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2020's Loudest Toys to Avoid and How to Test the Volume of Toys at Home

*Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing
Aims to Educate Parents Shopping Online for Toys on Safety and Usage*

PHOENIX (Nov. 18, 2020) – The [Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing](#) (ACDHH) recently tested some of today's hottest-toys on the market and found 10 of them to be "too loud". These toys are categorized as any toy that reaches a sound level of 85 decibels (dB) or higher.

According to the [American Speech-Language-Hearing Association](#), 85 dB is the maximum volume a child should be exposed to for no more than eight hours a day. Sounds louder than 100 dB can damage their hearing in less than 15 minutes.

Noise is the number one cause of hearing loss. Nearly 15 percent of children ages 6-19 have some degree of hearing loss. In addition, loud noises can increase fatigue, decrease a child's ability to pay attention, and reduce short term memory.

"All parents want to keep their children safe," said Sherri Collins, executive director for ACDHH. "This year most of us will be purchasing holiday presents online and parents will be unable to test toys volume before purchasing." She added, "We want to show parents that there is a fine line between a safe sound level and a harmful level. We give them a list of pre-tested toys to avoid and show them how easy it is to test a toy's noise level with an app that can be downloaded on their smart phone."

ACDHH examined some of this season's most popular toys chosen at random. Each dB measurement was taken as if the child placed their ear next to the speaker. If your shopping list includes toys for the children in your life, you may want to consider turning down the volume on these toys:

Toys to Avoid listed in highest dB order:

1.	Leap Frog Scrub and Play Smart Sink	18 months +	103 dB
2.	Vtech Turn & Learn Driver	6-36 months	101 dB
3.	Fisher Price Sing & Learn Music Player	6-36 months	98 dB
4.	Leap Frog 100 Animals Book	18 months +	98 dB
5.	Nickelodeon Baby Shark Musical Playpad	6 months+	98 dB
6.	Jada Police Hero Patrol Lights & Sound	3 years +	95 dB
7.	Leap Frog Fridge Phonics	2 years+	94 dB
8.	Vtech Helping Heroes Fire Station	1 1/2-4 years	93 dB
9.	Adventure Force Mighty Dragon	3 years +	92 dB
10.	Leap Frog 100 Words Book	18 months+	92 dB
11.	Vtech Peppa Pig Learn & Discover Book	2 years +	91 dB

12. Vtech Brilliant Baby Laptop	6-36 months	90 dB
13. Vtech Magic Star Learning Table	6-36 months	89 dB
14. Fisher Price Leave a Message Smart Phone	18-36 months	89 dB

ACDHH encourages parents to purchase a toy from the “safe” list. (This list is not meant to be all-inclusive).

List of Safe Toys under 85 dB listed by age:

1. Leap Frog Learn & Groove Caterpillar Drums	6 M+	80 dB max
2. Vtech Bright Lights Soccer Ball	6-36 months	70 dB max
3. Vtech Care for Me Learning Carrie	9-36 months	75 dB max
4. Vtech Drop & Go Dump Truck	6-36 months	75 dB max
5. Leap Frog Pick Up & Count Vacuum	2 years +	78 dB max
6. B. Toy Critter Clinic	2 years +	no sound
7. Melissa & Doug Dust Sweep Mop	3 years +	no sound
8. Melissa & Doug Ice Cream Counter	3 years +	no sound

“It is important to consider how the child will use the toy,” said Collins. “Children aren’t always using these toys at arm’s length as they may be intended. It’s also important to consider the decibel levels of other sounds around the child in addition to the toy, such as the television, kids yelling or other loud toys all making noise simultaneously. They can quickly add up and cause hearing loss.”

For parents who would like to conduct their own decibel test, there are free smartphone apps available to test the sound levels of any toy parents are considering buying or have already purchased.

A few suggested dB testing apps from a healthyhearing.com report:

- ***Apps for both Android and iOS***
 - Decibel X
 - SPL Meter
 - Too Noisy Pro
- ***Apps for iOS only***
 - NIOSH Sound Level Meter
 - SPLnFFT Noise Meter
- ***Apps for Android only***
 - Sound Meter Pro
 - Sound Meter and Noise Detector

Simple test methods to ensure toys won’t hurt young ears:

- Use ‘try-me’ buttons on the toys when available
- Hold the toy as close to your ear as your child would and ask yourself if the toy is too loud
- Hold the toy eight inches away from your ear (approximately the length of your child’s arm), and if you must speak at a higher volume above the sound effects, it’s too loud

How to keep the volume down on loud toys:

- If the toy has volume control, ensure it’s always set to the lowest level

- Put waterproof tape or super glue over speaker to mute it
- Put tape over volume control to prevent your child from increasing the volume to unsafe volume level

About ACDHH: Established in 1977 to improve the quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing residents, ACDHH serves as a statewide information referral center for issues related to people with hearing loss and aspires to be a national leader in communication access, support services and community empowerment throughout the state. The purpose of the organization, and its commissioners, is to ensure, in partnership with the public and private sector, accessibility for the deaf and hard of hearing to improve their quality of life.

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