Noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) is completely preventable.

**Limit listening time:** Keep the volume at 60% for no more than 60 minutes.

**Turn it down:** Keep the volume at a normal conversational volume.

**Use hearing protection:** Always wear ear protection devices (such as earplugs or earmuffs) at concerts or other places where loud noise may be damaging.

Be aware it only takes 15 minutes per week of listening at the maximum volume to cause permanent hearing loss!
Loud volumes on iPods, cell phones and other personal devices are contributing to an increase in the number of children, teens and adults who suffer from noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) each year.

Loud noise can cause permanent damage to your hearing. Children rarely complain about the symptoms of NIHL which include distorted and muffled sounds that make understanding speech more difficult.

Hearing loss is the third most common health problem in the United States and affects over 36 million Americans.

According to the American Speech, Language and Hearing Association, almost 12 percent (5.2 million) of all children between the ages of 6-19 years have NIHL.

Fortunately, NIHL is completely preventable. Here are some ways to prevent NIHL:

- **Turn it down:** A very simple way to prevent NIHL is to turn down the volume on portable media players (such as iPods, iPads, or MP3 players), cell phones, televisions and radios. Keep the volume at no more than 60 percent, or at a normal conversational volume. Also, if you are wearing headphones or earbuds and a person beside you can hear your music, then that is a sure sign that the volume is too loud and hearing may be affected!

- **Limit listening time:** Another easy way to prevent NIHL is to limit the amount of time earbuds are used. A good rule is the 60 percent/60 minute rule. Keep the volume at 60 percent for no more than 60 minutes.

- **Use hearing protection:** Earbuds are often more damaging to hearing than headphones, but both can be dangerous when not used in moderation. Fortunately, both are available in styles with protective features that promote safe hearing. Always wear ear protection devices (such as earplugs or earmuffs) at concerts or other places where loud noise may be damaging.

- **Be aware:** It only takes 15 minutes per week of listening at the maximum volume to a portable media player (iPod, iPad, MP3 player, etc.) to cause permanent hearing loss.

American Speech, Language and Hearing Association, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Defense Hearing Center of Excellence, Journal of Pediatrics