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PEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGY

Obesity in kids is now an epidemic in the United States. One child in five is overweight. The increase is in all age, race and gender groups. Overweight kids tend to become overweight adults, continuing to put them at greater risk for Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke. Children who are overweight or obese have significantly higher health-care costs than their normal weight peers.

As a Pediatric Endocrinologist, I understand the importance of teaching children about eating right and exercising at a young age. In my opinion, the Hearty character will be embraced by both children and parents alike. The interactive nature of the songs will encourage children to exercise and learn nutrition information in a fun way.

Implementing prevention programs, like Hearty, is important to controlling the obesity epidemic. Teaching healthy behaviors at a young age is extremely important, since change becomes more difficult with age. Behaviors involving physical activity and nutrition are the cornerstone of preventing obesity in children and adolescents. Hearty is a positive step in preventing this epidemic.

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Michele Zerah, M.D. earned her medical degree at the University of Paris XII, in France. She performed her post Graduate training at St. Luke's Roosevelt Medical Center in New York City, and at The New York Hospital, Cornell Medical Center. She was on the staff of The Center for Complementary Medicine at Stony Brook University Hospital in New York and practiced pediatric endocrinology at Long Island Jewish/Schneider Children Hospital, New York, until her move to Florida where she continues to practice pediatric endocrinology.