



Twinkling The Ivories

September 2013

Lessons in Parenting: What I've Learned in my First Year as a Suzuki Parent

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The journey that I embarked on over this past year with my daughter Dahlia was nothing less than an extraordinary lesson in parenting. I have tried in so many ways to explain to people what this experience has meant to me, what it has taught me, and I always end up tongue-tied. After putting some real thought into it, I would describe it as a true lesson in parenting, which is not really what I was expecting from my child's piano program.

What do I mean by a parenting lesson? Well, from our first practice, it became clear that if we were going to make it through this year, we would have to work as a team. We would set realistic goals, we would prioritize our home practice times, and we would discuss what needed to be worked on and the key points that our teacher had highlighted. I learned to be patient, I learned how to engage my child when she didn't want to practice, and I learned how to cue into her feelings and body language and to adapt to what she needed. I learned to listen, and above all, I learned to be her partner and support system. Most importantly, I learned that the tools that I was developing to support her through piano were the same tools that I could adapt into helping her succeed in all aspects of her life.

There is always that moment in a parent's life when they say, "*I am responsible for the upbringing of this human being, and how do I make sure that they become the best that they can be?*" Well, it takes a true effort, it takes dedication and time, it takes patience, and above all it takes love. *Because you simply could not do it without love.* The Suzuki program has provided for me an example of what it takes to be this dedicated parent at a micro-level. I believe that these lessons will help me to form a strong foundation for future challenges.

Dahlia is a pretty competitive little girl and I had a few tricks that made practices more interesting for a five-year-old. We had an X's and check mark chart that we would use in our practices. We established that each day, we would assess posture, ready position, finger movement, attention, and overall tone. She would receive a check mark for a job well done, which would eliminate any X's that were present and vice versa. She also loved to roll the dice to see how many times she would have to play a particular piece or part of a piece. And I cannot deny that treats (Smarties, jelly beans, or frozen blueberries) were also great motivators throughout our practices. The best trick of all, however, was jumping up and down and giving high-fives when she reached a key goal.

It has not been easy, that is for sure. There have been lots of ups and downs and I expect this will continue throughout our Suzuki experience. I am, however, grateful for the insight and lessons that are provided to Suzuki parents. It truly has been a great year for all of us.

Carolina Calderon

Update Your Family Practice Binder!

As we begin another school term, why not get your family off to a great start by cleaning out and organizing the family practice binder?

Lesson notes pages, along with several other alternatives including repetition pages and charts for children to assess their own successes, can be found at our website, www.edmontonsuzukipiano.ca. Follow the practice notes pages link on our home page.

ESPS Annual General Meeting and Parent Talk

Wednesday September 25, 2013

7:30 pm, Suzuki Charter School Learning Commons

Ever wondered what role ESPS plays and how it benefits your family? Let us inform you about ESPS at the Annual General Meeting on September 25th at 7:30 p.m. at Suzuki Charter School.

At ESPS, you and your children greatly benefit through:

- Fun and motivating ESPS group music class experiences
- Interesting, educational ESPS events such as the Fall Institute, Spring Festival and special events like the ESO concert event.
- Resources that support music learning such as Suzuki books and CDs, and lending library
- Celebrations such as graduations, group concerts and spring festivals.

At ESPS, your teachers greatly benefit through:

- Professional development throughout North America including opportunities to attend international Suzuki institutes
- Financial support to initiate and coordinate parent, teacher and student educational events
- Administrative support with registrations, group lessons, events and volunteer coordination.

Why not consider joining our group of dedicated and enthusiastic board members to help us fulfill these goals? We have a lot of exciting plans to benefit your children and would love your help. This year, we are seeking the help of several parents to serve on our Board of Directors in a variety of roles. Whether you are a beginner parent with ESPS or have been involved for many years, your perspective is valuable, and we welcome new volunteers.

Following the AGM, let us inform you during our annual Parent Talk. Join Guest Speaker and Registered Massage Therapist Sarah Oddoye as she speaks to parents about massage and it's benefits for musicians (and their parents!).

For more information about joining our Board of Directors, please speak to Kim Green at 780.488.0548

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*

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*

ESPS Attends the ESO!

On January 19th, 2014, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra presents its Sunday showcase, "Symphonic Celebration." The afternoon concert features young pianist Charlie Albright, who will play Shostakovich's *Piano Concerto No. 2*, which was originally written to celebrate his own son's birthday. Also featured is music by Mozart, Handel, Duke Ellington, and Canadian composer Maxime Goulet.

ESPS is coordinating discounted group purchasing for this kid-friendly afternoon concert and we'd love to see ESPS members enjoying this special opportunity to attend an ESO concert together.

Tickets can be purchased at three different price levels - \$29.95, \$38.50, or \$63.95. This event is not chaperoned, so children must be accompanied by an adult in order to attend. A minimum of two tickets must be purchased for the event.

Order forms will be available from your teacher in late September, and must be returned by the end of October in order to confirm seats at this special price.

Coming Soon: Fall Institute

Watch for registration forms at your teacher's studio for our annual **Fall Institute**, November 2-3, 2013. This year we welcome a master teacher from Ontario, Gail Lange, as well as ESPS favourites Susan Magnusson and Merlin Thompson as our faculty. Students will also attend a Music and Movement enrichment class, and parents can attend a very motivating Parent Talk on practising.