



Health Awareness

Boomers Are Learning They Don't Have To Put Up With Hearing Loss

(NAPSA)—Listen up: There's good news for boomers who want to improve their hearing health. That's because there are practical steps they can take to correct a hearing impairment.

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, hearing loss affects 17 percent of American adults—nearly 36 million people. Unfortunately for some, that can also result in a decrease in meaningful conversations with children and family.

A recent Energizer survey polled two groups: boomers who suffer from hearing loss and adult children who have parents suffering from hearing loss. Nearly half of adult children surveyed (45 percent) said a parent's hearing loss has had an effect on the relationship they have with that parent; 36 percent admitted that their parent has missed important details about their life.

With such a relationship impact, why does hearing loss often go uncorrected? Are boomers simply unaware? Not according to the survey; 72 percent of boomers admitted that their hearing loss has affected the relationship they have with their adult children. However, even with that acknowledgment, only 11 percent choose to wear a hearing aid.

"Being hard of hearing is a personal struggle," said Dr. Bary Williams, audiologist and Energizer Specialty "All Ears" spokesperson. "Many people with hearing loss often forget that their impairment can have a profound effect on the



Getting tested, embracing technology and talking about hearing loss are three steps older adults can take to improve hearing health.

relationships they have with their friends and family."

However, not all impairments go uncorrected. When it comes to having a visual impairment, nearly all the boomers polled (99 percent) said they wear glasses/contacts all the time or for specific tasks.

Just like eye exams, Dr. Williams stresses the importance of annual medical and hearing screenings in order to maintain a healthier life. "There seems to be a double standard in this country. When it comes to visual impairments, boomers don't think twice about having their vision tested or wearing glasses or contacts; however, hearing loss is often ignored," said Dr. Williams. "Hearing health

is every bit as important as visual health when it comes to maintaining a high quality of life. If left untreated, hearing loss not only impacts relationships, it can pose a real safety risk."

For boomers interested in taking steps to improve their hearing health, Dr. Williams offers simple advice:

- Get tested. Basic hearing screenings are available in communities across America for little to no cost.
- Embrace technology. Today's hearing devices are both discreet and effective.
- Talk about it. Hearing loss is not a reason to be embarrassed, especially if you are taking proactive steps to correct it. Educate family and friends on ways they can help. For example, syllabic clarity, not volume, is typically the problem for the vast majority of the hearing impaired. Therefore, encouraging friends and family to speak slowly and clearly with direct eye contact can make a big difference.

Although their children may not have always listened to them, it's important for boomers to listen to their children—and truly hear them in crisp, clear sound. Hearing health is an important part of living a happy, healthy and active lifestyle.

For more advice from Dr. Williams or to learn more about the Energizer "Live Healthy. KEEP GOING" program and specialty batteries that power important health and medical devices, visit energizer.com/livehealthy.