



Media Release

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A new item for the back to school checklist

As the summer holidays draw to an end and parents start preparing their children for the return to school, Australian Hearing is asking parents to add one more item to their "Back to school" checklists – to discuss with teenagers and young children how they can protect their hearing.

Exposure to loud noise is one of the most significant causes of hearing loss in Australia and it's important for parents to act as role models and educate their children about how to protect their hearing when using their MP3 players and when they're in noisy environments.

According to Ms Alison King, Principal Audiologist, Paediatric Services at Australian Hearing, the risk of permanent hearing loss from noise is related to the level of the noise and the duration and frequency of exposure.

"Hearing loss caused by noise damage is gradual and caused by exposure to loud noises over an extended period," she said. "Research has found that most young people are aware of the link between exposure to loud noise and hearing damage, but many are not changing their behaviours or considering themselves to be at personal risk."

"This is where parents can help," Ms King added. "Modelling good hearing care and educating teenagers and kids about protecting their hearing will ensure they are able to enjoy music, conversations and social gatherings for years to come."

Australian Hearing recommends that teenagers and kids protect their hearing by:

- Listening to their MP3 player at a volume where they can hear someone who is at arm's length without him or her having to shout.
- Limiting the amount of time they are exposed to very loud noise and to take time out periodically.
- Wearing ear plugs or muffs if they are exposed to very loud noise.
- Turning down the stereo to a safe volume level when at home or in the car.

If you're concerned about your child's hearing speak to your GP or contact Australian Hearing on 131 797. Alternatively, for more information about protecting your child's hearing visit www.hearing.com.au.

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