



The WHO Make Listening Safe Programme

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Globally, over 5% population (430 million) experience disabling hearing loss. When unaddressed this has far-reaching social, emotional and economic impacts. By 2050, that number is projected to increase by over 50% to 700 million people. While most of this rise is driven by demographic factors, there is also a notable rise in preventable causes of hearing loss. It is estimated that roughly 1.1 billion people, between 12 to 35 years old, are at risk of developing hearing loss through listening to loud music on smartphones and other audio devices or attending loud entertainment venues such as discos and clubs.

Make Listening Safe Initiative

In consideration of the above, the World Health Organization WHO launched the Make Listening Safe initiative in 2015. The initiative aims to promote safe listening practices and to raise public awareness about the risk of exposure to loud recreational sounds among young people. To achieve this, the initiative is composed of four main action areas, these include:

Global standard for safe listening personal audio systems: that recommends safe listening features to be included in devices such as smartphones, MP3 players, and headphones.

Global standard for safe listening entertainment venues: currently under development, this standard will provide recommendations on features to be included in the entertainment venues so as to reduce the risk of hearing among loss among those visiting these.

Raising awareness on safe listening practices: through awareness initiatives and evidence-based materials

Research: on safe listening practices and to guide the above-mentioned actions

The presentation will provide an insight into these and related actions to promote safe listening.