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 **March 3 Recognized as World Hearing Day**

Hearing loss in the U.S. has reached record numbers

**RESTON, Va., Feb. 21, 2018—**Congress recently designated March 3 as World Hearing Day as the numbers of those impacted by hearing loss rises around the world, including in the U.S. where record numbers of Americans suffer hearing loss.

The American Academy of Audiology is focused on educating the public on hearing loss, diagnosis, prevention and treatment. “Noise-induced hearing loss is a preventable and significant factor,” said Jackie Clark, Ph.D., president of the American Academy of Audiology and clinical associate professor at the University of Texas Dallas School of Brain and Behavioral Sciences. “This growing health problem is often unrecognized in U.S. adults, adolescents and children and it leads to a long list of problems including depression, isolation, academic delays, impaired communication and cognitive decline. We are grateful that Congress has created this day to shine a light on the significance of hearing loss.”

As the baby boomer population ages, more Americans are forced to face hearing health challenges. According to the National Institutes of Health NIDCD, approximately 15 percent (37.5 million) of American adults aged 20 to 69 have some trouble with hearing and approximately 28.8 million could benefit from the use of hearing aids.

While age is still the greatest factor in hearing loss, many younger people also experience hearing problems due to exposure to loud music and noises including occupational noise. Among adults aged 70 and older with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than one in three (30 percent) has ever used them. With adults aged 20 to 69 only approximately 16 percent of those who would benefit from hearing aids has ever used them.

“Audiologists are the experts in hearing health,” Clark explained. “Anyone suspecting a hearing issue should see an audiologist who will run a series of tests to determine the problem, if there is one, and will then recommend treatment.” The Academy represents more than 12,000 audiologists across the country and has an extensive “[Find an Audiologist” directory](http://memberportal.audiology.org/Directories/Find-an-Audiologist), whereby consumers can locate audiologists based in geography and specialty areas.

Some signs of hearing loss may include:

* Suddenly having to turn up the volume of the television, radio, or stereo and having

other family members complain that the volume is too loud.

* Difficulty understanding people speaking to you and asking people to repeat themselves.
* Difficulty with phone conversations and understanding the other person.
* Sudden inability to hear the door bell, the dog barking, and other household sounds.
* People telling you that you speak too loudly.
* Ringing in the ears.

School-aged children with hearing loss will sometimes exhibit poor school performance because they can’t understand the teacher assignments or classroom interactions. If hearing loss has been present from a young age, they often don’t recognize the loss and can’t identify the problem.

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The American Academy of Audiology is the world's largest professional organization of, by and for audiologists. The active membership of more than 12,000 is dedicated to providing quality hearing care services through professional development, education, research, and increased public awareness of hearing and balance disorders. For more information or to find an audiologist, go to [www.howsyourhearing.org](http://www.howsyourhearing.org).