

Make Listening Safe

KEY FACTS



1.1 billion young people worldwide are at risk of hearing loss due to unsafe listening practices

Over 43 million people 12–35 years live with disabling hearing loss



Among young people 12–35 years in middle- and high-income countries:



Nearly 50% listen to unsafe levels of sound through personal audio devices (MP3 players, smartphones, and others)



Around 40% are exposed to potentially damaging levels of sound at nightclubs, bars and sporting events

PREVENTION ACTION

Individuals can:



Keep the volume down!

- Determine safe listening level on personal audio device
- Wear earplugs in noisy venues; use carefully fitted, and if possible, noise-cancelling ear/headphones



Limit time spent engaged in noisy activities!

- In noisy venues, take short listening breaks and move away from loud sounds
- Limit the daily use of personal audio devices to <1 hour/day



Heed the warning signs of hearing loss!

- Ringing in the ears (tinnitus)
- Difficulty hearing high-pitched sounds, understanding speech on telephone, following conversations in noisy venues



Monitor safe listening levels through use of smartphone apps!



Get regular hearing check-ups!



Parents, teachers and physicians can: educate young people about safe listening



Manufacturers can: design personal audio devices with safety features, display information about safe listening on products and packaging



Managers of entertainment venues can: respect safe noise level set by venue, use sound limiters, offer earplugs and “chill out” rooms to patrons



Governments can: develop and enforce strict legislation on recreational noise, launch public information campaigns

Make Listening Safe. Once you lose your hearing, it won't come back!



World Health Organization

Department for Management of NCDs, Disability, Violence and Injury Prevention (NVI)

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