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2. General Information & Policies 2010 - 2011

2.1. Office

Our office is located at Arts Court at the corner of Nicholas and Daly Avenue beside the Rideau Centre in downtown Ottawa. We have voice mail: you may leave a phone message at (613) 569-7995 at any time, or email Liko Yamane, the General Manager at info@suzukimusic.ca

2.2. Terms

The year is divided into four 9-week terms.

2.2.1. Payment of fees

Fees must be paid upon registration in the form of post-dated cheques. Lesson fees vary according to instrument, teacher and lesson length; consult your teacher or the office for the exact amount. Annual fees include 36 private lessons, 15 group lessons, recitals, concerts, some other special events and parent information sessions. For more information speak to your teacher or contact the General Manager.

Note: Non-refundable SuzukiMusic registration or membership fees are additional: New student's fee - \$95, including parents education materials, Returning student's fee - 1st child - \$75, 2nd - \$35, 3rd - \$20, 4th - no charge. Registrations for returning students handed in after the posted deadline for returning registrants are subject to a late fee of \$35 (see registration form for additional family members). After July 1 an additional late fee of \$50 applies. A fee of \$25 is levied for each NSF cheque.

2.2.2. Bursaries

Families experiencing temporary, short-term financial difficulties may apply, in confidence, for bursary assistance. Application forms, criteria and additional information may be obtained from your teacher or by contacting the General Manager.

2.2.3. Withdrawal

In the case of withdrawal from the school in mid-term, the fees for the remainder of that term will not be refunded. Any subsequent complete term fees will be returned provided notice of withdrawal is given at least two weeks before the beginning of the next term. Membership fees will not be refunded.

2.2.4. Missed Lessons

Private lessons missed by the student will not normally be made up. Any lessons cancelled by the teacher will be made up at a time mutually convenient to parent and teacher. If more than two group lessons are missed, it will be up to the discretion of the group class teacher as to whether or not the student performs with his/her class in the final June concert.

2.2.5. Holiday Policy

Lessons which fall on legal holidays (e.g. Thanksgiving, Good Friday) will either be given on these days or be rescheduled to a date mutually convenient to parent and teacher. Lessons scheduled on non-bank holidays (Heritage Day, professional days, etc.) will be given as usual.

2.2.6. Private Lessons

Private lessons are normally scheduled during school hours (although a few of our teachers are prepared to teach at other times). The Ontario School Administration Act states: "A child is excused from attendance at school if he/she is absent from school for the purpose of receiving instruction in music and the period of absence does not exceed one-half day in any week." In most cases our students miss one-quarter day or less. One lesson annually may be set aside for a parent teacher conference. Teachers may opt to reschedule a student's lesson time for coaching with an accompanist or for attendance at the Kiwanis Festival or an RCM exam.

2.2.7. Parent Education

Parents receive instruction on Suzuki Philosophy and instrument-related topics. Parent Education is a continuing process in learning to work successfully with your child in the home environment. Don't assume this can all be digested in the first year; the rules and conditions of efficient practice and working positively with your child can change quite dramatically from year to year! As your child matures, a whole new set of tactics may be needed to preserve the harmonious musical co-existence between you and your child. As teachers, we have had extensive experience and training in helping parents cope with the bumpy intervals that may occur during home practice.

2.2.8. Instruments

Students are expected to acquire an instrument of their own. Some cellos, flutes and violas are available for rental; rental fees are waived for the first year of study on the instrument. A child wishing to study violin, viola or cello must be properly measured by his/her teacher to determine the size of instrument needed. The school is not responsible for damaged instruments. All instruments must be kept clean and in good repair at all times; they should not be exposed to extremes of heat or cold. We recommend that instruments be insured against fire, theft and damage.

2.3. Private Lessons

Each child and parent will receive one private lesson per week. Lessons vary in length from 15 minutes to one hour. Your teacher will advise you on the length suitable for you.

2.4. Group Classes

Each student will attend **Fifteen** 50-minute group classes and reading classes during the school year. Group classes (except for Pre-Twinkler groups) perform annually at the Kiwanis Music Festival.

A lot of time and effort is spent on the part of faculty to ensure that each child is placed in an appropriate group class. If you feel that, during the first 3 group classes, your child has been misplaced, this must be brought to the attention of the studio teacher, **not** the group class teacher. The studio teacher and the artistic director will reassess the placement and inform you of their decision. Under no condition is a parent allowed to unilaterally make this decision; the final decision will rest with the studio teacher and the artistic director.

2.5. Musicianship, Orchestra and Ensembles

Musicianship, Theory, Ensemble Skills, orchestra will be offered at the appropriate levels. There is also a multi-level orchestra program, and various advanced ensembles: *Chamber Music, VLN/VLA Choir, Advanced Cello Choir, Flute Ensemble, and Guitar Ensemble.*

2.6. Recitals

Each teacher offers their students opportunities throughout the year to participate in solo recitals. These occur at different locations throughout the city.

2.7. School Concerts

All students participate in Viva Suzuki, our Final Group Class concert.

2.8. Workshop Series

During the year, guest clinicians are invited to visit our program, teach groups and offer parent education lectures.

2.9. Special Recitals/Concerts in the Community

From time to time, students have the opportunity to participate in special recitals based on a specific theme, such as our Family and Friends concert, or to play in the community, e.g., as part of FestivArts, or as part of a school tour, etc.

3. Where to turn: A SuzukiMusic Parent's Guide to Gathering Information and Solving Problems

From time to time, you will find yourself needing information, or faced with a problem or some matter of concern. Please keep this list handy, because it will help you figure out whom to turn to in such circumstances.

You need information about...

1. Suzuki music lessons; SuzukiMusic administrative matters, e.g., dates for cheques

Start by checking our web site: www.suzukimusic.ca. If you don't find what you need, then Contact the General Manager at info@suzukimusic.ca

2. An upcoming studio recital

If the question is a musical one (e.g., what way must my child stand with respect to the audience), then please contact your private teacher.

If the question is about logistics (e.g., when do we have to be at the recital venue for tuning), then please phone your private teacher or if they are designated in your private teacher's studio - the parent coordinator for the studio recital or the studio rep.

3. Group classes; the final group class concert

Please contact your group class teacher for all information with respect to group classes. Group class dates and concert information can be found on the Calendar Page of our website: www.suzukimusic.ca.

4. The Workshop Series

Your group class teacher will organize a workshop for your class. Also check the website for special event listings on the home page and calendar page: www.suzukimusic.ca.

5. A special event involving children from your teacher's studio ONLY

If there is a special event involving children from your teacher's studio ONLY, then you should phone either your private teacher, the studio rep, or the coordinator for that event. If there is an event coordinator, then that person's name will be listed on the bulletin board in your teacher's studio.

6. A special event involving children from your child's group class ONLY

If there is a special event involving children from your child's group class ONLY, then you should phone either the group class rep, or the coordinator for that event. If there is an event coordinator, then that person's name will be announced at group class, and the group class rep will know who you need to contact.

7. A special event involving children from different studios and group classes

Don't forget to start by checking the website: www.suzukimusic.ca – major events involving students from several studios/group classes will generally have a page listing all the key information on the website. There will also be an event coordinator – please contact the General Manager at info@suzukimusic.ca to find out who the coordinator is.

You are faced with a problem in the context of...

1. Your private lesson

Generally, if you have a problem or concern with respect to your child's private lesson, the best person to talk to is your private teacher. This is particularly true if you are worried by your child's behaviour toward the teacher, or if you have any other concerns about lesson dynamics. If something your teacher is doing does not 'work' for your child, then your teacher will want to know about this as soon as possible.

However, if you feel that you are unable to raise a specific concern with your teacher, then please contact Liko Yamane, our General Manager, at info@suzukimusic.ca or Beth Sturdevant, our Artistic Director, at bs.ncssm@gmail.com. Confidentiality will be respected.

2. Your child's group lesson

Generally, if you have a problem or concern with respect to your child's group lesson, the best person to talk to is the group lesson teacher. This is particularly true if you are worried by your child's behaviour in the class, or if you have any other concerns about group dynamics, or repertoire. If something your teacher is doing does not 'work' for your child, then the teacher will want to know about this as soon as possible.

However, if you feel that you are unable to raise a specific concern with your teacher, then please contact the General Manager, Liko Yamane at info@suzukimusic.ca or Beth Sturdevant, our Artistic Director at bs.ncssm@gmail.com. Confidentiality will be respected.

3. A special event

Generally, if you have any problems or concerns with respect to special events, you should contact the coordinator of that event. If you are unsure of whom that might be, then please contact the General Manager, Liko Yamane at info@suzukimusic.ca

4. Getting home practise sessions to be pleasant and productive

This is probably the most frequent problem that SuzukiMusic parents encounter! We *all* fall into practise pits from time to time, and some of us spend more time than we

want to admit struggling with practise. So you are not alone! If you are feeling discouraged, there are several strategies you can try: (1) check out the resources for parents on the SuzukiMusic web site (www.suzukimusic.ca) – there are all sorts of practising tips from past SUZNEWS columns; (2) talk to your private teacher – they will provide encouragement; (3) talk to a parent who has ‘been there, done that’. Ask your private teacher if they can refer you to a parent who is willing to be available as a mentor for those of us who need some moral support.

5. Other problems

Administrative problems or concerns: Please contact the General Manager, Liko Yamane at info@suzukimusic.ca

Any other problems or concerns: Please feel free to contact any parent member of the Board of Directors; we are always happy to be of help, and are anxious to ensure that SuzukiMusic does its very best to meet the needs of its member families. You can find contact information for the members of the Board on the website www.suzukimusic.ca, or by e-mailing the General Manager at info@suzukimusic.ca

4. Role and purpose of group class

4.1. Fundamental objectives of group class

Group class plays a key role in Suzuki programs, and are a distinctive feature of Suzuki pedagogy as compared to traditional music teaching. There are four fundamental objectives of the group class program:

- To strengthen mastery of Suzuki repertoire
 - through review
 - by drilling new technical skills
- To develop ensemble and observation skills
- To reinforce performance skills
- To provide students with musical peers, and the sense that they are part of a learning community

Strengthening mastery

Children take pleasure in activities that they do well. Consequently, considerable group class time is allocated to review of their existing repertoire, which provides students with the opportunity to take pleasure in their skillful performance of pieces they have already mastered. Moreover, they learn that even though they ‘know the notes’ to these review pieces, that they can continually refine and improve their performance: new techniques and musical ideas are easily introduced which makes playing review pieces musically challenging.

Group class time spent working on more recently acquired repertoire also plays a crucial role in drilling new technical skills. Dr. Suzuki talked about developing ability through 10 000 repetitions – but few children will do this much drill at home! Parents can learn how to make drills less tedious by using some of the variations that group class teachers use when working on technique

Ensemble and Observation Skills

Musicians almost always play as part of an ensemble...and to play at a high level as an ensemble requires greater focus and concentration than with a solo performance. In an ensemble, musicians need to work as a team – breathing together, following the leader (conductor), communicating through eye contact and body language. Through regular participation in group classes, Suzuki students develop these ensemble skills naturally, from a young age.

To reinforce performance skills

Outstanding performances require careful preparation: soloists and conductors often work for months (years!) on their interpretation of a piece of music. In group class it is easy and natural to explore different ways for communicating our musical ideas with our audience, and for learning to ensure that the audience takes pleasure in our performance. At different times during the year (and in particular, during the Kiwanis Music Festival) SuzukiMusic tries to provide students with the opportunity to perform in the community with their group class.

To provide students with a learning community

Practicing a discipline like music is hard work: it is more rewarding if you can share the challenges (and the successes) with musical peers. In group class, students are part of a learning community of children of different ages who are at a comparable stage of musical development. Group class teachers work hard to provide students with opportunities to develop confidence and leadership skills by working with the other students in group class.

Importantly, group class provides models of success to inspire your child. Children are inspired by the pleasure that their peers take in learning to play an instrument; they can be inspired by the repertoire than another student is playing; by a very musical performance; by an enthusiastic performance. Your child knows that there are many other children who have successfully conquered the challenges that they are dealing with in their own studies; this knowledge can help both parent and child deal with bumps along their musical journey.

4.2. Is group class supposed to be fun?

Group class is not primarily about fun and games; it is about striving for excellence in making music together. Sometimes it can be a lot of work! But the group class experience will be joyful if students can hear themselves making beautiful music: this requires that everyone has prepared assignments given by teacher at previous class and that all students maintain an active review program.

4.3. How are children placed in group?

New beginners are placed in group class based on their age. Returning students are placed in group class depending on their repertoire level in May of the previous year. Age is not a factor in group class placement.

4.4. What is expected of the parent attending group class?

- You are expected to arrive 5-10 minutes before the beginning of class. Classes start 'on time' and end after 50 minutes. (Pre-Twinkler classes may end after 40 minutes.) If you arrive late, your child may be asked to observe until it is convenient for the teacher to stop and tune the instrument
- Pay close attention to what the teacher is doing with the children: don't create a distraction by chatting to your neighbour, or reading the paper, or...
- If you can't observe your child's group class (e.g., because you are attending Parent Ed), please arrange to make sure you know what assignments were given by the group class teacher – and make sure these are incorporated into home practicing.
- Don't coach your child from the sidelines! Let the teacher run the class.
- Sometimes kids are cranky and have a bad day. This is life. If you are asked to remove your child, don't get cross but simply pack up and depart matter-of-factly. (See "The Million Dollar Lesson" in this handbook.)
- Don't let your child skip group – demonstrate the same commitment to the other students (and parents) as you would to members of a sports team.

4.5. Responsibility of supervision

Please be aware that SuzukiMusic has neither the authority nor the capacity to screen visitors to Canterbury High School during group classes. You are responsible for your child's safety and supervision. You are at all times responsible for ensuring that your child does no harm (the school; instruments; dialing 911, other children!) In particular:

- No eating or drinking in any classrooms
- No touching of equipment belonging to Canterbury High School
- No children in classrooms without adults

If your child is younger than 10, you must remain at Canterbury during groups: you are generally expected to be observing your child's class. If you are not in class with your child, both your child and at least one other parent should know where you can be found (e.g., in your other child's class!)

If your child is 10-12 years of age, and is comfortable with your absence from the premises, then you may drop your child off as long as you leave contact information with both your child and another parent. You must pick your child up as soon as their classes are finished!

If your child is 13 or older, then they may attend classes independently. However, you are still responsible should they damage the facilities, etc.

5. Musicianship Program

Welcome to the musicianship program. In broad strokes, this key part of Suzuki Music's training focuses on the development of a student's competency in rhythm, and on-instrument reading and orchestral playing skills. This process begins with

movement and the learning of a steady inner pulse. As a child gets older, their cognitive development allows for a more sophisticated learning of rhythm and the fundamental components of music theory. A particularly exciting and unique part of this curriculum is a newly developed electronic composition offering for more senior students.

There is currently a complete review and redevelopment of our musicianship program taking place. It is expected that this process will take another two to three years to complete, as new Suzuki Music-specific materials and innovative methods of program delivery unique to our needs, are being developed and tested by various faculty members.

Should you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or anything else you would like to communicate to us about this program, please let your musicianship teacher know, or get in touch with the Artistic Director, Beth Sturdevant at bs.ncssm@gmail.com

6. Orchestra Program

SuzukiMusic's orchestra program includes two levels of string orchestra. The first serves as an introduction to string orchestra playing, the second is more advanced and provides students the opportunity to participate in an annual tour.

MY COMMITMENT AS AN ORCHESTRAL MUSICIAN

As an orchestral musician, I undertake:

- To practice my music at home every week so that I am ready for each rehearsal
- To bring my orchestra music to my private lesson, and to ask for extra help with anything that I am finding difficult
- To arrive 10 minutes early at the rehearsal so that I can be ready to play at the beginning of the rehearsal
- To bring a pencil and stand to each rehearsal
- To not talk or whisper or noodle on my instrument when the conductor is talking or working with a different section
- To mark any changes or directions from the conductor in my part or on my "Notes and Reminders" sheet
- To practice everything on the "Notes and Reminders" sheet with my teacher at my next lesson
- To silently follow my part with my eyes when the conductor is working with the students in another section so that I can learn how the parts work together

- To make sure that I glance up regularly at the conductor while we are playing through each piece and that I watch very, very carefully at the beginning and end of each piece
- To have a positive attitude to everything that we do and to take pride in making beautiful music as part of an orchestra

7. History of the Suzuki Method

7.1. The Legacy of Shinichi Suzuki

Shinichi Suzuki was a violinist, educator, philosopher, and humanitarian. Over the past fifty years he had a profound influence on music education in his own country and throughout the world. Suzuki based his approach on the belief that, "Musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability which can be developed. Any child who is properly trained can develop musical ability, just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue. The potential of every child is unlimited."

Suzuki's philosophy and the method he developed have now reached thousands of teachers, children and families in many nations. When he died in January 1998, Dr. Shinichi Suzuki was mourned around the world. His belief in the marvellous capabilities of all human beings and the importance of nurturing these capabilities with love has left a lasting legacy.

7.2. Origin of Suzuki's Talent Education Method

Born in 1898, Shinichi Suzuki studied violin in Japan for some years before going to Germany in the 1920's. After further study there, he returned to Japan to play and teach. He taught university students, but became more and more interested in the education of young children.

Suzuki realized the implications of the obvious fact that children of all nationalities easily learn their native language. He began to develop a method for teaching violin modeled after the way in which children learn language and called it the Mother-Tongue Approach or Talent Education.

7.3. Development of the Method

Suzuki's work was interrupted by World War II, and after its end he was determined to bring the beauty of music to the bleak lives of his nation's children. He began teaching at a small school in Matsumoto, working to develop a sequential repertoire that would present musical and technical points in a logical manner. Within a few years Suzuki's students were amazing listeners with their abilities.

The Talent Education movement grew as other teachers studied with Suzuki and began to teach throughout Japan. The program expanded as teachers of different instruments became interested in Suzuki's approach, and materials were developed for cello, piano and flute. Over the years, thousands of Japanese children have

received Suzuki training at the Talent Education Institute in Matsumoto or one of the branch schools in other cities.

7.4. The Suzuki Method Today

Dr. Suzuki did not develop his method in order to produce professional musicians but to help children fulfill their capabilities as human beings. As he has said, "Teaching music is not my main purpose. I want to make good citizens, noble human beings. If a child hears fine music from the day of his birth, and learns to play it himself, he develops sensitivity, discipline and endurance. He gets a beautiful heart."

Through his life and work, Dr. Suzuki inspired thousands of parents and teachers in more than forty countries in Asia, Europe, Australia, Africa and the Americas to nurture loving human beings through the mother-tongue approach to music education. In the supportive environment fostered by the Suzuki method, children learn to enjoy music and develop confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline, concentration, and the determination to try difficult things-qualities that are sorely needed in our time. As Pablo Casals remarked through his tears after hearing Suzuki children play, "Perhaps it is music that will save the world."

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8. The Suzuki Philosophy

By Alice Joy Lewis

The Suzuki Method was started shortly after World War II by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, violinist, educator and humanitarian. Dr. Suzuki referred to his system of training Talent Education, or Mother Tongue Method. He believed that every young child who is capable of learning his/her native language is capable of developing a high level of ability-talent-in other areas as well. The conditions that he saw as necessary for the development of talent are as follows:

1. Begin as early as possible.
2. Create the best possible environment.
3. Use the finest teaching method.
4. Provide a great deal of training.
5. Use the finest teachers.

Beginning as early as possible may actually mean starting as soon as 'age zero' by establishing an environment in the home which is conducive to the child's learning. In the case of music training, this simply means exposure to good music in the home by means of C.D.'s, tapes, T.V., radio and attendance at concerts. Just as a child speaks his/her first word after hearing thousands of repetitions, so the Suzuki musician learns to play after hearing much music at home.

The children's lessons - in the studio and at home - should be handled with positive encouragement and should be kept short. Formal training at an early age is desirable because children's brains are developing at an explosive yet continually descending rate. They are eager to learn, receptive to new information, and their young muscles are still most flexible.

The method itself is a carefully constructed sequence of skills based on LISTENING and REPETITION, the steps by which a child learns a native language. Gauged to the speed of the individual child this sequence adds a new skill only as previous skills are completely mastered, thus assuring a child's success at every step in a process as natural as learning to speak. Training is provided by private and group instruction and by daily listening and practise at home.

One of the especially exciting features of the Suzuki Method is the use of the finest teachers. If we look again at the analogy of language learning, we note that it is the parent who is usually the first and best teacher. With Dr. Suzuki's Talent Education, parents serve as teachers even if they have no musical background. The Suzuki teacher actually serves as mentor to both parent and child, teaching the child at the lesson and guiding the parent in developing techniques of teaching the child in home practise. The parent and the child are then in a position to work together toward a common goal.

How to make the most of Suzuki Education for your child

Successful Suzuki education depends heavily on the teamwork of teacher and parent working in the best interest of the child. The co-operative relationship has often been described as a triangle.

Listed below are some specific ways in which you contribute to make Suzuki Talent Education a successful experience for your child:

1. Listen daily to the assigned music

Not just once or twice but many times. The listening can occur in many settings-while your child is playing quietly, at mealtime, during travel time in the car at bedtime, etc. The value of repetition is certainly obvious as it is seen as part of language learning. Think about how many times your child heard "momma" or "daddy" before saying them. Dr. Suzuki told us that there is a direct relationship between the number of times a child hears a piece and the speed and ease with which he/she learns to play it.

2. Continue to provide rich listening experiences as your child advances through the repertoire.

It is important for the advanced student to listen faithfully just as it is for the younger ones. Comparative listening should be encouraged. For example, several different recordings of a particular sonata or concerto give the student a perspective about tone and interpretive possibilities that are extremely helpful.

3. Practice Daily

There are three aspects of practice that affect your child's progress:

- Regularity
- Amount
- The Child's knowledge of his/her own results

Regularity is actually a more important aspect of practice than the amount of time put in. A few minutes of practice daily produces better results than several days without any practice followed by several hours crammed in just before the lesson! Dr. Suzuki's own recipe for beginning students' practice is "Two minutes of joy, five times a day." Note the emphasis on joy and the repeated activity rather than the amount of time. Again, there is a direct relationship between how often your child practices and how he/she progresses.

The amount of time spent in practicing gradually increases as the child's ability to concentrate grows. As students advance in the repertoire, their musical material makes increased practice time necessary. It becomes easier, though, to practice more as the complexity of the material and the amount to do increases.

A student's knowledge of his/her own results in practice is important to progress. Bill Starr writes in *To learn with Love* that psychologists recognize three phases in skill acquisition:

1. In the first phase the learner understands what he is supposed to do.

(Ex. For a practicing Suzuki student it might be to play with "straight" bows, i.e. with the bow parallel to the bridge or to play with a relaxed, curvy bow hold, etc.)

2. The second phase consists of meaningful practice with appropriate feedback. Knowledge of results, or feedback, is considered by psychologists studying skill learning to be one of the most significant factors in practice. Most children do need help in learning to focus their own awareness on what they are doing as they play. It is possible, and so easy for them, to be a sort of "middle man" between teacher and parent. Teacher tells parent what must be done; parent sees that child does it. Bill Starr describes the child in such a situation as a passive, non-observer, totally uninvolved. Passive, uninvolved practice impedes progress! (E.g. It is much more helpful to the students progress if he/she is asked to watch to see if a bow is straight, to stop to see if he/she sees it crooked, and to see how few stops he/she needs to make during the song to be played, etc.)

3. The third and final phase of skill acquisition is automatic execution. When the notes, bows, and movement patterns are largely automatic, the musician can concentrate on interpretation.)

4. Show That You Value Your Child's Practice Time

Try to set aside a time (or times) each day that you and your child know is (are) just for practice. You might consider turning off the TV, turning on the phone answering machine (or taking the receive of the hook), having alternative activities for potential distracting siblings, and doing anything else possible to give your child's practice your undivided, calm, attention. Enjoy your child's practice. It can be precious time shared!

Allow time enough to arrive promptly (maybe even early) to your child's private and group lessons. Siblings are welcome and may listen while they engage in quiet activities. Refrain from doing knitting or needlepoint, reading a book, or any other activity however worthy - that demonstrates some inattention to your child's lesson.

5. Take notes at your child's lessons:

As we listen to a lesson, we may think that we can remember exactly what the teacher is asking for in daily practise; reality teaches us that in the complexity of daily living, we have so much to remember in so many areas that having written notes to jog our memory is helpful. Refer to the lesson notes during the week. Sometimes the use of the teacher's terminology in practise situations at home can help the student remember "how it felt" at the lesson.

6. Tape record your child's lessons

Recording the lesson does not replace note taking; however, it can be extremely helpful. In some situations, the lesson tape should be heard by the student once or twice during the week between lessons. This is particularly helpful for more advanced students who are moving toward increased independence in their lessons.

7. Follow the teacher's instructions carefully

Not because the teacher is an infallible expert, but because the teacher can only gauge how well his/her ideas work for your child if the instructions are followed exactly. Let the teacher know if there are things that you do not understand or that you have trouble implementing. Keep your teacher informed of what works well for your child.

8. Remember Suzuki's rule - One teacher at a time, please.

You are the teacher at home; the teacher is the teacher at lessons. There is sometimes a fine line between being attentive and responsive to your child and distracting from what the teacher is doing. During lessons, try not to indicate displeasure by frowning, gasping, groaning or commenting on your child's performance. Remain calm. Let the teacher establish a working relationship with your child. Enjoy.

9. Include review as a part of daily practise

After your first child learned to say "Mama" you didn't say, O. K., now that you can say that, we'll put it aside and learn something else. You built on continued repetitions of their first words to develop new vocabulary. So it is with Suzuki violin. New skills are built on the foundation of skills learned in the first few pieces.

10. Appreciate each small success.

Dr. Suzuki preferred not to use the word patience in referring to our working with the children, because he felt that it implied controlled frustration. Learn to genuinely enjoy the accomplishment of each step rather than to just be patient with your child. Each skill in the method is purposely broken down into its smallest components; what seems like a minute step to an observer may be a MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT for a small child. You can expect some steps to take what seems like an agonizing amount of time. The more success your child feels at the first small steps, the more courage he/she will have to take on big ones later.

11. Do Not Compare Your Child with Others

This goes for comparisons among siblings, classmates and friends. DO NOT COMPARE, PERIOD! Because each child is a unique individual, you do your child a grave injustice by comparing his/her progress to Patty's quickness or Peter's slowness. Not only will each child learn at a different rate, but that rate will change from time to time with each child. Some children start slowly and speed up; some start like meteors and slow down. Some start at a snail's pace and stay that way; some move like lightening the whole way. Some children move like bumper cars - now slow, now fast, now slow. Your two criteria for child's progress should be:

1. Is my child working to capacity without feeling undue pressure?
2. Does he/she feel good about his/her progress?

If you see a problem in your child in one or both areas mentioned above, make arrangements to talk with your teacher when the child is not present.

9. Special Features of the Suzuki Method

Parent Involvement

When a child learns to talk, parents function very effectively as teachers. Parents also have an important role as "home teachers" as a child learns an instrument. In the beginning, one parent often learns to play before the child, so that s/he understands what the child is expected to do. The parent attends the child's lessons and the two practice daily at home.

Early Beginning

The early years are crucial for developing mental processes and muscle coordination in the young child. Children's aural capacities are also at their peak during the years of language acquisition, and this is an excellent time to establish musical sensitivity. Listening to music should begin at birth and formal training may begin at age three or four, though it is never too late to begin.

Listening

Children learn to speak in an environment filled with language. Parents can also make music part of the child's environment by attending concerts and playing recordings of the Suzuki repertoire and other music. This enables children to absorb the language of music just as they absorb the sounds of their mother tongue. With repeated listening to the pieces they will be learning, children become familiar with them and learn them easily.

Repetition

When children have learned a word, they don't discard it but continue to use it while adding new words to their vocabulary. Similarly, Suzuki students repeat the pieces they learn, gradually using the skills they have gained in new and more sophisticated ways as they add to their repertoire. The introduction of new technical skills and musical concepts in the context of familiar pieces makes their acquisition much easier.

Encouragement

As with language, the child's efforts to learn an instrument should be met with sincere praise and encouragement. Each child learns at his/her own rate, building on small steps so that each one can be mastered. This creates an environment of enjoyment for child, parent and teacher. A general atmosphere of generosity and cooperation is also established as children are encouraged to support the efforts of other students.

Learning with Other Children

Music promotes healthy social interaction, and children are highly motivated by participating in group lessons and performances in addition to their own individual lessons. They enjoy observing other children at all levels-aspiring to the level of more

advanced students, sharing challenges with their peers, and appreciating the efforts of those following in their footsteps.

Graded Repertoire

Children do not practice exercises to learn to speak, but learn by using language for communication and self-expression. With the Suzuki method, students learn musical concepts and skills in the context of the music rather than through dry technical exercises. The Suzuki repertoire for each instrument presents a careful sequence of building blocks for technical and musical development. This standard repertoire provides strong motivation, as younger students want to play music they hear older students play.

Delayed Reading

Children are taught to read only after their ability to speak has been well established. In the same way, Suzuki students develop basic competence on their instruments before being taught to read music. This sequence of instruction enables both teacher and student to focus on the development of good posture, beautiful tone, accurate intonation, and musical phrasing. (Ed. Note: At SuzukiMusic, re-reading and beginning reading skills are often introduced at an earlier stage.)

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10. Make-up Lessons From An Economist's Point of View

I'm a parent of children enrolled in Suzuki music lessons. I'd like to explain to other parents why I feel - quite strongly, actually - that it is unreasonable of we parents to expect our teachers to make up lessons we miss, even if I know as well as they do just how expensive lessons are, and, equally importantly, how important that weekly contact is with the teacher to keeping practicing ticking along smoothly. I think that it is natural for we parents to share the point of view that students should have their missed lessons rescheduled, but if we were to 'walk a mile' in our teachers' shoes, we might change our minds about what it is reasonable for us to expect of our teachers.

Like many parents, I pay in advance for lessons each term. In my mind, what this means is that I have reserved a regular spot in the busy schedules of my sons' teachers. I understand - fully - that if I can't make it to the lesson one week (perhaps my son is sick, or we are away on holiday, or there is some other major event at school) then we will pay for the lesson, but that my teacher is under no obligation to find another spot for me that week, or to refund me for the untaught lesson. And this is the way it should be.

In my 'other life' I am an economist and teach at our local university. Students pay good money to attend classes at the university; but if they don't come to my lecture on a Monday morning, then I am not going to turn around and deliver them a private tutorial on Tuesday afternoon. When I go to the store and buy groceries, I may purchase something that doesn't get used. Days or months later, I end up throwing it out. I don't get a refund from the grocery store for the unused merchandise. If I sign my child up for swimming lessons at the local pool, and s/he refuses to return

after the first lesson, I can't get my money back. So there are lots of situations in our everyday lives where we regularly pay in advance for goods or some service, and if we end up not using what we have purchased, we have to just 'swallow our losses'. On the other hand, if I purchase an item of clothing, and get home and change my mind, I can take it back and expect either a refund or a store credit.

So why do I believe that music lessons fall into the first category of 'non-returnable merchandise', rather than into the second case of 'exchange privileges unlimited' (which I think is one of the advertising slogans of an established women's clothing store!)? Speaking now as an economist, I would claim that the reason is that items like clothing are 'durable goods' - meaning, they can be returned and then resold at the original price - whereas music lessons are non-durable goods - meaning, once my Monday slot at 3:30 is gone, my son's teacher can't turn around and sell it again. The only way she would be able to give him a lesson later in the week would be if she were to give up time that she had scheduled for her own private life; and that seems pretty unreasonable - I can't think of many employees who would be thrilled if their bosses were to announce that they couldn't work from 3:30 to 4:30 this afternoon, but would they please stay until 6:30 on Thursday, because there will be work for them then!

Many teachers hesitate to refuse our request to shift lesson times (because our busy schedules *do* change), because unless they keep us parents happy, we will decide to take our child somewhere else for lessons (or to drop musical study), and they will lose part of their income. This is particularly true in areas with lower average income, where it can be particularly difficult to find students. So rather than telling us that 'well, actually, the only time when I'm not teaching and that you can bring your son for lesson is during the time I set aside each week to go for a long soul-cleansing walk, and I *can't* do that on Monday at 3:30 when you should have turned up', they agree to teach us at a time that really doesn't suit their schedule. Teachers who are 'nice' in this way often, in the long run, end up exhausted, and feeling exploited; they try to draw a line in the sand. However, too few parents ask to switch only when absolutely necessary, and too many parents want lesson times when it suits them this week, which is not the same time that suited last week. If the conflict arises because my child is in the School play, and they have their dress rehearsal during his lesson time, then I feel that I must choose between the two activities, and if he attends the dress rehearsal my private lesson teacher doesn't owe me anything.

During May, my eldest son will be missing three lessons because he is going to accompany me on a trip to New Zealand to visit his great-grandparents. I do not expect my son's teacher to refund me for those missed lessons, or to reschedule them by 'doubling up' lessons in the weeks before or after our departure. Since there will be lots of advanced notice, I might ask her to consider preparing a special 'practice tape' for that period, or to answer my questions via e-mail, but if she doesn't have the time (the second half of April is going to be really busy for her, and she wouldn't be able to do the tape until more or less the week we left) and so has to refuse, then that's fine. I certainly don't expect her to credit me with three make-up lessons; there is no way for her to find a student to fill a three-week hole in her schedule during our absence. Instead, I hope that she will enjoy the extra hour of rest during those three weeks, and that we will all feel renewed enthusiasm when we return to lessons at the end of the trip.

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Note: SuzukiMusic policy is that lessons missed by the student are not made up. Any lessons cancelled by the teacher will be made up at a time mutually convenient to parent and teacher.

11. Taking Notes at Lessons: Practical Tips for Parents

By Heidi Ehie

Continuity is a crucial part of learning an instrument, and the link that provides continuity between lessons and practice is your precious notes! Having been a Suzuki parent, I know that in a busy day sometimes you sink into the chair at the lesson and think, "Ah, 30 minutes of down time." Then you find yourself daydreaming, and before you know it the lesson is over. You glance down at your notebook, and see "Review Allegro" ... hmmm, not much to work with. You hear your teacher compliment your child on the lesson, but you are not exactly sure what went on.

At this point you may ask your teacher, "What shall we practice this week?" This will probably get a somewhat annoyed response as the teacher thinks, "OK, do I have to re-run the entire lesson at fast forward?" although she's glad you at least asked. Or you don't ask and figure you'll just get through practice somehow.

Helpful Hints

While you may need some clarification at the end of the lesson, the teacher expects you to pick out major points for practice during the lesson. Here are some tips:

1. Look for a theme, especially with very young children. There is what Suzuki teachers call the "one point lesson." If you hear the same aspect mentioned again and again, circle it at the top of your notes (i.e., thumb position, clear high notes, where is your foot, D's correct).
2. In review songs, what is the teacher's focus? Sometimes it is just a fun warm-up, but more often there is a specific goal. Children do not like mind-numbing repetition. Find the teaching point in the review (i.e., beautiful E's, breathing, fingering D to C, air use on high notes, etc.).
3. Write down how to do things. "Last two measures of Minuet I" is not enough. How did the teacher break it up? Did you follow the process so it can be duplicated at home? (I.e., do this small group 5 times with no slurs, then add slurs, then speed up, then link to the next section through the A, be careful of the C#.)
4. In scales and exercises, try to notice how they are worked on (i.e., fruit salad, slur patterns, speed, position or tone aspects). Just writing "Do F Major scale" is usually not enough.
5. If you can't follow where we are in the music, make a copy of the piece as your own study copy. Whether you read music or not, you'll find this makes a huge difference.
6. Listen for cues. Your teacher is constantly aware of your presence—and how mentally present you are. Whenever you hear the word "practice," heads up!

Also listen for colorful language: sail your tone out the skylight, staccatos like hammering little nails, BIG beach ball bouncing." Try to use these words again in the practice. Listen for location phrases: "in the last measure of that line, where it starts on B flat and goes up, where it says crescendo." These location tips are often for your benefit, as the teacher and student already know where they are working.

7. Observe and adore your child. Relish the chance to do this. Watch body language, facial expressions, how your child learns, what feelings flicker past. It's very interesting, and you may find something to talk about later, or you may just cherish the memory 10 years from now. However, keep your reactions, especially negative ones, to yourself during the lesson.
8. Need time to space out? O.K. There are times you can, like when the teacher goes off on a long technical workout and you already have the gist of what is being done. But listen for cue words to bring you back to attention.
9. Help your teacher: Put all materials recently used on the stand at the beginning of the lesson. Ask for clarification of practice tasks at end of lesson. Ask about review if your teacher did not mention it. Try not to do noisy things like rattle newspapers, tear checks, crinkle cellophane, etc. It's easy to forget that listening captures all sounds—and we are listening. Bring up general practice or schedule problems at the beginning of the lesson. Starting these important and timely conversations at the end of the lesson can wreak havoc with the teacher's attempt to stay on time. Keep the teacher informed about events that may affect the child in a significant way (moving, illness, divorce, school troubles, etc.). These things have an impact which the teacher observes, and wants to respond to appropriately. Lengthy explanations are not needed, but a word will enable the teacher to respond in a sensitive, effective way.
10. How can your teacher help you? We want your feedback ... let us know how to make your job easier!

12. The Million Dollar Lesson

By Ed Kreitman

The million dollar lesson is designed to help young students learn what is and is not appropriate lesson behaviour. In my experience teaching, I have found that most young children eventually decide to "test the water" of lesson behaviour to see exactly what they can get away with. When this happens, the parent and teacher have the opportunity to teach the child that it is alright to manipulate the lesson, wasting everyone's valuable time, and the parent's money, or we can teach the child that inappropriate lesson behaviour is unacceptable.

First let's define inappropriate lesson behaviour. Hiding under a desk, in the corner or under the piano is inappropriate lesson behaviour. Clinging to mother's skirt with a thumb stuck in the mouth is inappropriate lesson behaviour. Acting bratty, and refusing to cooperate with the teacher is inappropriate lesson behaviour. Having an all out temper tantrum in the middle of the studio because you don't want to play *Lightly Row* is inappropriate lesson behaviour.

If we allow this type of activity to go on in our studios, the child will learn that he or she is able to control the lesson. I have had several who whined for 25 minutes until the next student showed up, then threw a temper tantrum because it was time to go and they couldn't have a lesson. This type of thing never happens in my studio anymore. Years ago, I learned from my mentor, Jeanne Luedke, that we need to address this situation even before it happens. With every new parent that enters my studio, part of the parent education is to discuss exactly how we will handle any situation dealing with appropriate lesson behaviour. Our goal is to train the child quickly and easily to have a productive lesson. I tell the parent that eventually, the child will come to the lesson and be tired, or fussy, or just decide that today is the day to test the perimeters of my patience, and pull something that is inappropriate. When that happens, the parent and I have a plan. First the parent is asked to take the child outside of the studio and have a talk. See if perhaps they need a drink, bathroom break, or whatever, to try to get it together. If this does not work, we agree that the parent will remove the child from the studio immediately, with no discussion. I usually say something like, "looks like today is the day" with a smile. The effectiveness of this lesson is lost if there is discussion or delay. The child needs to experience that hiding under the desk this minute produces the result of being in the car on the way home the next minute. The important part about having this plan set up in advance with the parent is that there is no anger on the part of the teacher, and no embarrassment on the part of the parent. We are simply going through the motions together of a necessary routine which will bring about a very positive change in the child's behaviour.

I would say that almost every child I have taught has had the million dollar lesson once. A few have had it twice, and if a child needs to have it a third time. I usually suggest to the parent that the child is not quite ready for formal instruction, and perhaps a break period of 3 to 6 months might be advised.

Incidentally, I call this the million dollar lesson, because one time as the mother was taking her screaming child out the door, she asked over her shoulder if there would

be a makeup, or a refund for the lesson. Without thinking, I replied, "Oh no, you are definitely getting your money's worth this week. This is the MILLION DOLLAR LESSON."

And you know what? That girl played Bruch Violin Concerto on the solo recital last Sunday.

13. How To Help Your Child At The Home Practice

By Lorraine Fink

Practice regularly, every day - seven days a week - no matter how many other demands present themselves.

Play the artist's recording of the music being learned. Do this casually, several times a day, without concern for whether the children are listening attentively.

The age of your child will be a major factor in your approach to practice. If your child is a pre-schooler, keep the element of a game in high priority since learning takes place best when an activity is fun.

Let your child have some say about the schedule for daily practice. Make a chart showing the times that you have both agreed to and post it as a reminder.

Be enthusiastic yourself about practice time!

Find an interesting practice routine that will cover the tasks to be done. List the assignments for the week and decide in what order they will be practiced. This can be done by using a prepared chart, by drawing lottery cards, or by some other system.

Precious moments between parent and child for making music and working together should not have to be shared with a younger sibling. Make special arrangements if necessary.

Know (ask your teacher) what is reasonable to expect. Children learn at different rates but excessive demands (or leniency) as a regular diet will create tensions and disinterest.

Actively involve your child in determining specifically what is to be learned and how to go about it. Do not tell him what the teacher said - ask him.

Learn how to work in very small steps - one note, two notes, a measure. Connect one small step to another and rejoice in the progress.

Motivate your student by making a chart that shows his progress. Be creative!

Tape your practice sessions. The child hears himself. You hear yourself. You are both sure to get some objective feedback.

Learning the notes, fingering and other technicalities is the beginning of study for a musical piece. Only through mastery will it contribute to the building of permanent skills.

Never begin work on a new piece unless your teacher has suggested or approved it.

Be generous with encouraging remarks, even though a good effort may not have produced successful results. Treat "praise" with caution, avoid verbalizing irritation and reward your child with your love and appreciation.

As you advance in the repertoire, spend more and more time reviewing and improving the pieces learned.

Once or twice a week, give a home concert for the parent who does not usually supervise the practice sessions. Include bowing and applause.

Sense when a practice session is over. It is more important to return to the instrument with joy and enthusiasm than to force a few extra minutes today.

14. Notes for parents about the “Parent’s Daily Dozen” practice chart

By Stephanie Judy

The “Parent’s Daily Dozen” practice chart was developed in response to a discussion in 2001 on the Suzuki-Chat e-mail list about what teachers can do to help parents gain better skills at being a practice coach or “home teacher.” One parent—who was in considerable distress at that moment—said that she wished there was a practice chart for parents. Bingo! The idea was born. Vicky Barham of Ottawa and I volunteered to draft a parent’s practice chart, and this is the result. After being discussed and revised via Suzuki-Chat, it was tested at various Suzuki Institutes and in several teachers’ studios, with both teachers and parents reporting that it was useful.

I would like to ask you to use this chart for 8 weeks. During the “parent time” in group class, we’ll discuss how it’s working for you. The spaces under each item are for you to jot down any comments, questions, or reminders to yourself. There’s a streamlined version (without the extra spaces), that I’ll give you after you’ve used this one for two or three weeks.

Some general notes about practicing

For most children younger than about 12, taking music lessons and learning to play an instrument is primarily the parent’s commitment.

Some children are enthusiastic, some are not. No child is aware of the challenges ahead. Every child needs the parent’s consistent, loving support to meet those challenges day after day.

The first year is the hardest. You may encounter some rocky times—you may even regret that you got started! Hang in there! If things get really rugged, phone me or phone an experienced parent to get some ideas and encouragement. During the first year, we are not so much teaching the child how to play the violin as we are teaching the parent to understand how your child learns . . . not how children in general learn, but how your own child learns best.

In Suzuki violin practice, the relationship of the parent to the child is very much like the parent/child relationship in learning to cross a street. At first, the parent has total responsibility, and the child has none—the child simply goes along for the ride, in arms, in a stroller, or in a backpack. Gradually, however, the child begins assuming more and more “street-crossing” responsibility—first by holding the parent’s hand instead of being carried, and then by walking beside the parent without holding hands. At some point, the child learns to look for cars and helps decide when it’s safe to cross, and so forth. As the years go by, the parent very gradually relinquishes responsibility to the child.

Violin practice is the same way. **You will “carry” your child for a long time**—maybe weeks, maybe months, maybe years. You will see to it that the practice happens and you will ensure that the environment is positive, (although you can certainly enlist your child’s help). If you and I do our jobs well, then, little by little, your child will take over responsibility. By the time your child is 12 or 13, he or she will likely be

practicing independently, and—I can promise you this—you will look back and feel that it was worth the effort.

Some specific notes about the “Parent’s Daily Dozen”

1. Please let your child hear the Suzuki book level recording a minimum of three times each day (about an hour in total). *Daily listening is the single factor that is most strongly correlated to a student’s success in a Suzuki program.*
2. Make practicing a routine event that happens at the same time every day. Pick a time when your child is reasonably alert but also calm. In most families, it’s best to set a practice time *as early as possible in the day* so that if it doesn’t happen, you still have time left in the day to do it. It’s also a good idea to tie practicing to another inevitable daily event—“After lunch, we practice.” *The hardest part of practicing is getting the violin out of the case* and making it ready to play. Find a special corner of your house where you can keep the things you need—violin, Suzuki book, your notebook, music stand, music dictionary, electronic tuner, metronome, whatever “gear” you use. You will be spending a lot of time in this space, so make it inviting and special: add a vase of flowers or put up some photos of composers and violinists—including your child!
3. Before the practice starts—earlier in the day, if you can—jot some notes about what you plan to accomplish. If it helps you to use a practice task chart (for your child), by all means do so.
4. Children often dislike changing from one activity to another. A bit of warning helps smooth the way: “In 10 minutes, it will be time to practice. Find a stopping place in your book/game/puzzle.”
5. If you aren’t in the habit of bowing to begin and end your practices, it may feel awkward or unnatural the first few times. That’s OK. Just do it anyway. If you have any questions about why Suzuki students bow to their teacher and their parent, please ask me.
6. A parent’s attention is a precious commodity for a child. Practicing together gives you an opportunity to offer undivided attention to your child every day. Your child will take cues from you about the value of practicing. If you give it only a quarter of your attention, your child is not likely to develop much commitment to it, either. (Use common sense, of course. You’re not expected to ignore the urgent needs of a younger sibling or let a pot boil over!)
7. The key word here is effort. You are acknowledging effort—not achievement. (Achievement will come through effort, and never without it). You can show appreciation non-verbally by smiling, nodding, giving a “thumbs up,” applauding, tapping your foot or swaying in time to your child’s music, or closing your eyes and listening intently.
8. **This is the real key to productive, contented practices.** Your child is working hard and, at times, really struggling. He or she will get discouraged and frustrated from time to time. Your child has a limited understanding of the process; you are the adult, and are able to take a longer view. A “one-point practice” means that you focus on *one thing at a time*. Avoid, for example, saying, “That was pretty good but your wrist was bent and the C# was too low and your pinky was straight on

the bow and you're supposed to use stopped bows and you forgot to play the repeat." OVERLOAD! Instead, pick the *one* thing that will make the most difference in the child's playing. This may well be something that was emphasized in the lesson. If you're not sure what to focus on, start at the top of this list and work down: (1) balanced playing position, (2) beautiful tone, (3) perfect intonation.

9. Many children get frustrated when they feel that they don't have any control over the situation. Give your child every choice that you reasonably can. She doesn't get to choose whether or not to practice, and whether or not to play F# in tune, but she can choose which review piece she wants to play first, and whether she'd like to do scales at the beginning or end of the practice.
10. Any time you are focussing on tone—on the beauty of the sound—you are practicing tonalization. I will usually assign a specific practice for tonalization.
11. Book 1 students review every piece every day. I'll give review lists to students in Book 2 and up.
12. As often as possible, end the practice when the child is happy and enthusiastic, or end it with something the child especially likes to do.
13. The last two items on the chart are for you and your child to summarize the day's practice. You can use this space in any way you like. You might want to rate the practice on a scale from 1 to 10, or give 1 to 5 stars (like a movie review). The space for your child's comment is extra big, so that your child can draw a happy face, put on a sticker, or write a few words—whatever seems appropriate.

HOME PRACTICE ~ A PARENT'S DAILY DOZEN- *Photocopy and use*

Name _____ For the week of _____

1. *Listening*—I played the recording today. (How many times?—show a tally or a number.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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2. *Setting a practice time*—We agreed in advance on a time for today's practice (✓). We practiced at the scheduled time (S) or at some other time (O).

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3. *Preparing*—I prepared for today's practice by . . .

- gathering the equipment and materials we need,
- consulting the notes I made at the last lesson, and
- making a list, plan, or practice chart.

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4. *Initiating the practice*—I gave my child some warning before calling him/her to practice.

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5. *"Bracketing" the practice*—We began and ended our practice with a bow.

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6. *Giving practice a high priority*—I gave our practice time a high priority. I gave my child my full attention, and did not answer the phone or do other tasks during practice time.

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7. *Offering encouragement*—I expressed sincere appreciation for my child's efforts, both verbally and non-verbally.

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8. *Creating a positive environment*—I created a positive environment today by . . .
- focussing on what my child *can* do,
 - pointing out the things that my child does well,
 - having a “one-point practice,” and
 - staying calm, and responding constructively to any frustration or resistance.

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List some of the specific things that your child did well this week:

9. *Giving choices*—My child made some choices about how and what to practice today.

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10. *Tonalization*—Our practice included tonalization.

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11. *Review*—Our practice included review (/ = partial review, X = complete review).

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12. *Ending the practice*—We ended the practice on a positive note.

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PARENT’S SUMMARY: What was today’s practice like?

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STUDENT’S SUMMARY: How did your practice partner do today?

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How did you do today?

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

HOME PRACTICE ~ A PARENT'S DAILY DOZEN	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. <i>Listening</i> : I played the recording ____ times today.							
2. <i>Setting a time</i> : We agreed in advance on a time for today's practice.							
3. <i>Preparing</i> : I prepared for today's practice.							
4. <i>Initiating the practice</i> : I gave my child warning before practice time.							
5. <i>"Bracketing" the practice</i> : We began/ended our practice with a bow.							
6. <i>Parent's priority</i> : I gave our practice time a high priority.							
7. <i>Encouragement</i> : I expressed sincere appreciation for my child's efforts.							
8. <i>Positive environment</i> : I created a positive environment for practicing.							
9. <i>Giving choices</i> : My child made choices about how/what to practice.							
10. <i>Tonalization</i> : Our practice included tonalization.							
11. <i>Review</i> : Our practice included review (/ = partial, X = complete).							
12. <i>Ending the practice</i> : We ended the practice on a positive note.							
PARENT'S SUMMARY: What was today's practice like?							
STUDENT'S SUMMARY: How did your practice partner do today?							
STUDENT'S SUMMARY: How did you do today?							

15. Why Should A Child Study Music?

Music is a Science

It is exact, specific, and it demands exact acoustics. A conductor's full score is a chart, a graph that indicates frequencies, volume exchanges, melody, and harmony all at once and with the most exact control of time.

Music is Mathematical

It is rhythmically based on the subdivisions of time into fractions that must be done instantaneously not worked out on paper.

Music is a Foreign Language

Most of the terms are in Italian, German or French, and the notation is certainly not English - but a highly developed kind of shorthand that uses symbols to represent ideas. The semantics of music is the most complete and universal language.

Music is History

Music usually reflects the environment and times of its creation often even the country and/or racial feeling.

Music is Physical Education

It requires fantastic coordination of fingers, hands, arms, lip, cheek and facial muscles, in addition to extraordinary control of the diaphragmatic, back, stomach, and chest muscles, which respond instantly to the sound the ear hears and the mind interprets.

Music is all these things but most of all, Music is Art

It allows a human being to take all these dry, technically boring (but difficult), techniques and use them to create emotion. That is one that science cannot duplicate: humanism, feeling, emotion, call it what you will.

That is why Music should be studied-

Not because the child is expected to major in music

Not because the child is expected to play or sing always

Not so the child can relax

Not only so the child can have fun

But -

So the child will be human

So the child will recognize beauty

So the child will be sensitive

So the child will be closer to an infinite beyond this world

So the child will have something to cling to

So the child will have more love, more compassion,
more gentleness, more good - in short, more life

Of what value will it be to prepare the child to make a prosperous living unless the child also learns how to live?

That is why Music should be studied

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PMEA News,

Official publication of the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association

16. Musicians and Teachers on the Meaning of Music in Their Lives

“Musicianship is the most direct expression of personality. Thus one way of perfecting musicianship is to conquer oneself, to rid oneself of meanness, to live the sort of life one can admire. Certainly no one ever reaches his ideal, but the act of striving does something to the spirit that can never be lost. Tone, technique, fleetness are never goals in themselves. They are simply the means by which the artist makes manifest those thoughts, feelings and aspirations for which he can never find words.”

Fritz Kreisler

“When I am teaching, I always keep three things in my mind: Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?”

Dorothy Delay

“Interpretation is the final goal of all instrumental study, its only raison d’être. Technique is merely the means to this end, the tool to be used in the service of artistic interpretation. For successful performance therefore, the possession of the technical tools alone is not sufficient. In addition, the player must understand the meaning of the music thoroughly, must have creative imagination and a personal approach to the work if his rendition is to be lifted above the dry and pedantic. His personality must be neither self-effacing nor aggressively obtruding.”

Ivan Galamian

“Listening to ourselves with the uttermost concentration is the first requisite for producing a singing tone.”

Adele Marcus

“I listen better if I play always from memory.”

Karl Schnabel

“ The greatest thing Leon Fleisher instilled in me was the importance of listening. You listen to the sounds you have just produced, and then the next time you try to produce what you hear in your inner ear. Figure out what it is that you really hear, and what you want to hear, and then what you need to do to achieve it.”

Andre Watts

17. Nonviolent Discipline Options

By Pam Kemp

Discipline, related to the word "disciple," implies learning from a master teacher. Like it or not, we parents are our children's primary master teachers. Expanding our repertoire of teaching techniques will enable us to tailor our choices to our child's age, temperament, learning history - and to our own values. Perhaps some of these options will work for you in your family.

Ignore the problem behaviour if it is not dangerous. Paying attention simply reinforces it so that it is more likely to happen in the future.

Redirect the child's attention to another activity.

Restructure the environment so as to remove or cut down on temptations for misbehaviour.

Pay attention to the positives. Try to reward constructive behaviour while ignoring troublesome behaviour.

Re-examine your expectations. Is it possible that the child's behaviour is age appropriate after all? Sometimes behaviours that frustrate parents - such as crying or wanting to "do it myself" - are a normal part of the learning process at a particular stage of development.

Use a time-out procedure. Calmly remove the out-of-control child to a boring but safe location. Briefly tell the child why the offending behaviour is not acceptable and that he must sit, doing nothing, in the time-out location until you say he may leave. One minute for each year of the child's age is a frequently recommended guideline in deciding how long to leave a child in time-out. Any yelling, arguing or tantruming results in the timer being restarted. At the conclusion of the time-out, let the matter drop - no nagging, no lecturing or recrimination. Expect to be tested at first. Remaining firm and calm is essential.

Examine your own behaviour. Is it possible that the child is responding to your own unclear expectations, confusing communications, threatening attitude or inconsistency? If so, a change of parental behavior is probably the quickest route to a change in the child's behaviour.

Less is more. When children become disruptive, it's tempting for the parent or caregiver to respond in kind - with loud voice, aggressive language and non-verbal signs of physical tension. Unfortunately, this often makes matters worse. Instead, find your calm center, establish eye contact, and lower your voice. Calm has a wonderful habit of breeding calm.

Touch. There are many kinds of touch that can help children restore order to their lives - a gentle hand on the shoulder, a stroke of the hair, a back rub. In our low-touch, fearful society, gentle touch carries within it a largely overlooked power.

Name the unacceptable behaviour. Although this seems obvious, sometimes parents simply assume that the child knows what she did wrong or that an admonition like "be nice" will provide enough direction. Don't assume. Instead, specifically state what is wrong and why. For example, a parent might say, "I will not allow you to stab your brother with your bow. That hurts."

Examine the environment for unacceptable behaviour models the child may be imitating. Did he hear that kind of language from Dad, from TV, from a friend? Does Mom pout and slam doors when she gets mad, too? With embarrassing accuracy, our children have a knack for emulating our most negative behaviours. Perhaps the child's models will need to change so the child may change more easily.

Permit logical consequences. Forgetting a homework assignment logically leads to poor grades on that assignment. Spending allowances right away logically leads to not having money to buy something she wants later in the week. Don't rescue the child. Let her learn from the consequences, with no "I-told-you-so's."

Reward positive behaviour with a tangible reinforcer, like a sticker or a favourite snack. We adults work for reinforcers (money) and children will too.

Give a choice, but be sure both alternatives are acceptable to you. "You may practice now or wait until after dinner. Which do you prefer?" Not practicing is not an option.

Invite the child to help figure out how to deal with the negative behaviour. Sometimes children, especially older ones, have surprisingly wise suggestions. Explain the problem and "Katie, for the last two or three weeks, you've been putting off doing your homework and then wanting to stay up past your bedtime to finish it. Now you're starting to complain of being tired all the time. How would you suggest dealing with this problem of procrastinating on homework?"

Hold a family meeting if other members are involved in or affected by the problem. Brainstorm solutions and, in consultation with the child, pick an approach that sounds helpful.

Remove a privilege, as a consequence to the behaviour. Try to pick a privilege that is meaningful to the child and has some logical connection to the behaviour. "If you do not get your homework done by 10 PM, you will not be permitted to watch TV the following night because you haven't used your time wisely."

Tell the child directly what you observe, think, feel, and want, using "I" statements. "When I see you abuse your instrument like that, I feel angry and worried about what damage you might do. I think you're old enough to find a better way of expressing your frustration. What ideas do you have?"

Use gentle - not berating - humour to put the situation in a new perspective for the child and you. Well-timed humour can turn a raging bull of a child into a laughing hyena faster than ten minutes of reasoning together.

Develop a nonverbal warning system for repetitive bad habits that the child may do without being aware of them. For example, when Mom tugs her earlobe, that might

mean, "Oops, you're biting your nails again." Scratching the head with two fingers crossed might mean, "Did you know that you're chewing with your mouth open?" Children who hate nagging will often accept nonverbal reminders as replacement.

Keep a behaviour count of the problem child and let the child establish a goal of how much to decrease that behaviour that week. Decide together on a treat, such as a special activity together, if the goal is met.

Help the child substitute an acceptable behaviour for an unacceptable behaviour. This strategy is built on the principle that it's unwise to take a behaviour away without providing a substitute.

Try to establish some physical links to emotional states and specific behaviours. For example, preschoolers can be taught that a certain piece of music means it's time to get quiet and calm. The lullaby and bedtime story routine means it's time to rest. Ringing a bell might mean it's time to come practice.

As a family, establish a list of rules and consequences. Don't make too many, and be sure to renegotiate them as the children get older. Making rules and consequences together helps the children feel a sense of ownership and assures parents that children truly do know the rules and consequences since they helped make them.

Look for causes and deal with them. For example, if a child has a tantrum when asked to practice, look at the context. Has his play been interrupted with no opportunity for a transition? If so, the tantrum might be prevented next time by giving the child a five-minute warning.

As our children's "master teachers," we must teach with consistency, wisdom and love from our expanded discipline repertoire.

(Reprinted from SAA Minijournal, Summer 1994)

18. Caring for your instrument

18.1. The Care of Stringed Instruments

By John Pohran

Some suggestions to make sure that your instruments last:

1. Avoid exposing instruments to extreme changes of temperature. Failure to do this could result in cracks, seams opening, collapse of fingerboard/neck, etc. Don't forget that violinmaker's glue will soften at high temperatures. Long periods of time in car trunks are dangerous both in the summer and winter for any string instruments.
2. Always watch that your bridge remains perpendicular to the top of the instrument. Normal tension will eventually "pull" the bridge towards the fingerboard. A knowledgeable teacher or repairman can fix this very easily. If your bridge is leaning dangerously to one side or another have it looked at...fast!
3. Never undo all of the strings at the same time. This could result in the soundpost (inside the instrument) falling over and needing professional re-setting. Under no circumstances ever attempt to tune an instrument when the sound post is missing - the bridge could push through the top of the instrument!
4. After you have finished playing, remove all rosin dust from your instrument. Not only will it eventually damage the varnish but it could also need special solvents to remove. Besides, a clean instrument always looks better.
5. Check your instrument for cracks occasionally. Seams do open from time to time. This is a way of relieving tension due to wood expansion. A qualified repairman can fix this easily - usually for a small charge.
6. If you clean your instrument, be sure to use only a high quality cleaning preparation that your teacher recommends. NEVER use any kind of furniture polish - this will permanently ruin your instrument.
7. When you put your bow away check to make sure that it isn't touching or rubbing the body of the instrument. If the case doesn't close easily check to see what might be getting in the way. Try reversing your bow in the case once in a while. Some case lids exert a pressure on the bow stick and may cause it to bend either to the left or right. Also when you store your instrument make sure that the case is right side up (bridge facing upwards).
8. If you are taking your instrument away for any long period of time be sure to have an extra set of strings in your case. Most strings that break tend to break when you least expect it.
9. Any repair work that has to be done should only be done by someone qualified to do such work. Your teacher can direct you in this area.

10. You own a wonderful instrument. Take care of it. Use common sense and it will last you for many, many years and give you hours of enjoyment!

18.2. Caring for Your Flute

To keep your flute in top condition, clean it after each time you play with a poly-cotton cloth and cleaning rod. Thread the cloth through the loop in the rod. Swab the inside of the instrument foot joint, body, and then head joint. Be sure to cover the entire rod so that it does not scratch the inside of your flute. You can alternatively use a flute swab (a cloth attached to a string with a weight on the end) that can be passed easily through the instrument.

Never give your flute a bath, put your flute in the dishwasher, or clean your flute with water! This will soak the pads under the keys and cork inside the head joint and call for immediate replacement. To remove fingerprints, or grime, use rubbing alcohol on a soft cloth. The alcohol will evaporate quickly enough to keep from damaging the pads.

Flutes should be have a 'clean, oil, and adjust' every two years to keep them in great shape. This can be done at their place of purchase, or by a flute repair specialist.

Online resources:

www.fluteworld.com – American store with reliable mail order service. Instruments, music scores, recordings, and accessories.

www.ottawaf flute.com – Ottawa Flute Association website. Information on concerts, workshops, teachers and classifieds page with instruments for sale. Always consult your teacher BEFORE purchasing an instrument.

www.larrykrantz.com – A wealth of information on flutes and flute playing. Also a flute listserve with discussions involving many prominent teachers and recording artists.

Ottawa resources:

St. John's Music – Area dealer for Yamaha flutes.

Long & McQuaid – Area dealer for Jupiter Prodigy flutes.

Leading Note – Fantastic local store owned and operated by a flute player! Great selection of scores. Special order service available.

Strings & Things – Suzuki flute materials, and supplementary materials for private lessons. Lots of accessories (metronomes, stands, etc.) with the best prices in the city. Available at Canterbury on group class Saturdays and in Blackburn Hamlet.

Tom Cross Flute Repair – (613) 241-5611 Very fine local flute repair specialist in Sandy Hill.

19. Resource List

Books

- Dorothy Briggs, **Your Child's Self-Esteem**. Doubleday & Co. Inc.
- David Elkind, **The Hurried Child**, Addison Wesley
- Masaru Ibuka, **Kindergarten is Too Late**.
- Edward Kreitman, **Teaching from the Balance Point**, Western Springs School of Talent Education
- Ray Landers, **The Talent Education School of Shinichi Suzuki** - An Analysis. Daniel Press
- Kay Slone, **They're rarely Too Young... and Never Too Old "To Twinkle."** Life Force Press
- Ed Sprunger, **Helping Parents Practice: Ideas for Making it Easier**. Yes Publishing
- William and Contance Starr, **To Learn with Love**, Summy-Birchard
- Shinichi Suzuki, **Ability from Age Zero**. Senzay
- Shinichi Suzuki, **Nurtured by Love**. Senzay
- Shinichi Suzuki, **Where Love is Deep**. World-Wide Press
- Craig Timmerman, **Journey Down the Kriesler Highway**. Ivory Palaces Publications
- Linda Wickes, **The Genius of Simplicity**. Summy-Birchard Music
- Charlene Wilson, **Teaching Suzuki Cello**, Diablo Press
- Phillis Young, **Playing the String Game**, University of Texas, Austin, Press

Magazines

American Suzuki Journal. Suzuki Association of the Americas, Inc., P.O. Box 17130, Boulder, Co., USA 80308, tel. 303-444-0948

Videos

Nurtured by Love - The Life and Work of Shinichi Suzuki. NBL Videos, 67 Alpha Drive, Cleveland, OH 44143

CD's

General Interest

Like Ducks, Performers Christina Smith & Jean Hewson, Label Borealis recording Co, 1998, Subject: Newfoundland Fiddling (cello, violin & guitar)

Les Cordes (& booklet), Label Aditions Gallimard Jeunesse, 1996
Subject: Story and music featuring instruments of the orchestra

Classics for Children, Performers Boston Pops with Arthur Fiedler, Label BMG Classics, 1995, Subject: Orchestral music

Le Nozze di Figaro, Subject: Opera Many recordings available

Vivaldi's Ring of Mystery
Beethoven Lives Upstairs
Mr. Bach Comes to Call
Tschaikowsky Discovers America
Mozart's Magic Fantasy

Label Classical Kids, Subject: Each CD highlights the music of one composer with interesting story lines. Ages 5-11

Leahy, Label Leahy Family - LFC 464, Subject: Canadian Toe Tapping Fiddle Tunes

Bending the Bows, Performers Eduard Minevich & Frank Leahy
Subject: More great fiddle music including the Bach Violin Concerto for two violins played in various styles: country, jazz and swing.

Hush, Performers Yo Yo Ma & Bobby McFerrin, Label: Sony Masterworks ST 48177
Subject: Short popular classical music pieces. For cello and voice presented in contemporary style.

The Brandenburg Concertos - JS Bach, Label: CBC SMCD 5028-2
Subject: Concertos for small chamber orchestra

The Magic Flute (Highlights), Performers Cast, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra/K. Böhm
Label: DGG 429-825-2, Subject: Opera

Four Last Songs - R. Strauss, Performer Elisabeth Schwartzkopf, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra/George Szell, Label: EMI CDC 472762

Violin

The Four Seasons – Vivaldi, Performers The Drottningholm Baroque Ensemble
Label: BIS CD 275

Bits & Pieces, Performer Itzhak Perlman
Label: EMI Classics 17777 5488 2 27, Content Contains La Folia & Fiocco Allegro etc.

Perlman and Zuckerman playing the Bach Double Violin Concerto, Bach A Minor Concerto and E Major Concerto, Label: EMI Classics CDC 7 46 856 2

Jascha Heifetz performing the **Bruch G Minor Violin Concerto** and Scottish Fantasy
Label: RCA 6214 - 2 - RC

Serenade For Strings Op 22 - A. Dvorak, Performer Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Label: Philips 400 020-2

Piano Quartet in A, "The Trout" - F. Schubert, Performer Andras Schiff/Members of the Hagen Quartet, Label London 411 975-2

Any of the **Kreisler Collections**

Viola

London Viola Sound, Label: Cala Records LTD 1995, Subject: 48 Violists of major symphony orchestras play collection of viola pieces

Music for Viola and Harp, Label: Marquis Classics 1994

Chaconne Music for Viola and Orchestra, Label: CBC Enterprises 1989

Cello

Works for Cello and Orchestra, Label: Vox 1991

Jacqueline du Pré/Lasting Inspiration, Label: EMI 1996

Jacqueline du Pré/Her Early BBC Recordings Vols. 1&2, Label: EMI 1989

Suites for Violincello Solo - JS Bach, by Anner Bylisma, Label: Sony Music 1992

Concerto for Cello Vol. 1 - Luigi Boccherini, Label: EBF Recording

Internet Email lists

(they are free, but you must "Subscribe")

Suzuki Chat email list - for teachers, parents and students.

<http://launch.groups.yahoo.com/group/suzukichat/>

An e-mail based discussion board where you can seek support from a worldwide Suzuki community.

Web Sites:

SuzukiMusic Web Resources List of Suzuki web sites

www.suzukimusic.ca

20. Music and Instrument Retailers

Always ask your teacher to approve instruments before you make your purchase. You can generally borrow two or three instruments to try out. Bring them with you to the lesson and have your teacher help you make the final selection. We recommend you consult your teacher before visiting any of the dealers on this list.

(In alphabetical order)

Guy Harrison

792 Gladstone Ave., Ottawa, ON

T. (613) 569-4803

www.guyharrison.com

Email guy@guyharrison.com

String instrument sales and repairs. One of Canada's most respected violin makers.

Long & McQuade

2631 Alta Vista Drive, Ottawa, ON

T. (613) 521-5909

Email ottawa@long-mcquade.com

Flute rentals and purchases, cello stools, electronic equipment, etc., dealer for Jupiter flutes, not recommended for flute repair.

Lorius Violin Studio

26 Pondsides Private, Ottawa, ON

T. (613) 842-4974

String instrument and bow repairs, sale of full-size instruments only.

Peter Mach

309 Eardley Road, Gatineau, QC

T. (819) 684-3886

www.machonerest.com

Email pmach@cyberus.ca

Cello and violin maker and restorer, Mach One shoulder rests.

The Sound Post

1-319 Catherine St., Ottawa, ON

T. 1 (613) 422-4415, F. (613) 421-1151

www.thesoundpost.com

Email ottawa@thesoundpost.com

String instruments and accessories, Suzuki music supplies, sheet music, reading material for parents.

St John's Music

1771 Carling Avenue, Ottawa, ON

T. (613) 722-1021

*Flute rental and purchase, flute repair, *dealer for Yamaha flutes.*

Strings and Things

Anna Gut
27 Highpark Crescent, Blackburn Hamlet, ON
T. (613) 841-5821
www.stringsandthings.ca
Email: stringsandthings@rogers.com

*Present at Canterbury on group class Saturdays. *Musical accessories and books.*

The Leading Note

370 Elgin Street, Suite #2, Ottawa, ON
T. (613) 569-7888, T. 1 (866) 569-7888, F. (613) 569-8555
www.leadingnote.com
Email leadingnote@on.aibn.com
Suzuki music supplies and sheet music.

Tom Cross Flute Repair

T. (613) 241-5611
Email tomcross@fastmail.fm
Flute repairs.

Wilder and Davis

257 Rachel Street East, Montreal, QC
T. 1 (888) 419-9453 F. (514) 289-9894
www.wilderdavis.com
Email info@wilderdavis.com
Instruments.

SuzukiMusic website: lists instruments for sale.