

Why Teach About Noise-Induced Hearing Loss?

- Twenty-eight million Americans are affected by hearing loss.
- Over fifty million Americans have tinnitus.¹
- Approximately one third of all hearing loss can be attributed to noise-induced hearing loss.²

Although many people are familiar with hearing loss among the elderly (called **presbycusis**), fewer are aware of the extent of hearing problems among younger generations. Rates of noise-induced hearing loss are on the rise in all age groups. Tinnitus and noise-induced hearing loss can be caused by sounds in our jobs, homes, and recreational activities.

The Dangerous Decibels classroom activities are designed to help students understand and answer the following questions:

- What are the common sources of sounds that can damage ears?
- What are the effects of these “dangerous decibels”?
- How can I protect myself from them?

Behavior-Related Objectives

After participating in the Dangerous Decibels project – whether viewing the exhibit, receiving the outreach program, or participating in classroom activities from the teacher resource guide – students should understand the danger of loud sound and respond by one or more of the three following methods:

- **Turn Down the Volume,**
- **Use Hearing Protection, and/or**
- **Walk Away.**

¹ American Tinnitus Association, November 2004.

² Noise and Hearing Loss. NIH Consensus Statement, NIH Consensus Development Conference, Jan. 22-24, 1990;8(1) 3-4