

Are you exposing your children to an incurable lifelong condition?

February 6 2014, by Holly Finch

You would not allow your child to be exposed to the sun without any sun tan lotion or go to school without a coat in the winter. So why would you let your child attend a school disco without checking the noise levels?

We are exposed to a variety of harmful elements every day, whether they are natural or man-made. By the time we reach adulthood we have learnt to become aware of how to protect ourselves, however, parenting holds the added responsibility of teaching our children of these cautions and offering advice.

Tinnitus is experienced by around ten percent of the adult United Kingdom population and is currently incurable. For current non-suffers of the condition, Tinnitus is almost entirely preventable just by being aware of the surrounding noise.

Shelley Bartlette is a parent and an academic who is living with chronic Tinnitus. Developing Tinnitus just over two years ago, Shelley wants to share the life changing effects of living with the condition and wants to raise awareness of how to protect your children from damaging their ears before it is too late.

Part of Shelley's mission to raise awareness across the country has been to develop and launch the Tinnitus Awareness [app](#). The app measures the sound levels wherever you are and indicates how quiet or how noisy a place is, along with advice as to whether noise protection is necessary or not. The app also has features that allow the phone to vibrate when the

[noise levels](#) are too high; fun and interactive photo creator and endless information on the safety and prevention of Tinnitus.

Shelley, who is a Senior Lecturer in Media, Art and Design at Canterbury Christ Church University, said: "I am really pleased the app is now available as I genuinely believe that an early education is the best method in reducing the risk of [tinnitus](#). I hope my app goes some way in support of this goal.

"I feel parents need to start discussing [noise exposure](#) with their child. The app provides useful information alongside a playful and interactive sound meter that engages both parent and child in measuring and understanding noise levels."

Emily Broomfield, Project Manager at the British Tinnitus Association, said: "Raising awareness of tinnitus is so important and we are delighted when individuals undertake projects to help support others. An app such as Shelley's empowers individuals to take care of their hearing and we are delighted that the Tinnitus Awareness app is now available and receiving praise from those who have been using it."

Tinnitus Awareness was created for parents with young children to help them understand the risks of noise exposure. The app includes a professionally calibrated decibel sound meter, carefully designed to appeal to both parent and child, that informs the user of how safe the surrounding noise levels are and how to protect their ears.

Bradley Locking, customer of Tinnitus Awareness, said: "The features within the app have been a huge benefit. As a tinnitus sufferer I am constantly aware of further damage I am placing onto my hearing, but the notification telling me when an environment is potentially damaging has allowed more accurate awareness. A must buy for parents with small children!"

Shelley has previously conducted research into this area called, 'Kids like it loud'. The project measured the sound levels of recreational venues attended by children to determine whether parents should be concerned about noise exposure. The results of the research showed that cinemas and discos, in some cases, were over 30 decibels (db) louder than the European Union's recommended safety limit of 85db.

More information: Available on Apple i-Tunes
[itunes.apple.com/gb/app/tinnit ... ess/id793865629?mt=8](https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/tinnit-ess/id793865629?mt=8)

Provided by Canterbury Christ Church University

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