

Health Awareness

Protect Hearing Every Day

(NAPSA)—The good news is that hearing loss is preventable. That's just as well, as it's growing among youngsters.

According to hearing experts, loud sounds destroy tiny, inner-ear hair cells. With damage to just 30 percent of these hair cells, which convert sound waves into nerve impulses that are sent to the brain, hearing loss can result.



One in five teens—a 31 percent rise over the last decade—suffers from hearing loss.

To help, the Starkey Hearing Foundation launched Listen Carefully and offers these tips:

- Avoid prolonged exposure to MP3 players and other sound-emitting devices.
- If you're wearing earbuds and others can hear the music, it's too loud.
- At concerts and when operating loud equipment, wear earplugs to control your personal noise level.
- Have your hearing tested annually by a doctor or licensed audiologist—the tests may be free.

The Starkey Hearing Foundation offers an online hearing test and recommendations for further action at www.starkeyhearingfoundation.org/hearing-test.php#intro. Learn more at www.starkeyhearingfoundation.org and (866) 354-3254.