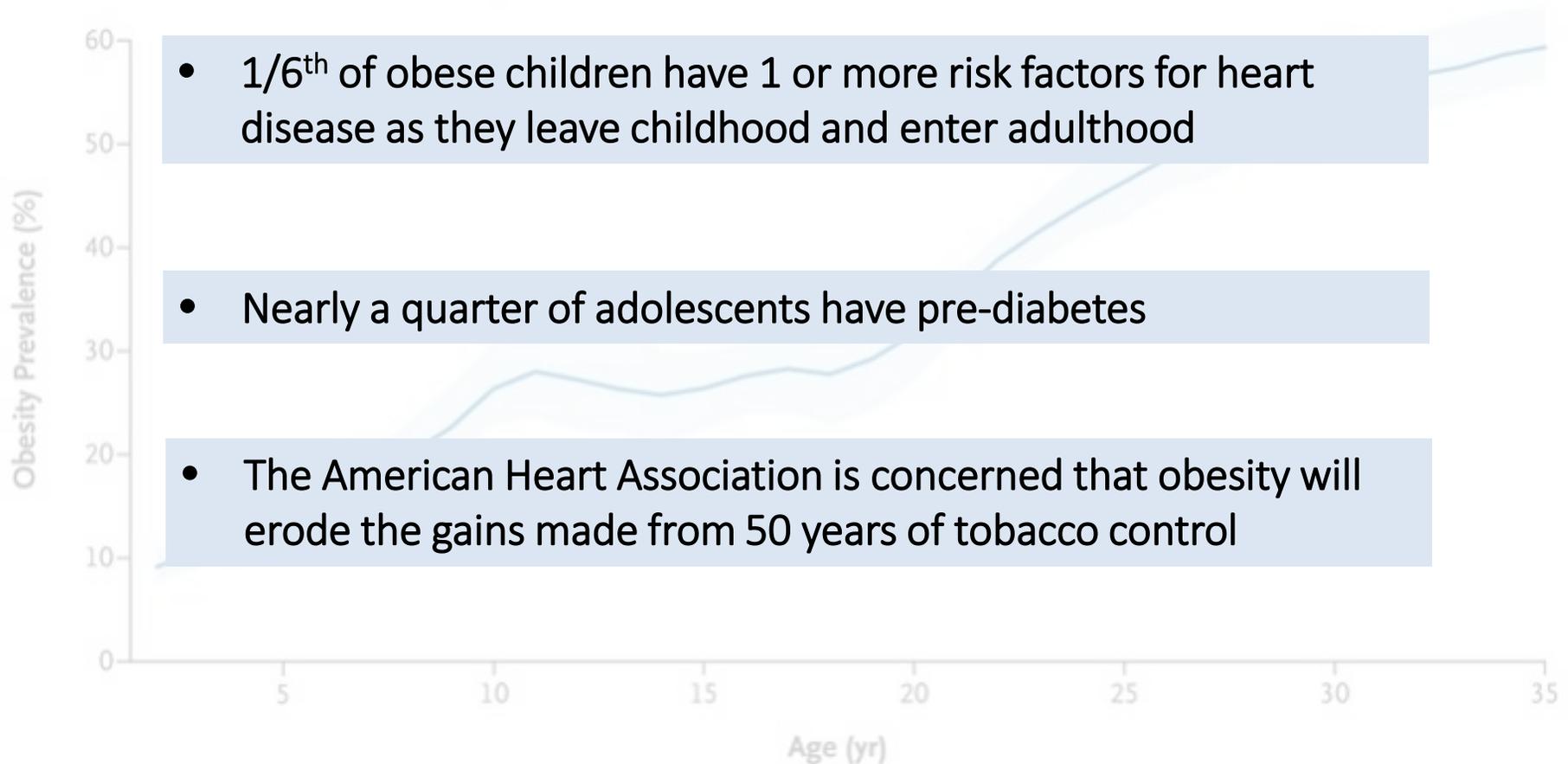


Obesity in the Future

Projected prevalence of obesity at future ages
among 2-year-olds in 2016



Focus on the prevention of heart disease and diabetes



A photograph of a school playground. The playground features a red slide and a yellow structure with green railings. The ground is covered in wood chips. There are trees in the background and a clear blue sky. The word "SCHOOLS" is written in white capital letters in the upper left corner of the image.

SCHOOLS

A Decade of Achievements

- California was the first state to pass policies limiting chips, candies and sweetened beverages in schools
- The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act enacted nationwide competitive food policies
- California litigation held schools accountable for PE; now minutes and quality are increasing
- Safe Routes to School program made street and sidewalk improvements around schools
- Local soda taxes passed and now funds are used for community health initiatives and school wellness activities



From the Evidence



- Comprehensive school food and physical activity interventions *are more effective* than singular efforts
- Wellness committees are associated with lower student BMI
- On average, school meals are significantly more nutritious than foods brought from home
- Removal of less healthy foods and beverages is as effective as providing healthier options
- Comprehensive PE and physical activity interventions can be effective at improving cardiovascular and socio-emotional health and academic outcomes
- Behavioral economic strategies change children's food intake



We have shown that school interventions can impact the weight status of kids

Schools are *still* the most effective setting for interventions



In low income schools, kids get up to 2/3rds of their meals at school

Kids can get most, or all, of the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity a day at school



What's next?

Build on achievements, reframe issue, push further

- Regulate and increase minutes of physical education and physical activity at schools – we are lacking regulations and monitoring that uphold standards
- Boost school meal participation for all students
- Pilot improvements in school food quality; then be ready to advocate for more policy changes at the federal level in a few years
- Make schools a hub of health – add access to food banks, healthy dinners, family fitness from school
- Open school channels for involving parents
- Examine the role of technology on sedentary behavior and isolation
- Integrate with other wellness initiatives
- Partner with others working on income and education equality, *but this alone is not enough and the problem is urgent*



Challenge

The *waning interest in obesity* despite the urgency. This is not an intractable problem, but it is complex and takes persistent effort. The condition is so pervasive now, it's become normalized.

This is why *leadership* is so important to protect today's kids. We have a looming public health crisis and we are already seeing shortened lifespans and more years of disabling effects from diabetes and heart disease starting at a younger age.



Opportunity

Evidence supports continuing **food and physical activity interventions**. *National leadership and reframing the problem to focus on the prevention of heart disease and diabetes prevention is needed.*

Integrate nutrition, physical activity, social/emotional and worksite wellness work

Test common impacts like attendance and achievement—measures schools care about