

Can Portable Cassette Players Damage Hearing?

When loud is too loud.

More than 24,000,000 portable stereo cassette players sold last year belong to Americans who walk, run and ride to the music coming from their headphone units. If you're one of them, you may be risking hearing damage. Whether you move to the music of The Rolling Stones or Kenny Rogers, know how loud is too loud.

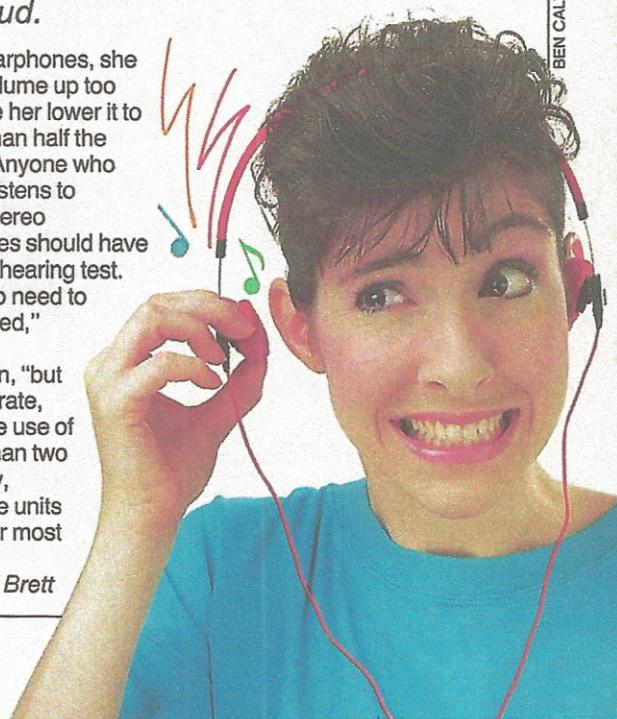
"Generally, a portable stereo headphone unit turned up to more than half its total volume capacity is loud enough to cause both temporary and permanent hearing loss," says William

Rintelmann, professor and chairman of the department of audiology at Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit, who recently studied 18 different American- and foreign-made portable stereo headphone units. But some units are powerful enough to inflict damage at even half their volume, which can reach an ear-splitting 115 decibels (dB). Loss of hearing can occur if exposures exceed 90 dB for prolonged periods of time.

A good rule of ear: If you can hear your teen's music when standing three feet away from her when she's

wearing earphones, she has the volume up too high. Have her lower it to no more than half the capacity. Anyone who regularly listens to portable stereo headphones should have an annual hearing test. "People do need to be cautioned," notes Dr. Rintelmann, "but with moderate, reasonable use of no more than two hours daily, headphone units are safe for most people."

—Honi Brett

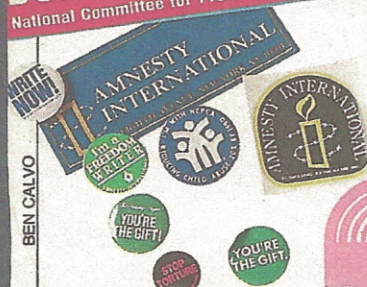


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Take time out.
Don't take it out on your kid.
National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse • Chicago, IL 60690



Are you eager to work for a worthy cause but unable to leave home? Many charitable organizations will come to you for help.

• **United Way of America** works with groups such as the Girl Scouts of America and the American Red Cross. Volunteer centers around the country can match your skills to the

charities that need them most. Check your local telephone directory for the United Way office in your area.

• **National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse** focuses its efforts on change, awareness and prevention.

Volunteers can write to or phone legislators about changing child-abuse laws and demanding attention to publicized abuse cases. Volunteers also can transcribe tapes of national conferences, write articles for newsletters, and establish a home hot line for abusive parents who need help. There are chapters in all 50 states. Contact: Nancy Peterson,

Charity Begins at Home

Do-good organizations to work for from your living room

National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604.

• **The Holiday Project** brings Christmas and Chanukah cheer, gifts and visits to people confined to hospitals and nursing homes. At-home telephone work includes recruiting volunteers and places to visit, and soliciting gift and financial contributions. Volunteers can throw gift-making and wrapping parties, produce and mail flyers and newsletters, and drum up local press coverage. There are local groups throughout the nation. Contact: The Holiday Project, Box 6829, FDR Station, New York, NY 10150-1906.

• **Amnesty International**, a nonpolitical group, works to

stop torture and secure the freedom of prisoners of conscience around the world. For an annual tax-deductible fee of \$25 (\$15 for students), volunteers can become Freedom Writers and receive a bimonthly newsletter with information on prisoners and whom to write on their behalf. Contact: Amnesty International Development, 322 Eighth Ave., New York, NY 10001.

• **Volunteer—The National Chapter** is the national umbrella volunteer organization; its local centers work to meet each community's specific needs. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Volunteer—The National Chapter, 1111 N. 19th St., Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22209. —Honi Brett

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