

Hear Well

Contact: GoodTalk.GoodTalk.

Jo-Anne Estes, CEO

Isaac Liu, AE

goodtalkgoodtalkmedia@gmail.com

goodtalkgoodtalk.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

1 in 4 American Teenagers Now Has Hearing Loss. A New Campaign Wants Teens to Turn Down The Volume.

WASHINGTON DC January 1, 2024 – A growing body of research reveals an alarming trend: hearing loss among American teens aged 12 to 17 years old is on the rise and is impacting our next generation. To alert the public, a public service campaign, created by the nonpartisan, nonprofit hearing.org is warning parents, educators, doctors and teens to turn down the volume and to get a hearing check.

The campaign includes a PSA tv commercial, social media and materials available for pediatricians, parents and educators.

Kate Carr, executive director of hearing.org, reports " In 2022, the journal Pediatrics found 1 in 4 US teens reported experiencing tinnitus, a ringing or buzzing in the ears. This is an early indicator of hearing damage. What's particularly worrying is that this type of early hearing loss can be permanent and yet is preventable. Untreated hearing loss in adolescents has been linked to decreased academic performance, social isolation, and increased risk of depression and anxiety. And we know the mental health crisis we are already facing with teens. Do we really need to layer this on?"

Carr stresses early detection is essential. "We get our eyes checked, our skin checked, our teeth checked, why not our ears? It's one of our critical five senses. It takes just 15 painless minutes in a sound booth." Carr ads, "By taking action now, we can protect the hearing health of an entire generation and prevent the long-term consequences of untreated hearing loss."

Health experts and hearing.org are urging parents to take the following steps:

1. Schedule an annual comprehensive hearing test for their teenagers, even if no obvious symptoms are present.
2. Educate teens about safe listening practices, including the "60/60 rule" - listening to personal audio devices at no more than 60% of maximum volume for no more than 60 minutes at a time.
3. Encourage the use of noise-canceling headphones in loud environments.
4. Be aware of potential signs of hearing loss, such as difficulty understanding speech in noisy environments, frequently asking for repetition, or listening to media at unusually high volumes.

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Based in Washington, DC, hearing.org is a national nonprofit partnering with researchers, medical professionals, audiologists, hearing aid manufacturers and retailers to create awareness of hearing health for all ages. Visit hearing.org.