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**(City) Expert Stresses Hearing Protection as Noisy Summer Leisure Season Approaches for Children**

***Audiologist Shares Tips for Keeping Earbuds and Headphones From Damaging Kids’ Hearing as Nation Celebrates Better Hearing & Speech Month***

(City, State – Date) With 1.1 billion young people worldwide at risk of hearing loss from unsafe use of personal audio devices and exposure to noisy activities, (city) audiologist (name) is reminding parents of simple ways they can help their children protect their hearing as we head into the summer leisure season. The message is a timely one, as May is recognized nationally as **Better Hearing & Speech Month (BHSM).**

“Summer is always a time of heightened risk for kids since they have more free time on their hands—time they often use for gaming, scrolling TikTok, or streaming music on their devices, often with earbuds or headphones in or on their ears,” said (last name). “This year, hearing experts are especially concerned, as many kids have already spent a full year online for school, using devices for 6 or more hours per day for educational purposes alone. The amount of time spent listening, coupled with volume, are the two factors that can put a person’s hearing at risk.”

Specifically, children may be in danger of developing noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). NIHL is completely preventable, but once it occurs, it is irreversible. Although NIHL can develop from one excessively loud noise event, such as being near a loud bang, it more frequently occurs as a cumulative effect from noise exposure over time.

Guidelines from the World Health Organization recommend that children spend no more than 40 hours listening to a personal audio device per week, at levels no higher than 75 decibels, to prevent hearing damage. Many technology devices and accessories reach volumes above 100 decibels, and even headphones marketed as “kid safe” routinely exceed 85 or even 90 decibels. This makes ongoing vigilance important.

(Last name) advises that these simple steps will help protect children’s hearing:

1. **Turn the volume down**(even on “volume-limiting” products). Some headphones claim to have maximum noise output levels that won’t damage hearing. But studies have shown that these claims aren’t always reliable and offer a false sense of security. ***The best bet is for kids to keep the volume at half level.***
2. **Use noise-canceling earbuds/headphones.**Noise-canceling earbuds or headphonescan reduce the need to crank up the volume and help kids hear better by drowning out external noise.
3. **Take regular listening breaks.**Encourage kids to give their ears a rest and take hourly breaks, even if just for a few minutes. The potential for hearing damage hinges on how *long* a person listens as much as how *loud* they listen.
4. **Model safe use.** Practice what you preach by watching your own volume and taking other prevention steps. You’ll be a great example—and you’ll protect your *own* hearing, too.
5. **Help children appreciate their hearing.** Talk to kids about *why* safe listening is important, so they understand that you aren’t just nagging. Let them know that hearing is something to value and that they should want to continue enjoying their entertainment (and more) for years to come.

If your child seems to have trouble hearing or is constantly turning up the volume on their devices or television, contact a certified audiologist for a hearing evaluation. (City) residents can contact (name’s) offices at (phone number or website). Learn more about hearing loss at [www.asha.org/public](http://www.asha.org/public).

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