



# Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

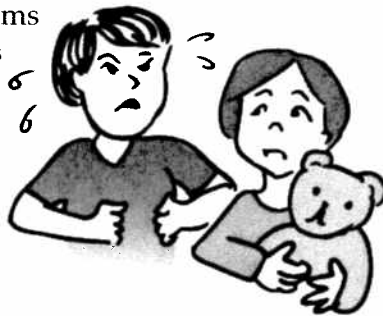
North Shore/Coast Garibaldi, Vancouver & Richmond

## "Noise" Hurts Kids!

Child Care places can be very noisy. Sound is necessary for communication, but too much noise can be harmful. Children under five years are very sensitive to noise. Two year olds and younger are the most sensitive. The World Health Organization\* says excessive noise can cause health and social problems.

### Too much noise can cause:

- higher risk of hearing loss
- more aggressiveness, pushing, fighting
- sleeping problems
- increased stress and anxiety
- higher heart rate and blood pressure
- attention span and memory difficulties
- behavioural problems and hyperactivity



### Children who experience too much noise are less likely to:

- concentrate on and finish tasks;
- develop good listening, learning and communication skills;
- get along with others;
- have strong speech and language skills;
- read and hear well.

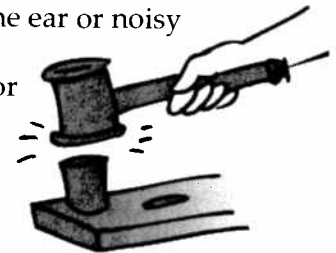


### Noise can come from:

- Large groups of children;
- Loud music (e.g. from TV, radio, computer games, stereo, headphones);
- Voices – loud shouts, many children talking;
- 'Background' noise – Heating, lights, fridge, fans, traffic, lawnmowers, cleaning equipment, appliances, etc.

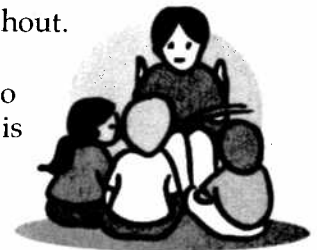


- Toys used close to the ear or noisy toys or noisy use of toys (e.g. dumping or banging onto hard surfaces);



### What can we do? (helpful hints)

- Keep group sizes small – 10 or less;
- Plan a quiet activity after a noisy one;
- Limit the amount of 'noisy' time;
- Use quiet or "inside" voices. Ask children not to shout. Take turns talking;
- Show children how to speak in a voice that is not too loud;
- Reduce background noise;
- Put soft rugs or covers on the floors in active areas and on tables;
- Put 'quiet' pads (felt, tennis balls) on chair legs;
- Close doors and windows during quiet times;
- Dim the lighting;
- Design or renovate according to acoustic guidelines;
- Children can learn about loud and quiet noises through puppets, stories, pretend play etc.



**For more information contact:**  
**Vancouver Coastal Health Authority**  
**Community Care Facility Licensing Office**  
**Vancouver area phone: 604-736-2866**  
**Richmond area phone: 604-233-3147**

or visit these websites:

- World Health Organization guidelines for community noise: [www.who.int/peh/noise/noiseindex.html](http://www.who.int/peh/noise/noiseindex.html)
- League of Hard of Hearing: [www.lhh.org/noise/index.htm](http://www.lhh.org/noise/index.htm)
- [www.nonoise.org](http://www.nonoise.org)