



Reduce Noise Pollution:

Close the Chew

# What is it?

Noise pollution is all over the world, it is something that can not be seen, but heard. It is heard across land and sea, a thing that doesn't ever stop. Noise pollution is considered as unwanted and disturbing sound, which can affect health, and the well-being of others. Sound is measured in decibels.

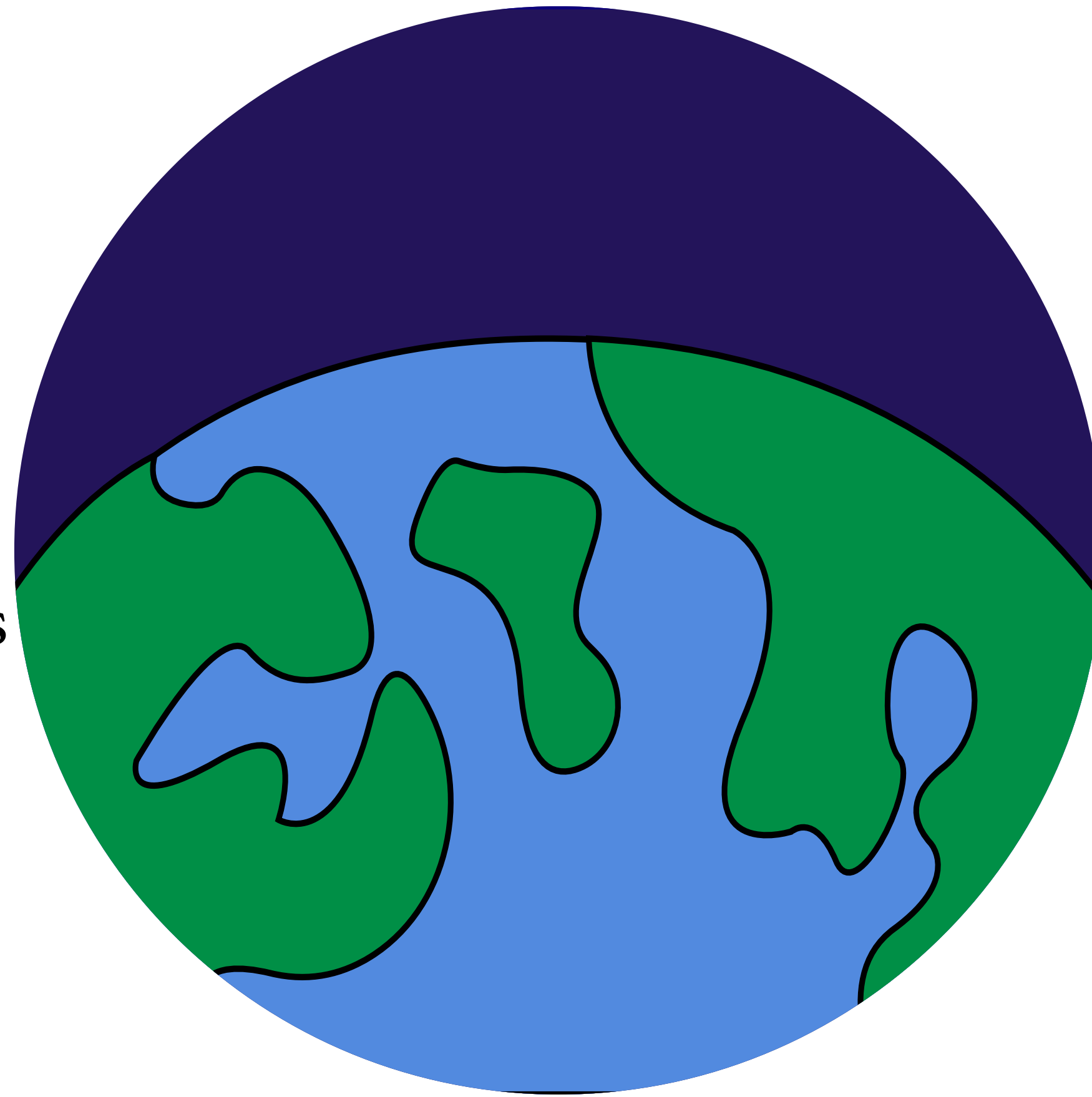
There are many sounds in the environment, from rustling leaves to thunderclap, the wail of a siren, lawn mowers, trains, loud rock concerts.

Noise pollution impacts millions of people on a daily basis.

The most common health problem it causes is

**Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL).**

Exposure to loud noise can also cause high blood pressure, heart disease, sleep disturbances, and stress. It also affects children with impairments in memory, attention level, and reading skills.



Out of all of these noise pollution and problems causing it, the biggest one is people who chew with their mouth open. Researchers monitored participants' heart rate and blood pressure levels before and after listening to a variety of noises, including dogs barking, babies crying and knuckles cracking.

Loud eating beat out the rest of the noises, with the average participant's heart rate jumping to 135 beats per minute, a 68 percent increase from the average resting heart rate (between 60 and 100 beats per minute).

It's called "misophonia," said Zachary Rosenthal, a psychology professor at Duke University.

That term means "hatred of sound." We can all be bothered by annoying or gross-seeming sounds, he said, but some people actually experience an abnormal fight-or-flight response.

# What can you do?

There's not enough research into causes or treatments of misophonia to yield any particular remedy or one-size-fits-all solution, Rosenthal said. From there, he said the best treatment is a "coordinated multi-disciplinary approach," focusing on evidence-based interventions picking away at the three major pillars of the disorder. If you have misophonia, the National Institutes of Health's Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center notes that other family members are likely to have it as well.

Among its treatment recommendations, it lists wearing hearing plugs, using antidepressant medications, and maintaining an active lifestyle to reduce stress.

All is true, but the main problem is those who chew with their mouth open. That's what needs to be stopped.



# How does design stop this problem?

For starters people who chew with their mouth open could be doing it without even realizing it. Because of this a simple design can point it out to them and make them realize what they are doing is cause problems to others.

To showcase these designs I will be using multiple ways.

- I will create a flyer that would go in areas where people would eat, such as lounges, cafe's, just anywhere someone is seen eating, especially quiet places like libraries.

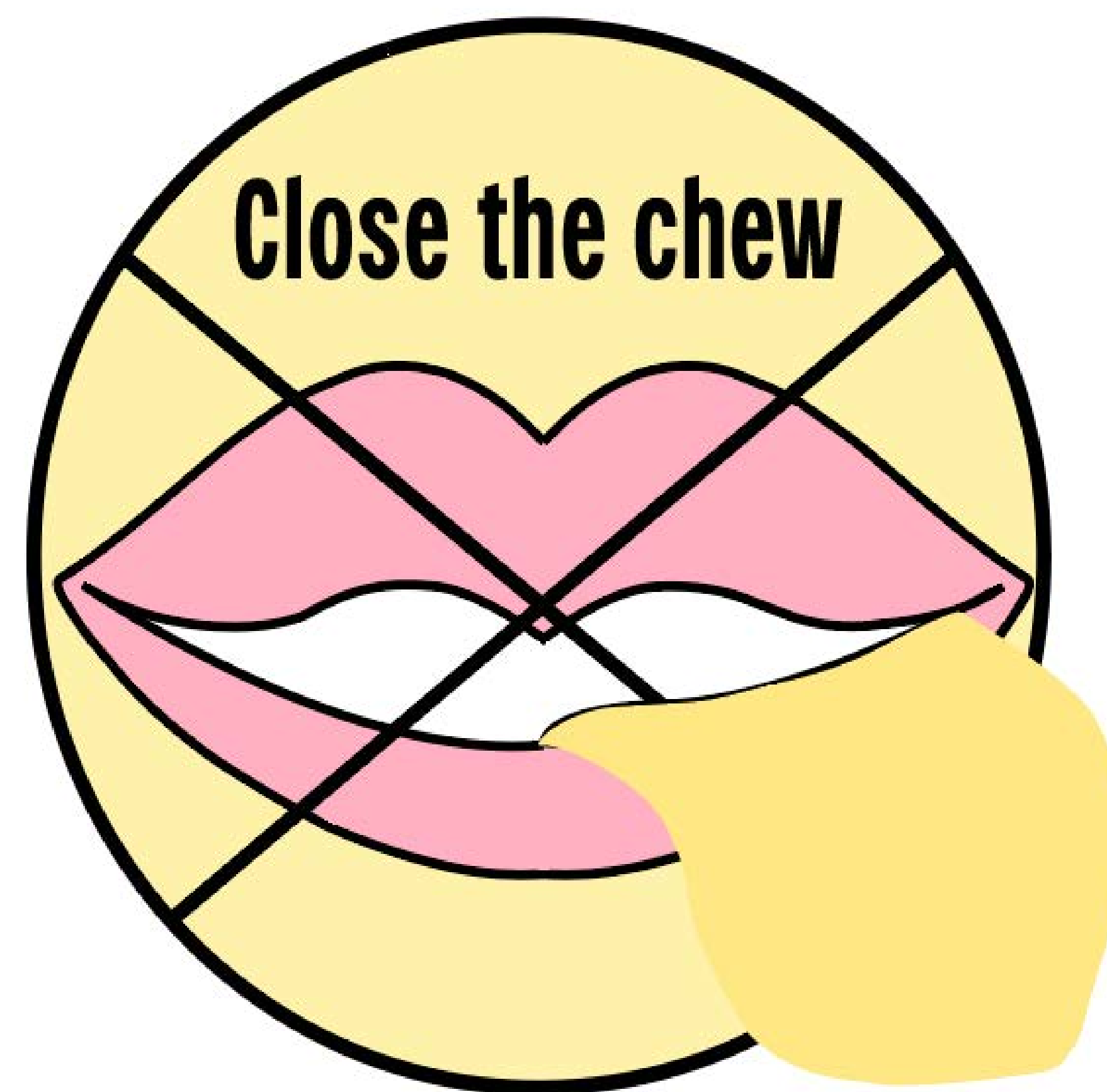
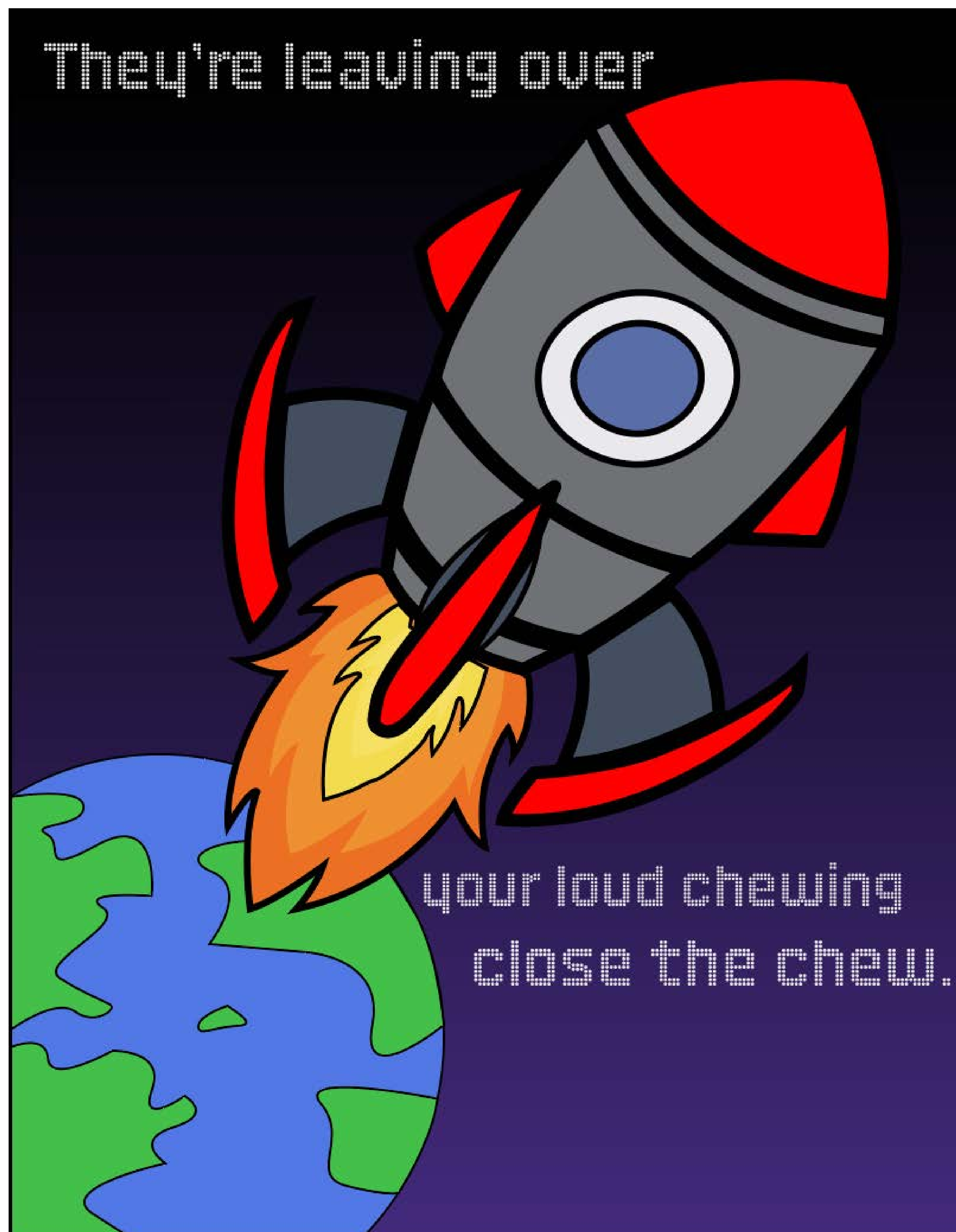
- I will create a simple sticker design where people can showcase how they also dislike when people chew loudly.

The point of theses designs and the message behind them is just to make everyone aware that they can affect others in ways that they might think doesn't bother others.

Just make everyone aware of their surroundings and how it is considered rude and unappetizing to hear.



The designs:



# How Misophonia affects:

Through research it indicates misophonia affects a significant portion of the population, with prevalence estimates ranging from around 10% to 20% experiencing bothersome symptoms, though only a smaller subset has severe, diagnosable conditions, often linked to impacts on family, work, and social life. Studies show widespread distress from sounds (nearly 80% in one U.S. sample) and high rates in specific groups, like 18% in the UK.

- General Population: Estimates suggest 10-20% experience misophonia, with one UK study finding 18.4% have significant misophonia, and a large U.S. study finding 4.6% with a diagnosis, but 78.5% bothered by sounds.

- College Students: Studies on student populations show high rates, with some finding around 23.8% with misophonia and others over 49% experiencing significant symptoms.

- Social & Family Life: Misophonia significantly disrupts daily functions, affecting family relationships, social interactions, and school/work performance.

- Common Triggers: Chewing, slurping, and other eating sounds are frequently cited as primary triggers, affecting over 60% of people with misophonia.

- Underdiagnosis: Many affected individuals (like 86% in one study) haven't heard the term before, highlighting the need for awareness.

## Why it happens:

- People chew with their mouths open for various reasons, including medical conditions, differences in etiquette, the belief that it makes food taste and sound better, and simply as a result of habit or a lack of awareness.

## Websites:

- [TimeOut](#)

- [National Geographic](#)

- [CNN Health](#)

- [Hashir International](#)