

Report to **PARENTS**

Hearing Health Guide for Kids

Your child's hearing is crucial to their overall well-being and development, and understanding the mechanics of hearing can empower families to take steps toward protecting this vital sense. This guide offers practical tips and resources to safeguard your child's auditory health.

About Hearing Loss

About 1 in 8 kids between the ages of 6 and 19 already have hearing damage from loud noises. Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) is preventable, but once it occurs, the damage is permanent. Three factors affect NIHL:

1. **Level:** The louder the sound, the higher the risk.
2. **Distance:** The closer you are to the source of the sound, the more chance you have of hearing damage.
3. **Time:** The longer you're exposed to the sound, the more significant the risk.

Signs of Hearing Loss

Common signs of hearing loss in children are:

- Not reacting to loud noises;
- Not responding to their name;
- Turning up the volume on electronics; or
- Speech delays.

Protecting Your Child's Hearing

Simple steps like turning down the volume, using hearing protection, and avoiding loud environments can make a difference. Here's a list of actionable tips from the National Institute on Deafness and Other



Communication Disorders to help avoid damage to your child's ears:

- **Turn Down the Volume:** Lower the volume on devices, especially headphones. High volume levels can lead to NIHL over time. Many smartphones now have volume parameters parents can set.
- **Maintain a Safe Distance:** Avoid sitting or standing directly in front of speakers at events and concerts.
- **Be Mindful of Your Environment:** If you have to raise your voice to speak to someone just a few feet away, the noise level is probably too high and could damage hearing.
- **Get Hearing Tests:** Regular hearing tests can help monitor any changes in your child's hearing and catch issues early.
- **Use Hearing Protection:** When you can't avoid loud noises, use personal hearing protection, like earplugs or earmuffs.
- **Avoid Inserting Objects Into Ears:** Never stick anything in your ear, not even for cleaning. This can lead to infections or even perforate the eardrum.
- **Consult a Doctor Promptly:** If you notice any signs of ear or hearing damage, consult a health care provider.