



**DISTURB THE CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM.** Elevated blood pressure and other cardiovascular ailments can be found in children who are chronically exposed to loud noise.

**DISRUPT SLEEP.** Noise can awaken a child or disrupt his or her sleep patterns.

## Minimizing the Risks

Take the following steps to protect your child from the physical and psychological effects of noise:

- Instruct him or her to walk away from sources of loud noises.
- Limit the amount of time spent on noisy activities.
- Lower the volume.
- Have your child's hearing tested if he/she routinely participates in noisy activities, such as playing an instrument or attending concerts or sporting events.
- Ensure that he or she wears child-sized hearing protection, such as earplugs or earmuffs, during noisy activities and events.
- Create a quiet learning and sleeping environment.

## When to Seek Help

Consult an **audiologist** (a person who tests and measures hearing) or an **otolaryngologist** (a doctor who treats diseases and problems of the ear, nose, and throat) if your child experiences any of the following symptoms:

- Asks people to repeat themselves.
- Regularly hears ringing, roaring, or hissing sounds.
- Speaks loudly or raises voice to be understood by someone standing nearby.
- Does not react to unexpected loud noises.



## More Information

EPA's Office of Children's Health Protection and Environmental Education is working to protect children from environmental hazards, through risk management and prevention strategies, education, and research. For more information, visit [www.epa.gov/children](http://www.epa.gov/children).

### For information on noise pollution, visit:

Office of Air and Radiation  
[www.epa.gov/air/noise.html](http://www.epa.gov/air/noise.html)

Noise Pollution Clearinghouse  
[www.nonoise.org](http://www.nonoise.org)

## Additional Resources

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association [www.listentoyourbuds.org](http://www.listentoyourbuds.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/noise/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/noise/index.htm)

National Hearing Conservation Association [www.hearingconservation.org](http://www.hearingconservation.org)

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise)

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders  
[www.noisyplanet.nidcd.nih.gov](http://www.noisyplanet.nidcd.nih.gov)

## References

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Efforts Aim to Curb Number of Kids Who Suffer From Noise-Induced Hearing Loss, American Academy of Audiology, January 16, 2008, [www.audiology.org/news/pr/Pages/pr20080116.aspx](http://www.audiology.org/news/pr/Pages/pr20080116.aspx)

Noise Effects Handbook: A Desk Reference to Health and Welfare Effects of Noise, U.S. EPA, Office of Noise Abatement and Control, July 1981, [www.nonoise.org/library/handbook/handbook.htm](http://www.nonoise.org/library/handbook/handbook.htm)

Bronzafn, A. The Effect of a Noise Abatement Program on Reading Ability, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 1981.

Dangerous Decibels®, Types of Hearing Loss, [www.dangerousdecibels.org/hearingloss.cfm](http://www.dangerousdecibels.org/hearingloss.cfm)

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Noisy Toys Can Be Dangerous Too, December 10, 2007, [www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2007/12/noisy\\_toys.html](http://www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2007/12/noisy_toys.html)

Recommendations for a Noise Standard, [www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/98-126/chap1.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/98-126/chap1.htm)

## Listen Up

Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) is preventable.

Some toys (talking dolls, musical instruments, etc.) can emit sound that can be hazardous to children.

Personal music players (iPod, MP3, etc.) should be played at low levels. If you can hear your child's music, that might mean it's too loud. Turn down the volume.

## Sound Thermometer

(Courtesy of Dangerous Decibels)

The noise levels (in decibels) on the thermometer are approximate as measured at a typical listener's distance. Use this sound thermometer to judge your or your child's noise exposure. Noise levels at 85 dB or above can be harmful to your hearing and require protection.

