

Preventing Noise Damage

Parents & Teachers:

- **Monitor the noise levels** to which children are exposed. If you have to shout for a child to hear you over his or her recreational activities, the noise is too loud.
- Purchase personal stereos with **volume limiters**.
- **Listen to toys** prior to purchase. Consult safety resources such as www.toysafety.net.
- **Ask for the volume to be lowered** at video arcades, dances and other places your children frequent.
- **Limit the time** your child spends in noisy places.
- **Provide earplugs or earmuffs** sized for your child's ears when the noise can't be reduced.
- **Be a good role model** — use hearing protection yourself when exposed to hazardous noise.
- Make sure your child's school has a **hearing loss prevention program** for music, shop and other noisy classes.
- **Have your child's hearing tested** yearly if they participate in noisy activities or you suspect a change in hearing ability.
- **Be aware of hearing loss warning signs** a child may have such as ringing in the ears, speech muffled and difficult to understand or temporary hearing difficulty after a noisy activity.



Consult a local audiologist for guidance in hearing protector selection and retail resources.

NOISE RULES

- E** = Earplugs/Earmuffs
- A** = Avoid Loud Sounds
- R** = Reduce the Volume
- S** = Shorten the Time in Noise

Contact your child's local educational audiologist through your school district or a private audiologist for additional information or assistance. To find an audiologist in your area, visit www.audiology.org and click on **Find An Audiologist**.



How's your hearing? Ask an Audiologist!

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NOISE... HEARING LOSS and CHILDREN



Hearing & Children

- **EARS NEVER STOP WORKING:** they never get a rest. Even months before birth, babies can hear their mothers' heartbeats.
- **HEARING** is critical to your child's safety. Hearing is important to the development of speech, listening, learning and social skills.
- **CHILDREN ARE EXPOSED** to a variety of noise sources, especially if involved in band, automotive or shop classes.
- **HEARING LOSS** can happen at any age. A growing number of children and adolescents are damaging their hearing by exposure to noise.
- **A RECENT NATIONAL STUDY** estimates that approximately 12% of all children ages 6 to 19 years have noise-induced hearing loss.



Noise can cause permanent hearing loss that cannot be restored. Noise-induced hearing loss can be **PREVENTED!**

How Noise Hurts Ears

Exposure to loud sounds may cause **permanent physical damage to your hearing**, just like heat causes a burn or a sharp object causes a cut. You can't see or feel the damage from noise, but it can be measured on hearing tests.

Inside our inner ears are thousands of tiny hair cells that send hearing signals to the brain. These hair cells act like the blades of grass in your lawn — if you walk across them too much or stomp on them too hard, they will eventually bend, break and die out. Listening to loud sounds too long or at high volume will damage these irreplaceable delicate hair cells.



ARMS-LENGTH RULE

If you have to shout to be heard from 3 feet away, then the noise is too loud. Turn down the volume or wear hearing protection!

Childhood Noise Risks

Noise levels of some toys and children's activities are loud enough to cause permanent hearing loss. Noise can damage hearing with long-term exposure to sound levels at or above 85 dBA SPL (typical lawnmower loudness). Even brief exposure to very loud sounds can result in permanent hearing loss. You should be concerned if your child is exposed to loud noises from:

- **Toys**
- **Personal Stereos**
- **Sporting Events**
- **Band Class**
- **Motorbikes**
- **Farm Equipment**
- **Movie Theaters**
- **Shop Class**
- **Arcades**
- **Concerts**
- **Firearms**
- **Firecrackers**
- **Jobs**
- **Power Tools**

