



Twinkling The Ivories

March 2009

Family Support at ESPS

"...The fate of a child is in the hands of his parents." - Shinichi Suzuki

Edmonton Suzuki Piano School (ESPS) structures its programming based upon the philosophy of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki. Dr. Suzuki's approach to learning requires a strong parental commitment and involvement in the educational process – parents are a key cornerstone of the Suzuki triangle.

This year, ESPS made a strong commitment to begin the process of better supporting families in their efforts to learn and practice with their children. We began the school year by providing our members with family tote bags. The bags came with a practice binder designed to encourage successful note-taking and practices. Parents also received a practice die with ideas for games and activities to try during practices and a copy of *First Class Tips for Suzuki Parents*, a book chock full of ideas to promote success in practicing.

For new families, we began to redevelop our Parent Class to make it easier to attend and take home practical and usable information. We also began to offer the classes more frequently and included the fee for attendance within the annual registration fee. Our next class is on Saturday, April 25th at Suzuki Charter School. If you are a relatively new family and haven't had the chance to attend this workshop, please contact Administrator Kim Green at 780.488.0548

More recently, ESPS teachers and Board members met at the Gramophone and began the fun task of building a lending resource library for Suzuki families. In this trip, teachers chose CD and DVD selections as diverse as *Beethoven: The Complete Piano Sonatas* and *Stephen Hough's Spanish Album* for ESPS families to borrow.

Ask your teacher to see what s/he has in the studio or check out the full inventory of what's available for lending at www.edmontonsuzukipiano.ca



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Practice Binder Tip:

Continually ask your child to evaluate his/her own playing.

"Was that right?"

"Did your left hand remember to use the correct fingering in measure 3?"

Don't do the thinking for your child – train him/her to do it.

Marilyn Andersen, MasterTeacher, 2008 ESPS Fall Institute

Annual General Meeting

The Board of Directors is holding its next General Meeting on Wednesday, March 25, 2009. If you have questions about ESPS, would like to meet the volunteers who form our Board, or are interested in getting involved yourself, then we'd love to see you there!

8 PM, March 25, 2009
Suzuki Charter School
(7211-96 A Avenue)
Refreshments will be served

Register for the SPRING FESTIVAL

Our Edmonton Suzuki Piano annual Spring Festival is coming soon. Saturday, April 18 is the date and parents should already have received registration forms. They need to be filled out and returned to your teacher by March 28th.

Our Suzuki festival is both a performance and educational opportunity. It is non-competitive, meaning that the adjudicating teacher will evaluate and comment on the students performances but will not give out any grades or placing (1st or 2nd etc.) The students are placed in classes of three to five students according to what piece they are playing, what book they are in, and their age. Each student prepares a piece and polishes it to their highest level of excellence as possible and performs it in the class for the visiting teacher to evaluate and make written comments. These comments typically include suggestions for further study, practice tips, and encouragement.

The festival is a wonderful opportunity to hear other students perform as well. Without a doubt, students and parents learn much and are inspired and encouraged by hearing the performances and adjudications of the other students in their class. Also, teachers strongly encourage and urge students and parents to take in at least one additional class at the festival, if not the whole day!

This year, we are most fortunate to have two adjudicators that some of us are already quite well-acquainted with. Ms. Anne Haywood was a teacher with ESPS for many years before retiring and moving to New Westminster, BC. She will be coming back to Edmonton for our festival. It will be a real treat for us all to enjoy her company and expertise again. Mr. Joseph Fridman is a renowned teacher and performer who now lives in Edmonton and teaches at the Alberta Music Academy. We were inspired by him at our festival two years ago, and we enthusiastically anticipate having him adjudicate again this year.

Ruth Johnson, ESPS teacher

Boost Your Brain – Read a Book!

Ability Development From Age Zero – Shinichi Suzuki

\$12, available for purchase at ESPS

Ability Development From Age Zero, written by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, is a very heartfelt book, whose central theme is that the fate of a child is in the hands of the parents. Dr. Suzuki emphasizes that a warm and nurturing environment is conducive to any child becoming a happy, loving, and talented human being. The book includes many real life situations experienced by Dr. Suzuki to convey his method of teaching. It really opened up my eyes and encouraged me to self-reflect on my life and role as a parent. I highly recommend this book to all parents.

Phuong Chau, ESPS parent

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Graduations

Congratulations to the following students for their hard work and well-deserved graduations:

Volume 1

Novin Kong

Noah McEachern

Volume 2

Tiffany Kung

Volume 3

Yuri Kohan

Volume 4

Jeff Cork

Bridget Sham

Vincent Wong

Volume 6

Adrian Aschenbrenner

Congratulations to the parents and teachers as well for enabling and supporting the students