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THOSE TOYS AREN'T JUST NOISY – THEY'RE DANGEROUS

BY JENNIFER HENSLEY, FAMILY AND YOUTH RESOURCE SPECIALIST AT THE ARIZONA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND THE HARD OF HEARING

As holiday season is gearing up again, that usually means one thing for families - toy shopping! Much of the coming months revolve around walking up and down toy aisles trying to find just the right gift for the little one on your list. When shopping for the perfect gift, you may look at age appropriateness, price, and other warning labels. But how often do you consider the noise level of the toys? You won't often find the decibel reading on a toy's warning label, but the noise level could be detrimental to a child's hearing.

LISTEN UP- IT'S IMPORTANT

Did you know that noise is the number-one cause of hearing loss? By first grade, less than 1 percent of all children have hearing loss but by the time they are teenagers, 20 percent of all children will have some level of hearing loss. Some toys with sound or noise components could be the cause for this loss. How can you tell how much is too much when it comes to noise levels?

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Upcoming Events

NOVEMBER

Lovin' Life After 50 Healthy Living Expo

November 19, 8 a.m. – noon
Mesa Convention Center
263 N Center Street
Mesa, AZ 85201

JANUARY

Sun City Lovin' Life After 50 Senior Expo

January 12, 2016, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Sundial Recreation Center
14801 N 103rd Ave.
Sun City, AZ 85351

Tucson Lovin' Life After 50 Senior Expo

January 19, 2016, 8 a.m. – noon
Double Tree Resort Reid Park
445 S Alvernon Way
Tucson, AZ 85711

Mesa Lovin' Life After 50 Senior Expo

January 27, 2016, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Mesa Convention Center
263 N Center Street
Mesa, AZ 85201

THOSE TOYS AREN'T JUST NOISY – THEY'RE DANGEROUS

Continued

According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 85 decibels (dB) is the maximum volume a child should be exposed to for no more than eight hours. Decibels are a unit of measurement to gauge volume and decibel volume is measured in several industries including construction and engineering to ensure hearing safety. Sounds more than 100 dB can damage hearing in less than 15 minutes of exposure.

"The distance at which the decibels are measured can be misleading, because chances are, children aren't using these toys at arm's length," said Jennifer Hensley, family and youth resource specialist at Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing.

How do you know which toys are safe and which should be left off your shopping list?



Topping the noisy toy list:

- * Bruin- R/C Racer- **103 dB** near the ear, **74 dB** at arm's length
- * Disney- Sofia the First, Time to Shine Sing-Along Boombox- **102 dB** near the ear, **76 dB** at arm's length
- * Leap Frog- My Talking LapPup- **100 dB** near the ear, **74 dB** at arm's length
- * Blue Sky- The Peanuts Movie, Happy Dance Snoopy- **96 dB** near the ear, **78 dB** at arm's length
- * Barbie- Rock 'N Royals Rockstar Guitar- **94 dB** near the ear, **75 dB** at arm's length
- * Star Wars The Force Awakens- Chewbacca Electronic Mark- **92 dB** near the ear, **79 dB** at arm's length

When shopping for your precious little ones, remember these precautionary measures:

- * **Does the toy have volume control?** If there is no way to turn down the volume, the child will be exposed to whatever decibel level naturally comes with the toy.
- * **Is there an on/off switch for the volume?** An on/off switch is a great capability for the child to still be able to enjoy the toy, without the risk of damage to their hearing.
- * **Does the toy seem loud to you?** If the noise level seems loud to you, it will probably be just as loud or louder to the little one playing with it.

As toy shopping season rounds the corner, take a few extra precautions to make sure your child is getting a toy they love, but is also safe. Once the toys are in their hands, you can also monitor their usage when they are playing with the toys as well as watching TV and listening to loud music. Keep solid time and volume limits to ensure the kids aren't exposed to too much noise. Noise reducing head phones are also a great gift to accompany any sound bearing device.

Enjoy the holidays with your family by making sure their hearing is protected.

For more information visit www.acdhh.org

DON'T LET UNTREATED HEARING LOSS AFFECT YOUR EMOTIONS

Is your hearing loss standing in the way of enjoying your family during the holidays? You are not alone! According to the American Academy of Audiology more than 19 million Americans over the age of 45 experience some level of hearing loss. If left untreated, hearing loss can be accompanied by a variety of emotions including depression, sadness, a feeling of loss and loneliness.

However, if you recognize the signs of hearing loss early and take steps to improve the condition, the holidays with your family can be more enjoyable.

Why does hearing loss affect your emotional stability?

When individuals experience hearing loss, they can feel very isolated; and as if they don't belong. Living your entire life with normal hearing and then feeling it slowly fade can be a shock that takes time to get used to. If your hearing loss isn't addressed, this experience can then lead to feelings of sadness, loneliness or isolation. The American Academy of Audiology found that seniors with untreated hearing loss report two or more weeks of depressed or sad feelings than the previous year.

If you are diagnosed with a hearing loss but don't wear your hearing aid or utilize other assistive technologies, you're more likely to skip out on social events and may feel isolated. It is completely normal at first to feel left out of conversations because you have difficulty hearing, or to feel like you can't contribute because you might not hear someone correctly, but the key is to not let these feelings control you. If you recognize and take care of your hearing loss immediately, it will help prevent these feelings.

How can you prevent depression from hearing loss?

While hearing loss can lead to feelings of depression, it doesn't have to. If you are diagnosed with a hearing loss, there are plenty of ways to help solve the problem. The real problem exists if you don't address the loss.

- * **Get your hearing checked regularly.** Because hearing loss is at an increased level in seniors, it is important to get your hearing checked often. The more often you get your hearing checked, the sooner you can detect loss. As soon as you start to see signs of hearing loss, such as having to turn up the TV volume or asking others to repeat themselves in conversation, make an appointment to see a hearing healthcare specialist.
- * **Take measures to improve your hearing.** If you are diagnosed with a hearing loss, do something about it. Take measures to find out if hearing aids are an option for you or talk with your hearing healthcare specialist about other suggestions to improve your hearing level. The worst thing you can do is to do nothing and think your hearing will improve on its own.
- * **Don't view hearing loss as a barrier. A hearing loss shouldn't prevent you** from doing the things you love. If you take your hearing treatment seriously, you should be able to proceed with life normally, with a few new adjustments. Utilize the resources available for those with hearing loss so you can get back to enjoying life!

TIPS FOR A PERSON WITH HEARING LOSS TO COMMUNICATE DURING THE HOLIDAYS

- * **Communicate with friends and family about the best way to communicate with you**
- * **Anticipate difficult situations and plan how to minimize them. If in a noisy environment pull the person aside for a one-on-one conversation**
- * **Set a time limit so you don't become exhausted and unable to handle the situation**
- * **Pay attention and concentrate on the speaker**
- * **Look for visual clues and ask for written cues if needed**
- * **Let the speaker know how well he or she is conveying the information**
- * **Communicate to others when you don't understand what they are saying**
- * **If you're too tired to concentrate, ask for discussion later**

DON'T LET UNTREATED HEARING LOSS AFFECT YOUR EMOTIONS Continued

Support groups, such as The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) www.hearingloss.org or the Association of Late-Deafened Adults (ALDA) www.alda.org, can connect you others who share the same experience.

If you're experiencing hearing loss at any level, the best thing you can do is to take care of it as soon as possible. Don't let your hearing loss get the best of your emotions and your holidays.

If you can't be with your friends and family in person this holiday season and rely on the phone to communicate, consider using a product from Arizona Relay Service to help your communication. Services including Voice Carry Over (VCO) and Captioned Telephone utilize a communications assistant to moderate the conversation whether you are hard of hearing, deaf, deaf-blind or have trouble communicating over the phone. A full list of services can be found at www.azrelay.org/relay-services/overview.

For more information on the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing visit www.acdhh.org or Arizona Relay Service visit www.azrelay.org.

WINTER COLDS ARE BAD ENOUGH WITHOUT HEARING LOSS

BY THE ARIZONA COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND THE HARD OF HEARING AND ARIZONA RELAY SERVICE

We all know that horrible feeling of the seasonal cold coming on. Your nose starts running, your throat gets sore and your ears start feeling full. And you know when that happens you're not going to feel well for a few days. Most of the time, if you get lots of rest and drink plenty of fluids, the cold will go away on its own. But what happens when some of the symptoms, don't go away?

COLDS AND EARS

When you develop a cold virus, fluid can build-up in the middle of your ear, preventing sound to travel correctly from the outer ear to the ear drum. This is why your ears can feel full or conversations seem muffled when you have a cold. Ear infections can also develop when you have a cold due to the congestion. If the infection doesn't go away on its own, sometimes medication can be prescribed, but sometimes the temporary hearing loss may not be so temporary. If the hearing loss symptoms brought on by your cold persist longer than the other symptoms, see your doctor for an in-depth ear check. If your hearing loss from the cold overstays its welcome, you want to make sure there isn't a more serious issue or permanent damage caused by the virus.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING WINTER COLDS

The winter season is prime time for these infections to attack which is why you need to take extra precautions to prevent the winter cold from entering your body.

- * Wash your hands. You never know what kind of germs the other people in your office are passing around. Or the germs your child may pick up from his or her classroom. Keep hand sanitizer with you at all times and make sure to load up before putting your hands near your face.
- * Keep your hands out of your mouth. This comes straight from tip number one. You are constantly picking up

germs with your hands, so keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth unless you're sure your hands are clean.

- * Get some rest. If you want your immune system to be healthy enough to fight off infection, you need to let it rest. Go to bed early and get good, uninterrupted sleep.
- * Take vitamins and drink water. Give your immune system an extra boost with daily vitamins. The more you can add positives to your body, the more able it will be to keep out viruses.
- * Get to the gym. Exercise, especially aerobic, will keep your heart moving which increases your body's virus-killing cells. Make sure that if you use a machine or other equipment at the gym you wipe it down before using, so you don't pick up any extra germs.

While winter colds can seem eminent, take the mentioned precautions to prevent your own cold experience. If a cold does end up knocking on your door, make sure to rest up and take care of yourself so that the symptoms don't persist. After 10 days of having a cold, you need to visit your doctor to rule out other illnesses.

For more information visit www.acdhh.org or www.azrelay.org.



ARIZONA RELAY SERVICES LAUNCHES NEW AD CAMPAIGN

Arizona Relay Service has launched a new ad campaign statewide and online. Be on the lookout for our new ads!

“Your aunt Dot is tossed!”



Skip the misunderstandings, not the moment. With a captioned phone, you can hear and read your phone calls on a bright, easy-to-read screen. No asking to repeat. No “can you speak up?” Just the simple joy of conversation.



Arizona Relay Service 7-1-1

LEARN MORE ABOUT FREE CAPTIONED PHONE SERVICES AT AZRELAY.ORG

PHOTO RECAP



▲ Ken Arcia at the 2015 Ultimate Women's Expo, 10/4/4 ▲

Sponsors and exhibitors at ALDAcon, 9/19 ▼





RELAY FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

At Arizona Relay Service we do business with the following “Relay Friendly” businesses! They are certified “Relay Friendly” and understand how relay works — and more importantly, how to use relay.

3 CANYONS TRANSIT COMPANY, LLC

P.O. Box 1431
Hereford, AZ 85615
Phone: (520)-803-6713
Website: www.goshuttleaz.com

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

301 South Paseo del Flagstaff
Flagstaff, AZ
Phone: (928) 779-0037

CITY OF PHOENIX- BUDGET AND RESEARCH

Phoenix City Hall
200 W. Washington St., 14th floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003
Phone: (602) 262-4800

CITY OF PHOENIX- PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Phoenix City Hall
200 W. Washington St., 2nd floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003
Phone: (602) 262-7811

CITY OF PHOENIX- RETIREMENT

Phoenix City Hall
200 W. Washington St., 10th floor
Phoenix, AZ 85003
Phone: (602) 534-4400

LAKE HAVASU CITY ADA ADVISORY BOARD

Bruce Hinman
2330 McCulloch Blvd
Lake Havasu City, Az 86403
Phone: (928) 855-1851
Website: www.lhcaz.gov

PERSONAL TOUCH TAX SERVICE

Darcy J. Tucker, EA
Phone: (602) 588-2818
Email: darcy.tucker@cox.net
Website: www.personaltouchtaxservice.com

THE RELAY FRIENDLY PARTNERS PROGRAM IS A FREE PROGRAM THAT:

- * Offers FREE training to assist your business with receiving and placing Arizona Relay Service calls
- * Reduces or eliminates hang-ups on relay users
- * Allows customers to know you are certified as a Arizona Relay Service Relay Friendly Partner
- * Offers you a free listing on the Arizona Relay Service website
- * Provides a Relay Friendly Partner logo to post on your business' website
- * Provides a Arizona Relay Service Relay Friendly Partner decal for your door or window

To view the entire list of relay friendly businesses or for additional information on becoming a relay friendly business please visit our website at www.azrelay.org/home/relay_friendly_business