



Twinkling The Ivories

June 2013

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Living the Suzuki Lifestyle

The Suzuki method has been a rewarding and wonderful experience for our family. We currently have 3 children studying piano – the eldest daughter has been playing for 5 years, the eldest son for 3 years, the youngest daughter for 2 years, and we have a 3 year old who wants to start! The eldest is in Book 3 and the youngest in Book 1. Whew! Life is busy with 4 children – but the question I am often asked is how our family makes the Suzuki method work. Some find the commitment challenging with one child!

Over much trial and error, we have learned a few things along the way. As our family has grown and changed, so have our outlooks, expectations, and our measurement for success. For one thing, we as a family have learned that learning to play the piano is teaching the children so much more than just to play music. It is a daily lesson in dedication, perseverance, kindness, self-motivation, patience, responsibility, and a host of other character qualities we are trying to instill in our children from an early age.

Here are a few ideas that we use in our family:

1. Cycle through the CDs as often as you can. We play them on iPods, in the car, etc... Whatever opportunity arises to listen, we try and take advantage of it. The younger children enjoy listening to the Book 2 and 3 songs, in addition to their own Book 1. They are very familiar (and can sing along) with all of the repertoire songs, whether it is from their own book, or somebody else's.
2. The older children sometimes assist with the younger ones practicing. Although I don't completely give over the supervision task, I do allow the older child who can play a particular piece to help the younger ones with a specific goal. It is fun to teach what you already know!
3. The older children sometimes play the left hand to songs, and the younger children play the tune. New songs are often worked out this way, and they both end up having lots of fun with Suzuki duets!
4. We have a large, single family notebook that we bring to each lesson. Each child has their name, and their notes from the lesson are written for easy referral with the song title, and what they worked on in the lesson.
5. We take turns on the piano, with very focused practice on what needs to be accomplished. We try our best to have each child practice daily – even a short practice is beneficial. They don't have to be long drawn-out sessions to be productive.

We try and have very long term goals, and as long as we are headed in the right direction, our children are successful and will hopefully carry the lessons learned throughout their lives.

Kristin Nowazek

Mark Your Calendar - Annual General Meeting - September 25, 2013

All parents are invited to attend our **Annual General Meeting and Parent Talk**, to be held on September 25, 2013 at Suzuki Charter School. This year, our parent talk will feature Suzuki parent and Registered Massage Therapist, Sarah Oddoye, who will speak about massage and it's benefits for musicians. Sarah comments, "*Think about the instruments used by musicians and the body positions they utilize for practice sessions and performance periods. Does repetitive strain come to mind? Or even just achy muscles? A massage therapist knows which muscle (and its origin, insertion, and its action) might be affected and how to manipulate tissue. A pianist will need to work on his or her wrists but also on muscles crossing the elbow. Homecare will include back stretches, arm and wrist strengthening and finger exercises. A singer will benefit from work on the diaphragm and hip flexors. A violinist will work on the neck, shoulders, arm, and upper chest muscles.*" Watch for more information from Sarah in our September newsletter.

Prior to the Parent Talk, we'll hold our Annual General Meeting. In addition to reporting on our year and presenting our audited financial statements, we'll also be holding elections for membership on our Board of Directors.

We're looking for parents to serve as volunteers on the Board. We are looking for parent representatives who are committed to providing their children a positive musical education and who are interested in helping to shape the future direction of Edmonton Suzuki Piano School. Whether you've been an ESPS member for one year or ten, your perspective is valuable!

The Board of Directors meets at Suzuki Charter School on the last Wednesday of every month. If you are interested in getting involved with the Board of Directors, please contact Kim Green at 780.488.0548 for more information.

Great Practice Ideas for the Summer Months

It can be a challenge to feel like practicing on a lazy summer day. Why not try one of these great ideas to help make piano practice a little more interesting?

- Have your children play in a "home concert" for summertime visitors. Print tickets, make a program, and create a special event.
- Find some great music apps that your children can play during your summer road trip. They won't even know they are practicing!
- Try enrolling your child in a summer music camp – there are so many summer camp options in Edmonton and beyond.
- Take your family to a music concert during one of Edmonton's many summer festivals.
- Choose a new piece of music that is outside the Suzuki repertoire. Why not try a pop song, your favourite movie theme, or a catchy jazz piece?
- Have your children learn a duet together – have one sibling work on the left hand part, while the other tackles the right hand.
- Host a Suzuki Music party and invite other students from your teacher's music studio or your child's group class.

Add Some Music to Your Summer!

Edmonton's summer festivals offer an incredible opportunity to experience a variety of musical genres. Share your favourites with your kids as you enjoy summertime in Edmonton!

Edmonton Chamber Music Festival

June 21-23, 2013

Edmonton International Jazz Festival

June 21-30, 2013

K-Days

July 19-28, 2013

Blueberry Bluegrass and Country Music Festival

August 2-4, 2013

Heritage Festival

August 3-5, 2013

Edmonton Folk Music Festival

August 8 -11, 2013

Cariwest – Edmonton Caribbean Arts Festival

August 9-11, 2013

Edmonton Blues Festival

August 16-18, 2013

Symphony under the Sky Festival

August 30-September 2, 2013

Kaleido Family Arts Festival

September 13-15, 2013

Casino Raises \$77,000 for ESPS Programming

Thanks to the efforts of about 45 hardy ESPS volunteers, our casino in January raised about \$77,000, which will benefit every family and teacher with the Edmonton Suzuki Piano School.

These casino funds will be spent over the next two years, and comprise about 45% of our total annual revenue. While registration fees, donations, special event revenue and grants provide the remaining funds that pay for our annual budget, the biennial casino is our single largest fundraiser and helps to keep ESPS registration fees low for families.

The Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, however, sets out very specific rules about what can and cannot be funded with casino dollars. This year, the AGLC has approved the use of the bulk of our gaming funds for piano maintenance, teacher training, and for most of the costs associated with group lessons.

As a result, the remainder of our general revenue (including the money from registration fees) can be used to subsidize special events like the Fall Institute and the Spring Festival. Our general revenue is also used to pay for the majority of our administrative costs, facility rentals, graduations, professional fees and even the popsicles at the end of the group concerts.

Securing financing to sustain programming can be challenging for every charity, and ESPS is grateful for the opportunity to operate a casino and for the many ESPS volunteers who help to make it a success.

Donations Go Further Thanks to the Community Spirit Grant Program

Did you know that when you make a donation to Edmonton Suzuki Piano School, your donation is topped up by the Government of Alberta?

Alberta Culture's *Community Spirit Grant Program* provides matching funding to charities for donations received from its membership, and the funds are used by ESPS to help cover operating costs. In 2012-2013, Edmonton Suzuki Piano School received a grant totalling \$3120.00.

While the program has now ended, ESPS is grateful to have received this funding from Alberta Culture.



2013-2014 Calendar

September 25, 2013 *Annual General Meeting, Suzuki Charter School*

November 2 & 3, 2013 *Fall Institute, Suzuki Charter School*

November 17, 2013 *Graduation, Muttart Hall*

January 19, 2014 *ESPS attends the ESO Event (watch for information in the September newsletter)*

January 26, 2014 *Graduation, Muttart Hall*

February 2, 9, & 23, 2014 *Winter Recitals, Suzuki Charter School*

March 15, 2014 *Spring Festival, Suzuki Charter School*

April 13, 2014 *Graduation, Muttart Hall*

May 3, 2014 *Groups Concert, Suzuki Charter School*

June 8 & 15, 2014 *Summer Recitals, Location TBA*

June 22, 2014 *Graduation, Muttart Hall*

Congratulations to Book 7 Graduate Liesl Sham!

ESPS is proud to celebrate recent Book 7 graduate, Liesl Sham. Liesl has been playing piano since she was five years old. She is currently in grade nine, at Vernon Barford Junior High School. When she grows up, she hopes to become a nutritionist. Some of Liesl's hobbies include baking, cooking, and listening to music.

Listening to the finished products is one of Liesl's favourite things about playing piano. The difficult part for her is all the practice, time, and commitment you need to put into it, but she says it's worth it! She has done some playing at seniors' homes, and plays for the worship team at church. Liesl wants to thank Eleanor Tsui for teaching her all these years, and her family for supporting her through her musical journey. Liesl recently performed at her Book 7 Graduation Recital at Muttart Hall. Congratulations Liesl!

Thank You ESPS Volunteers!

As we wrap up another successful term, we offer our thanks to all of our wonderful ESPS volunteers. Whether you worked during one of our special events, served as an adjudication assistant, set policy as a member of our Board of Directors, braved traffic as a dedicated driver, or worked a long shift at our casino, we thank you and appreciate your efforts.

Your commitment to Edmonton Suzuki Piano School allows us to offer our children so much more than just a weekly piano lesson. Your willingness to give a little extra time allows us the opportunity to provide something great for all of our families. Thank you! We couldn't do it without you.

2013-2014 Group Class Placements

Teachers are currently working hard to organize group class placements for the fall term. As a group, they meet and carefully balance family requests for location and day-of-the-week preferences with the need to build cohesive and productive groups.

Families will be notified about their child's group teacher and location in late June, and a complete schedule for the year will follow by early September. Group classes will commence later in the fall, and will continue until the group concert on Saturday, May 3, 2014.

*Parents who have smiling faces have children who
have smiling faces.*

Shinichi Suzuki

June 2013 Graduations

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

Volume 1

Amanda Dantas
Thomas Gray
Joshua Palmer
Joanne Pang
Tessa Parker
Theresa Severin
Nicholas So

Volume 2

Samuel Heintzman
Lindsay Kim
Jonah Koller
Colin Sweetzir
Hannah VandenBorn
Raya Wolski

Volume 3

Julianna Graham

Volume 4

Margaret Huang
Sophie Jackson
Quinn Sweetzir
Claudia Wang

Volume 5

Lina Kim
Daphne Ma
Christopher Otto

Volume 6

Colin Zhou

*Ability is one thing we have to produce (or
work for) ourselves. That means to repeat
and repeat an action until it becomes a part of
ourselves.*

Shinichi Suzuki