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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Join Sertoma in Raising Awareness During Better Hearing & Speech Month

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The phrase “keep it down” has never been more applicable than it is today. We live in a world that is noisier than ever. Some of that noise comes from our surroundings, and some of it comes from noises we ourselves generate or from noise-producing gadgets we place right inside our ears. Sertoma’s Better Hearing and Speech Month, quickly approaching in May, raises awareness about hearing health and helps people avoid hearing loss, because once hearing is gone, it’s gone.

“We need to address hearing while people still have it, before the damage is done,” says Debby Larsen, Sertoma’s president. “Most hearing loss is noise-induced and, as such, is preventable if people take simple steps to protect their ears.”

Most Americans aren’t aware that hearing loss is the third most common health problem this country faces. We have a two-fold problem with regard to hearing health. The first is addressing the obstacles that make it difficult for those with hearing loss to get the treatment they need. The second is preventing hearing loss in the first place. Sertoma, in conjunction with other hearing and speech organizations, designated May as Better Hearing & Speech Month to raise awareness about hearing loss and to promote habits that protect hearing. The organization wants everyone in the community to have the tools needed to make their hearing a priority.

“Most people who do have hearing loss wait years before they seek treatment, and those can often be years of isolation, confusion, cognitive decline, and other avoidable side effects of poor hearing,” Larsen says. She adds that, with 1.1 billion young people at risk of hearing loss due to unsafe listening practices, this is an especially important time for people to focus on prevention and on modeling good hearing health practices.

Here are five simple steps Larsen says people can take to protect their hearing:

- Turn the volume down.
- Wear earplugs if you can’t control the noise in your environment.
- Give your ears a rest every day.
- Seek treatment for hearing loss.
- Model good hearing health practices for others.

Following these steps can make a big difference. Sharing them with others can have an even bigger impact. Being diligent in educating our community about prevention of noise-induced hearing loss has the potential to make most cases of hearing loss a thing of the past.

In addition to Sertoma's work on Better Hearing & Speech Month, the organization provides direct assistance at the national and local levels to people with speech, hearing, and language disorders through its national headquarters and nationwide clubs.

To learn more about how to get involved with Sertoma or about Better Hearing & Speech Month, visit sertoma.org or call 816-333-8330.

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Headquartered and founded in Kansas City, Mo., in 1912, Sertoma Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national civic organization whose focus is on assisting the more than 50 million people with hearing-health issues and educating the public on issues surrounding hearing health. For more information about Sertoma and its community clubs, visit sertoma.org or call 816-333-8330.