

Protecting your child's hearing

Why protect children's hearing?

Infants and young children are more sensitive to loud noises. Children's ear canals are smaller therefore the sound pressure that is generated is greater compared to adults. In other words, loud sounds are even louder for children!

What is too loud?

Hearing damage due to noise exposure is permanent and adds up over time. It is important to monitor your child's surroundings for noise exposure that exceeds recommended levels. Sounds are measured in decibels (dB). Safe sound levels vary based on the duration of exposure. In general, noises softer than 80 dB will not damage hearing unless the exposure lasts for several hours.



Possible Hearing Hazards for Children

- Loud Toys
- Television volume
- Telephone/ tablet volume
- Firework Displays
- Events such as festivals, sports events and concerts
- White noise sleep machines

White Noise Sleep Machines

The amount of time an infant is exposed to sound is important. If you're using an infant sleep machine or app, test the sound output before use to make sure that it isn't excessively loud.

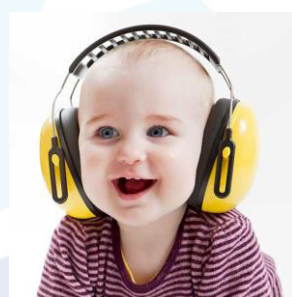
Safe Levels

% of Volume	Maximum Listening Time	
	Supra Aural headphones	Ear Phones
		
10-50%	No Limit	No Limit
60%	No Limit	18 Hours
70%	20 hours	4.6 hours
80%	4.9 hours	1.2 hours
90%	1.2 hours	18 minutes
100%	18 minutes	5 minutes

Based on Fligor and Portnuff, (2006)

Ear Protection


Noise cancelling headphones are useful when attending loud events e.g a firework display. These will simply block out sounds therefore making loud sounds quieter. Ear muffs can be used as a cheaper alternative but may not be as effective at blocking out the sound level.



Using Headphones

If you want to purchase headphones for your child e.g to use with a tablet, we suggest buying good quality ones that will cut out background noise and prevent the child from wanting the volume to be increased.

You can also purchase noise limiting headphones; these have volume controls that are set to go no higher than 85dB. We still encourage parents to supervise this and encourage children to keep the volume at safe levels.

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