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CASLPA Calls on Committee to Quiet Noisy Toys ***Bill C-6 must be amended to protect children's hearing***

OTTAWA (May 28, 2009) – Today, the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) will appear before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health to encourage the government to include restrictions on noisy toys in consumer product safety legislation.

The Health Committee is currently studying Bill C-6, the *Canada Consumer Product Safety Act*, which will place an onus on manufacturers to ensure that their products are safe and provides government with the power and capacity to make sure that this happens.

“With C-6, the government is clearly moving in the right direction to ensure that the products on store shelves and in our home are safe,” commented CASLPA Executive Director Ondina Love, “but it is important that Government recognize the hearing health risks that noisy toys pose when reviewing this legislation.”

CASLPA has worked for a number of years to inform the public and Members of Parliament about the dangers of noisy toys. Currently, the *Hazardous Products Act* bans toys emitting noise levels exceeding 100 decibels. Audiologists feel that this level is too high and are calling on government to set the limit to only 75 decibels. As a matter of comparison, exposure to 100 decibels in a workplace would be considered safe for only a 15 minute period, and that is for adults with fully developed ears. Lowering this noise limit is also the focus of a Private Member's Bill, C-357.

“The concern is that noisy toys are often trivialized or dismissed as just annoying to parents,” said Love. “But the danger these toys pose is very real and can cause permanent hearing damage.”

CASLPA's appearance before the Committee helps to mark the end of Speech and Hearing Awareness Month. Throughout May, thousands of professionals involved with the treatment of speech, language and hearing disorders came together to participate in public awareness campaigns that encouraged early detection and prevention of communication disorders, and sought to increase the public's sensitivity to the challenges faced by individuals experiencing them.

“The government has taken real steps to encourage a culture of product safety, and this should be applauded. But it must also take the next step to ensure that the toys a child plays with do not cause lasting harm to their hearing health,” concluded Love.

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CASLPA, with more than 5,400 members, is the only national body that supports and represents the professional needs of speech-language pathologists, audiologists and supportive personnel inclusively within one organization. Through this support, CASLPA champions the needs of people with communications disorders. Visit CASLPA at www.caslpa.ca

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