



Coordinated nationally by Deafness Forum

# MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## 3.5 million Australians Have Hearing Loss Due to Recreational and Industrial Noise Damage

The **2009 Hearing Awareness Week** will be launched in Rundle Mall, under the canopy, at 10 am on **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August**. The theme for the 2009 Hearing Awareness Week is **At Home, At Work, At Play – One in Six**, which aims to raise awareness of hearing loss caused by noise damage. One in six or 3.5 million Australians have acquired hearing loss and the number continues to grow as people put their hearing at risk.

**Keith Conlon** will MC the launch, which will include free hearing tests, displays, music performances from school choirs, Cora Barclay Centre early intervention children and Adelaide High School band. Hearing Awareness Week is a national campaign, which raises awareness of hearing loss and features a program of workshops, activities and free hearing assessments around the country.

Maureen McGrotty, HIDKON Committee Chair says 'Our focus this year for Hearing Awareness Week is on prevention and conservation of hearing loss. The two most serious causes of hearing loss in Australia today are age related hearing loss and noise injury amongst young people through use of ipods, MP3 players and very loud concerts. We really need to help young people understand that they can damage their hearing irreparably. Hearing loss caused by noise injury is still the most common form of preventable hearing loss'

Damage to hearing can be prevented **At Home** by avoiding excessively noisy toys for young children and ensuring proper ear protection when using noisy tools. **At Work** - wear protective earwear in noisy workplaces and have a hearing test as a part of your regular health check. **At Play** - get better ear buds for your Ipod or MP3 player so the volume doesn't need to be excessive.

3.5 million Australians live with some form of hearing loss. Hearing Awareness Week aims to raise awareness, so that people who are deaf or hearing impaired or have a chronic disorder of the ear experience greater acceptance and better access.

During the week, around the country there will be many opportunities to find out how well you are hearing.

Visit the Hearing Awareness Week website [www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au](http://www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au) for more events.

Hearing Awareness Week 2009 is made possible through the generous sponsorship of

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### Quick Facts about deafness

1. One in six Australians has some form of hearing impairment – that's 3.5 million people  
*Deafness is one of the most common disabilities worldwide.*
2. Treat your hearing with care.  
*Noise injury is the single most common cause of hearing loss. 37% of hearing loss is due to noise injury<sup>1</sup>. That means it could have been prevented.*

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**Deafness Forum of Australia is a national peak body.**

**HIDKON is SA based Hearing Impaired Kindred Organisations Network.**

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<sup>1</sup> "The economic cost and impact of hearing loss in Australia" Access Economics 2006