Session III

Cause and Effect

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CHILDREN: CANARIES IN THE COAL MINE

Abstract: Research linking loud sound to hearing loss in youngsters is now widespread, resulting in the issuance of warnings to protect children’s hearing. However, studies attesting to the adverse effects of intrusive sounds and noise on children’s overall health and psychological well-being have not received similar attention. This, despite the fact, that many studies have demonstrated that intrusive noises, e.g., from passing traffic or overhead aircraft, adversely affect children’s cardiovascular system, memory, language development and learning acquisition. While some American schools have received funds to abate noises from intrusive aircraft, many schools still expose children to the noises from passing traffic and overhead aircraft. Additionally, homes and schools expose youngsters to the impacts of interior noises as well. Discussion will center on the harmful effects of noise on children, what has been done to remedy the problem, and what needs to be done further to lessen the impacts of noise, including low-level vibrations.
Bio: Dr. Bronzaft is Professor Emerita of the City University of New York and serves on the Mayor's GrowNYC.org as chair of its noise committee. She has given testimony on the hazards of noise to government and health organizations, serves as an expert witness in court cases, and advises U.S. public officials, both locally and nationally, on the dangers of noise. She has written extensively on noise impacts, including chapters in nine books, articles in academic journals and writings in the popular press. Her latest chapter: Noise: Not Just Hazardous to your Ears - Harmful to Physical and Mental Well Being appears in The Consumer Handbook of Hearing Loss and Noise. She frequently lectures on noise in the United States and abroad and has been quoted in the media internationally. She also advises anti-noise organizations in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. She received a Certificate of Appreciation from Region 2 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for her achievements in the protection of the Environment