In this issue of *Pediatrics*, Barrett and White\(^1\) report on the prevalence of adolescent hearing loss using data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). Specifically, they extend the findings of Shargorodsky et al\(^2\) 2010 publication, which compared the prevalence of adolescent hearing loss in the third NHANES (1988–1994) to NHANES 2005–2006. Shargorodsky et al\(^2\) reported a significant rise in the prevalence of adolescent hearing loss from 14.9\(^\%\) to 19.5\(^\%\) using these 2 time points, but when the 2008 and 2010 data are included, the prevalence does not appear to have significantly changed since 1994.\(^1\) Barrett and White\(^1\) conclude that Shargorodsky’s often cited manuscript on the rising prevalence of adolescent hearing loss is not substantiated when subsequent NHANES data cycles are included.

Regardless, whether adolescent hearing loss has increased or remained stable, it still affects \(~15\%\) of US adolescents.\(^1,2\) This is on par with many other widely publicized issues facing US adolescents today. For example, the prevalence of asthma among US adolescents is \(~10\%\), obesity 18.4\(^\%\), and major depressive disorder 12.5\(^\%\).\(^8–10\) It has been demonstrated repeatedly that unidentified hearing loss is associated with negative effects on social interactions, educational achievement, and future workplace success.\(^11–14\) Despite the morbidities and economic burden associated with hearing loss, adolescent hearing screening and conservation are poorly acknowledged and addressed by the public and in primary care. This is in part because unlike the above-mentioned issues (eg, asthma), the efficacy of strategies to meaningfully prevent or reduce adolescent hearing loss and its associated morbidities remains unproven.

To cite: Sekhar DL. Adolescent Hearing Loss: Rising or Not, It Remains a Concern. *Pediatrics* 2017;140(6):e20173084
In their most recent revision, the authors of Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents and the American Academy of Pediatrics provide updated guidelines on adolescent hearing screening. However, requirements for youth to use hearing protection and national product regulation of infant sound machines, children’s toys, and volume limiting devices marketed to parents are lacking. Barrett and White call for NHANES to resume collecting audiometric data, but it seems a better approach is to put hearing screening and conservation practices into action and then study the effect on hearing loss prevalence.

**ABBREVIATION**

NHANES: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

REFERENCES


Adolescent Hearing Loss: Rising or Not, It Remains a Concern
Deepa L. Sekhar
Pediatrics 2017;140;
DOI: 10.1542/peds.2017-3084 originally published online November 8, 2017;

Updated Information & Services
including high resolution figures, can be found at:
http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/140/6/e20173084

References
This article cites 7 articles, 2 of which you can access for free at:
http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/140/6/e20173084#BIBL

Subspecialty Collections
This article, along with others on similar topics, appears in the following collection(s):
Community Pediatrics
http://www.aappublications.org/cgi/collection/community_pediatrics_sub
Bright Futures
http://www.aappublications.org/cgi/collection/bright_futures_sub
Ear, Nose & Throat Disorders
http://www.aappublications.org/cgi/collection/ear_nose_-_throat_disorders_sub

Permissions & Licensing
Information about reproducing this article in parts (figures, tables) or in its entirety can be found online at:
http://www.aappublications.org/site/misc/Permissions.xhtml

Reprints
Information about ordering reprints can be found online:
http://www.aappublications.org/site/misc/reprints.xhtml
Adolescent Hearing Loss: Rising or Not, It Remains a Concern
Deepa L. Sekhar
Pediatrics 2017;140;
DOI: 10.1542/peds.2017-3084 originally published online November 8, 2017;

The online version of this article, along with updated information and services, is located on the World Wide Web at:
http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/140/6/e20173084