**Headphones, Earbuds Impact Younger Generations' Future Audio Health**

*Children at highest risk because auditory system maturation incomplete, normal hearing health vital for learning, socialization*

\*\*\* EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 10, 2021 AT 11:30 A.M. EASTERN U.S.\*\*\*

MELVILLE, N.Y., June 10, 2021 -- As more and more people are taking advantage of music on the go, personal audio systems are pumping up the volume to the detriment of the listener's hearing. Children, teenagers, and young adults are listening to many hours of music daily at volumes exceeding the globally recommended public health limit of 70 decibels of average leisure noise exposure for a day for a year.

During the 180th Meeting of the Acoustical Society of America, which will be held virtually June 8-10, Daniel Fink, from The Quiet Coalition, and audiologist Jan Mayes will talk about the current research into personal audio system usage and the need for public health hearing conservation policies. Their session, "Personal audio system use can harm auditory health," will take place Thursday, June 10, at 11:35 a.m. Eastern U.S.

"Nonoccupational noise exposure in everyday life comes from a handful of noise sources: personal listening systems, especially for younger people; transit noise, home appliances; power tools; and entertainment (sports events, movies, parties (weddings, bar mitzvahs, birthday parties, etc.), NASCAR races, etc.)," Fink said.

In 2017, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported almost 25% of American adults, age 20-69, have noise-induced hearing loss. Acquired hearing loss is associated with communication difficulties, social isolation, increased risk of falls and accidents, and health complications, including dementia in later life.

Auditory health risk is highest for people using personal audio systems for more than an hour a day at more than 50% volume over a five-year period. Disputing a recent Wall Street Journal article claiming 85 decibels is safe for children and teens, Fink said 85 decibels is not a safe exposure for anyone.

"People think the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health 85 dBA recommended exposure level for noise is safe," he said. "But a noise level that won't prevent hearing loss in factory workers or heavy equipment operators is far too high for a young child whose ears have to last an entire lifetime."

Fink and Mayes will talk about the need for personal audio system noise emission standards and public education on their use "to prevent an imminent noise-induced hear loss epidemic when today's younger generations reach midlife."

"This isn't just a theoretical problem. Most people get too much noise every day," Fink said, citing studies from Western Michigan University and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and the University of Michigan School of Public Health and Apple.

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**----------------------- MORE MEETING INFORMATION -----------------------**

**USEFUL LINKS**

Main meeting website: <https://acousticalsociety.org/asa-meetings/>

Technical program: <https://acousticalsociety.org/technical-program-and-special-sessions/>

Press Room: <http://acoustics.org/world-wide-press-room/>

**WORLDWIDE PRESS ROOM**

In the coming weeks, ASA's Worldwide Press Room will be updated with additional tips on dozens of newsworthy stories and lay language papers, which are summaries of presentations written by scientists for a general audience and accompanied by photos, audio and video. You can visit the site during the meeting at <http://acoustics.org/world-wide-press-room/>.

**PRESS REGISTRATION FOR MEETING SESSIONS**

We will grant free registration for credentialed and professional freelance journalists who wish to attend the meeting sessions. If you are a reporter and would like to attend, contact the AIP Media Line at [media@aip.org](mailto:media@aip.org). We can also help with setting up interviews and obtaining images, sound clips or background information.

**VIRTUAL MEDIA BRIEFINGS**

Press briefings will be held virtually during the conference. Credentialed media can register in advance by emailing [media@aip.org](mailto:media@aip.org) and including your full name and affiliation in the message. The official schedule will be announced as soon as it is available, and registered attendees will be provided login information via email.

**ABOUT THE ACOUSTICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA**

The Acoustical Society of America (ASA) is the premier international scientific society in acoustics devoted to the science and technology of sound. Its 7,000 members worldwide represent a broad spectrum of the study of acoustics. ASA publications include The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America (the world's leading journal on acoustics), Acoustics Today magazine, books, and standards on acoustics. The society also holds two major scientific meetings each year. For more information about ASA, visit our website at [http://www.acousticalsociety.org](http://www.acousticalsociety.org/).

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