

**Op-Ed submission for [insert publication name]
By [insert author name]**



Word count: [insert word count, not including author bio and organization description]

Why Better Hearing & Speech Month Matters

The vacuum cleaner, the garbage disposal, the lawn mower, the blow dryer. What do these objects have in common? They all make noise, and it's noise that could be costing you your hearing.

If you're like many Americans, you aren't aware that hearing loss is the third most common health problem this country faces. You probably also aren't aware that the number of children and young people with hearing loss is on the rise. (For that, you can thank things like marching band, personal listening devices, and loud music.)

We have a two-fold problem in this country 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. We want everyone in our community to have the tools needed to make their hearing a priority.

With May just around the corner, we ask that people take a few simple steps 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.

In addition to Sertoma's work on Better Hearing & Speech Month, the organization provides direct assistance to people with speech, hearing, and language disorders at the national and local levels. Here in [insert city name], [insert club name] [insert descriptions of your club's hearing health related work. this may include presenting public awareness campaigns about hearing loss prevention, operating mobile hearing vans, providing youth scholarships, and other community service projects].

Every day, some 50 million people are at risk in the workplace, in recreational settings, and at home from exposure to dangerous levels of noise. Sertoma hopes that, by being diligent in educating our communities about prevention of noise-induced hearing loss, most cases of hearing loss will become a thing of the past. We encourage everyone in our community to get involved in this important work.

Let's make this May the best Better Hearing & Speech Month yet. Please join us in raising awareness about this important issue and supporting our mission of hearing health.

[insert author name, title and organization with brief bio/description]
[headshot of author should be submitted with op-ed]