



## Califone® collaborates with the American Speech Language Hearing Association advocating the safe use of personal audio technology.



ASHA President Noma Anderson with Califone VP, Marketing Tim Ridgway

Hello, and welcome to TechWatch, the ed-tech video news program produced by eSchool News. I'm Dennis Pierce.

Ahead on this edition: how virtual worlds make for compelling instructional tools, and the dangers of misusing MP3 players.

Califone® International, a developer of audiovisual products for schools, has joined the American Speech Language Hearing Association in a national effort to encourage the safe use of audio equipment by students.

The two organizations are hoping to make educators more aware of the risks of hearing loss their students may face from improper use of personal MP3 players. eSchool News Associate Editor Laura Devaney has more.

*"As iPods and other personal listening devices become nearly ubiquitous for today's youth, the improper use of these devices is contributing to the growing problem of noise-induced hearing loss. Noma Anderson is president of the American Speech Language Hearing Association, or ASHA. Her organization has launched Listen to Your Buds, a campaign to make educators and students aware of the problem."*

**Anderson:** "Well, the problem that we're really talking about today is noise-induced hearing loss, hearing loss caused by excess exposure to noise. And about ten million Americans have a hearing loss that comes from noise exposure. And what we're seeing, actually, is an increase in the numbers.

*"I think the basic message is to make everyone aware that you can damage your hearing if you're listening to an audio system that is too loud, and if you listen for too long, and if the quality of your earbuds is not high quality. So we're asking everyone to turn down the volume, to limit their listening time, and to use high-quality earbuds."*

ASHA has teamed up with Califone, a maker of audiovisual products for schools, to help spread the message. Califone's Tim Ridgway explains what is meant by high-quality earphones.

**Ridgway:** "For younger children, we would recommend headphones which are considered to be over-the-ear headphones. These, as you can see, are designed for a younger child, and this ear cup for children up through at least seven or eight years old ... offers the greatest amount of ambient noise reduction. Most importantly, Califone has incorporated its Sentinel Technology™, which restricts the volume output on this MP3 player to 85 decibels. Eighty-five decibels is the critical number suggested by both ASHA and the... National Institutes of Health as being the recommended volume level that should not be exceeded."

Califone has introduced a new MP3 player designed specifically for schools. It has a built-in microphone for recording podcasts, as well as dual earphone jacks for student/teacher listening, but its key feature is a safe volume threshold.

With modern technology comes the danger that it will be abused. ASHA and Califone are promoting guidelines for setting healthy patterns of behavior that will serve students well through a lifetime of technology use. For eSchool News, I'm Laura Devaney.

That's it for this edition of TechWatch. Join us again soon for more ed-tech news from around the nation. For eSchool News, I'm Dennis Pierce.

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