

**Hearing Conservation Education
Raising Awareness about Excessive Noise**



*Over 5 million 6 – 19 year-olds have hearing loss
directly related to noise exposure!
Are you one of them?*

What is Noise and how does it affect your hearing?

- Noise is defined simply as unwanted sound. The measure of loudness, or sound level intensity, is a unit called the decibel.
- Sounds that exceed 85 decibels can damage your hearing, and the louder the noise, the shorter the time before your hearing is damaged.



This chart tells you how long you can listen to loud sounds without hurting your hearing

Continuous sound level	Maximum Time
85 dB	8 hours
91 dB	2 hours
97 dB	30 minutes
103 dB	8 minutes
109 dB	Less than 2 minutes

What are some common examples of sound levels in our environment?

- A typical conversation occurs at 60 dB
- A bulldozer idling at 85 dB can cause permanent damage after only 1 work day (8 hours).
- Listening to music on earphones at level 5, the sound reaches 100 dB, loud enough to cause permanent damage after just 15 minutes per day!
- A clap of thunder (120 dB), a firecracker or a gunshot (140-190 dB, depending on weapon), can cause immediate damage.

What are some common examples of things people do that can expose them to potentially damaging sounds?

- Target shooting, hunting
- Woodworking, shop tools
- Movie theaters, video Games and video arcades, concerts
- Gas-powered lawn mowers, leaf blowers, and string trimmers

What are the warning signs that it's so loud it might hurt your hearing?



- The sound is so loud it hurts your ears to listen
- You may experience immediate loss of hearing
- You may hear a ringing in your ears or inside your head
- Sounds may become distorted or muffled
- Always having to ask people to repeat things they said to you, or having to shout to make yourself heard.

How can you protect your ears from loud noise?

- **Know which noises can cause damage** (those above 85 decibels), and stay away from them if you can.
- **Wear earplugs** when involved in a loud activity. You can find them at drug, hardware, and sporting good stores.
- **Turn it down!!!**
- **Protect children** who are too young to protect themselves, and tell your family and friends about the hazards of noise.
- **Have a medical examination and a hearing test** by a physician who specializes in diseases of the ears, nose, and throat.

Where can you get more information on preventing noise-induced hearing loss?

Crank It Down!

National Hearing Conservation Association

www.hearingconservation.org

Dangerous Decibels

Oregon Hearing Research Center

www.dangerousdecibels.org

Wise Ears

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders

www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/kids/index.htm