



Encore Music Studio



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PARENT SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT

In making it possible for your child to play a musical instrument, you are providing the opportunity for self-expression, creativity, and achievement. Numerous studies indicate that parental attitude, support and involvement are important factors in a child's ability to successfully learn to play and to enjoy music. The student-parent communication is an important key to a student's success.

Practicing

Practicing is the heart of continued success. Having a specific time each day and an appropriate atmosphere for the instructions on the lesson plan can really help make practicing easier. A minimum guideline is usually thirty minutes for beginners, and two twenty minute periods or one 40-minute period for more advanced.

Weekly Practice Schedule

I recommend that every student have a WRITTEN OUT Weekly Practice Schedule that is agreed upon and arranged with the involvement of the parent and student. I recommend having all 7 days of the week with a time, and each week the student chooses 5 of those sessions. This way, if something unexpected comes up, normal practice time will still happen. You could make a number of copies of this schedule and hang it up in places like: the student's bedroom, the refrigerator, and near his instrument.

How You Fit In

Always keep in mind that your support is a key element in your child's success with music study. Music achievement requires effort over a period of time. You can help your child by:

- SCHEDULING PRACTICE TIMES (One of the most important things. Think of it like a rehearsal for a band or orchestra.)
- Providing a quiet place in which to practice.
- If possible, remaining nearby during practice times.
- Scheduling a consistent, daily time for practice.
- Praising your child's efforts and achievements.

What To Do

To give your child the best possible support, you should:

- Encourage your child to play for family and for friends.
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music, including concerts and recitals.
- Encourage your child to talk with you about his or her lessons.
- Watch as many music videos as possible.

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- Help your child make sure his instrument is always in good working order.
- Allow your child to play many types of music, not just study pieces.
- Listen to your child practice, and acknowledge improvement.
- Help your child build a personal music library.
- Try to get your child to make a minimum two-year commitment to his or her music studies.

What Not To Do

Your child's progress will be greatly enhanced if you...

- Don't use practice as a punishment.
- Don't insist your child play for others when they don't want to.
- Don't ridicule or make fun of mistakes or less-than-perfect playing.
- Don't apologize to others for your child's weak performance.
- Don't start your child on an instrument that's in poor working order or condition.
- Don't expect rapid progress and development in the beginning.

If Your Child Loses Interest

In the event your child loses interest in his or her music studies, don't panic.

- Discuss the situation with your child to determine why their interest is declining.
- Talk to your child's music teacher to see what might be done to rekindle their enthusiasm.
- Encourage your child to stick with lessons for an agreed period of time.
- Offer increased enthusiasm and support.
- Take your child to see a live music performance that include the instrument they play.
- Watch as many music videos as possible.

Parental Attitude and Involvement

How do you make music part of your life? Your family can see what types of music you gravitate to. Actively show your children that you value music in your life. Discuss with your teacher what kind of involvement is best for your child. Ask your child what they did during the lesson. Another easy way to be involved is to read your child's lesson plan and then ask them what certain things mean or to demonstrate something. Usually it is recommended that a parent remain nearby for beginners for encouragement, and junior high and high school given more privacy during practicing. Consistent, regularly scheduled times are greatly recommended. Inconsistent practice times lead to inconsistent practicing. Try to remain on schedule to facilitate manageable after-school tasks.

Providing Outside Musical Exposure

Provide opportunities to see performances that they would enjoy. This is probably the best way for a student to stay inspired. Check local colleges and high schools can be a good and inexpensive source for this. Use discretion in choosing performances they would enjoy - ask your teacher. Expose to various styles - orchestra, chamber music, ballets, Broadway, jazz clubs, open-mike shows, etc. Another way to provide exposure is to help your child build a music collection. Typically classical and jazz CDs are less expensive than popular. Then take time to listen to the CDs (more than once) with them.