



Twinkling The Ivories

November 2013

Lessons in Making Home Practice Easier

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A music journey with your child, when it involves daily home practice, is a huge commitment. Fortunately we are not alone. Numerous people have been there before us. I have benefited from their experiences through reading and talking to teachers and other parents. Three years into the journey, I also have my two cents to share with fellow travelers.

Practice is not meant to be easy. Some parents know this all along. They set out to teach their child patience, self-discipline, and the reward of working slowly and steadily toward a goal. Some parents, however, envision parent and child happily making music together, and may get frustrated when the journey gets tough. Effective practice, or what psychologist Anders Ericsson calls “deliberate practice”, means remedying weaknesses rather than fooling around and playing what one already knows. It is difficult even for adults. To both the parent and the child, acknowledging that practice is hard is only fair.

Practice can be made easier. Many techniques can be found in books and other resources on the topic – a good place to start is *Helping Parents Practice – Ideas for Making It Easier* by Edmund Sprunger. Practice at an appropriate time of the day so your child has the physical and mental energy for the task. Give your child choices so she has a sense of control. Play games to make practice fun. Be quiet when your child is playing. Be your child’s fan. Tune in to your child’s feelings and talk in a way she listens and understands.

Establish a reward system. Adults expect to be rewarded for a job well done, so do children. Rewards can serve as a powerful motivator for the child, though what counts as a reward may change over time. I have moved from stars in the practice chart to candy and TV time back to smileys in the chart that are tied to the allowance. Perhaps the child will always need some external motivator to keep her going, which is fine as most of us do. Perhaps one day the child will find the internal motivation to strive for excellence in music or some other pursuit. Either way we would have enjoyed our music journey.

Haichen Sun

Congratulations to ESPS teacher Melanie Bodnar and her family, who recently welcomed the arrival of their daughter Vasylyna. Though she is only a few days old we look forward to having our youngest piano student perform for us some day!

ESPS at the ESO Event: Tickets for families attending the ESO concert on January 19th have been picked up and will be provided to teachers shortly for distribution. It’s not too late if you would still like to purchase tickets – contact Kim Green at 780.488.0548 for more information.

Get Involved with Edmonton Suzuki Piano School!

Become an ESPS Teacher!

The great work and reputation of our teachers and the ESPS program has meant tremendous growth for our society over the past years, and currently ESPS is completely subscribed.

Thus, ESPS is looking for musicians or teachers who might be interested in becoming a Suzuki teacher with ESPS. Interested teachers require a minimum of Gr. 10 RCM or equivalent, or a Bachelor's degree in music. The teacher must complete Book One Teacher Training at a Summer Institute sanctioned by the Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA). Visit the Suzuki Association of the Americas website, especially www.suzukiassociation.org/teachers/training for important information regarding the audition process. Next summer, Book One training will be offered in Calgary.

Observations are an important component of Suzuki lessons, and new teachers with ESPS are encouraged to take advantage of the collective resources and experience of the ESPS teacher group through mentorship and information-sharing.

For more information about becoming an ESPS teacher, please speak to your teacher or to Kim Green at 780.488.0548.

Join the ESPS Board of Directors!

Thanks to those members who attended our recent Annual General Meeting. At the AGM, we said farewell to long-time Board members Lori Demeriez, Don Dyck and Geeta Passi-Shourie. Their contributions to ESPS have been tremendous over the years and they will be missed. We also welcomed returning members Rolinda Graham, Betty Lee, Tammy Field-Compri, and Merrie Zubritsky, as well as our newest members, Roxanne Fraser, Marci Friesen, Meleena Doroshenko and Michelle Rose. We also welcome Rhonda McEachen as our new Teacher Representative. Look for our Board Members at upcoming events – they're the folks wearing our bright orange ESPS jackets!

Registered Massage Therapist and ESPS parent Sarah Oddoye also gave an informative Parent Talk on *Massage and the Musician*, and attendees left with some exercises to try with their own families.

If you are interested in getting involved ESPS or would just like to attend our public meetings, please contact Kim Green at 780.488.0548 for meeting details.

2013-2014 Calendar

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*

November 2013 Graduations

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

Volume 1

Amber Chen
Shawn Doroshenko
Jaidelle Hoffmann
Zoe Huang
Emerson Jensen
Jack MacDonald
Rachel Mack
Thomas Nowazek
Marissa Szalacsi

Volume 2

Meredith Graham
Judy Li
Mira MacMillan
Kelti Spencer
Noah Thomas
Micah Truong
Elise VandenBorn
Omar Wehbe

Volume 3

Isaac Chua
Novin Kong
Hannah Liu
Hailey Lothamer
Conrad Oddoye

Volume 4

Weronika Chlebek
Dariush Khani-Hanjani
Tatiana Marciniak
Marcus Wong

Volume 5

Devan Chow
Kathy Nguyen

Volume 6

Annika Hanson
Michaelene Poworoznik