



We hope that all students have a great year of face-to-face learning and friendships this year. Ensure that your child has the best start to learning. Difficulty with hearing can impact your child's communication, academic development, friendships, and extra-curricular activities such as sport and music. It is recommended that year prep students have their hearing tested. And if year 1 students missed out on testing last year, they can have their hearing checked too.

Tinnitus Awareness Week

Tinnitus Awareness Week ran from 1-7 February. Tinnitus refers to a buzzing, whistling, or ringing sound in your ears or head that does not have an outside source. For some people, the experience of tinnitus can be tolerable while for others it is completely distracting and bothersome. We would like to share Sylvie's story on her journey with tinnitus.

Sylvie's Tinnitus Journey

My first bar job was at 18 in Fitzroy, I remember being so excited that I had gotten a job in a bar. The idea that I had to protect my ears from the loud DJ sets that would be played at the bar had never crossed my mind. Nobody spoke about protecting your hearing and it was uncommon for people to wear earplugs, let alone for it to be a workplace policy. I think part of this was due to the fact that people believed that earplugs made it harder to hear customers, which the basic \$5 earplugs did. There was no knowledge of customised earplugs that were tailored for the music scene and made hearing customers viable. If I had been aware of them, I know for a fact I would have thought they were too expensive. At 18 I had no understanding of what tinnitus was, nor how debilitating it could be. In hindsight the damage to my ears would far outweigh the cost of buying protective earplugs.

By the time I was 24 I had been working in bars and nightclubs for 5 years and it was this year of my life that I first noticed ringing in my ears. I remember laying in my bed one afternoon trying to nap. I had a constant ringing in my ears that would not go away no matter what position I lay in, whether I stood up or sat down, opened or closed my eyes, it was constant. I remember being overwhelmed with anxiety when the ringing in my ears would not go away, I read about tinnitus and realised that the noise could potentially be permanent. I remember feeling distressed about this realisation and overwhelmed with grief about losing silence. I remember wishing I had appreciated silence more and being terrified that I may never be able to normalise the tinnitus. Luckily, I had done an extensive amount of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy in my life before this moment. I did this therapy to manage my Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and it came in handy with managing the ever-growing snowball of fear and anxiety that was building around the onset of my tinnitus. I also used music and sound recordings to normalise the tinnitus at night, as this was the time it was loudest. Eventually I normalised it, so much, that I barely noticed it. Today I rarely notice it, and when I do it is generally when I am stressed and stretching myself too thin.

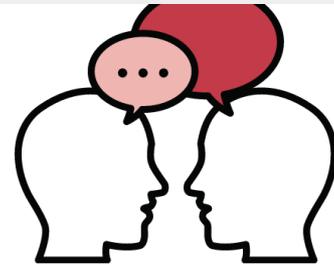
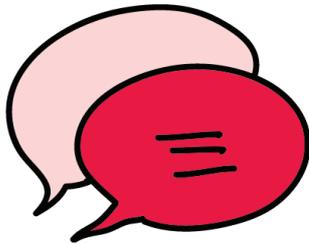
Medical professionals know a bit about the causes of tinnitus, but often the exact cause is not always found. This was the case with me. However, there are two things I am sure have influenced the onset of my tinnitus. First, sound damage. I believe from working in nightclubs and bars without any protection, 4 nights a week for 5 years damaged my hearing. It is common that regular exposure to loud sounds can lead to tinnitus. Second, in my early 20s I experienced muscular fatigue throughout my back, from my glutes to my neck, which caused spasming across this area, including in my ears. This has left long lasting effects across this area of my body and I experience tightness and aches to this day. To manage it I stretch and maintain my fitness otherwise the spasms and aches become worse.

If there is one thing I can recommend, where financially viable, is to see a specialist. They normalise the experience and can recommend ways to manage tinnitus. In addition, they can refer you to support services and, in my case, organised personalised earplugs to minimise further sound damage. It is important to remember you are not alone in your tinnitus journey.

Valentines Day

We hope you all enjoyed Valentine's Day despite it being during the Circuit-Breaker Lockdown. We love how providing the right hearing health advice and solutions can lead to better communication between loved ones!

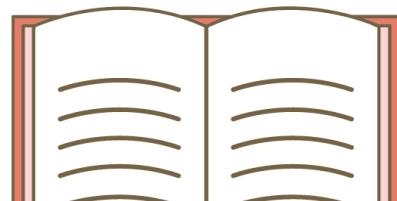
If you would like to gift your partner with better hearing, give us a call: 03 9037 7010.



**A great
relationship
starts with great
communication.**



**GIVE THE GIFT OF BETTER HEARING
AND ENJOY CLEARER
CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR
LOVED ONE.**



Swimmer's ear

Swimmer's ear is an infection of the outer ear canal. Symptoms of swimmer's ear usually appear within a few days of swimming and include:

- Itchiness inside the ear.
- Redness and swelling of the ear.
- Pain when the infected ear is tugged or when pressure is placed on the ear.
- Pus draining from the infected ear.



Have you ever experienced how painful Swimmer's Ear can be? One way to protect yourself and your family from Swimmer's Ear is by keeping your ears dry with earplugs. They prevent water from entering the ear canal.

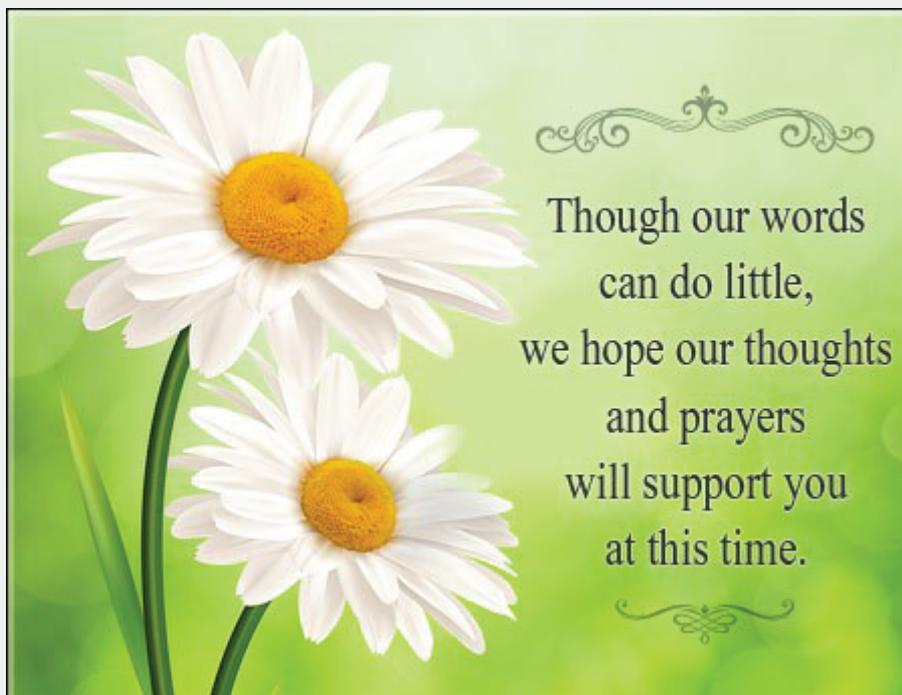
At Casey Hearing, we are specialists in custom fitting earplugs for swimmers. This summer we have fitted children as well as adult swimmers and surfers. We also offer pre-fit swim plugs designed to suit your needs and budget that can be used when swimming or bathing.



Help your children avoid painful ear infections from pools with earplugs.

Staff News

With heavy hearts we would like to share that Lubna's beloved father passed away in Bangladesh. We understand not being with family and friends at this time makes the loss all the more difficult. We send our sincere condolences, love and strength to Lubna and her family during this time and pray that her late father's soul rest in peace.



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Forward

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