

At the String Academy of Wyoming, parents are considered to be the child's "home teacher". In the beginning stages, especially for a younger beginner, the teacher is essentially teaching the parent how to practice with the child at home. Practice charts are used in lessons to organize the assignments and at home to record the week's practice. Parents must oversee the practice just as they would monitor their child's homework assignments. Parents have a vital role in instilling discipline and cultivating joy in learning.

Please read the following thoughts (from an anonymous source) about the role of parents and the relationship of practice, motivation and progress in music study...

PARENTS ARE IMPORTANT PEOPLE!

Parents play a vital role in their child's musical growth, both because they initiate the lessons and choose the teacher and because only they can create and maintain the atmosphere of interest and encouragement at home so necessary to real pleasure and progress in music study.

The greatest help you can give your child is active, constructive, daily interest. Being interested takes no special training or skill. It can consist of just asking, "What did you learn at your lesson today?" It can mean listening to your child play their pieces, or checking to make sure they have covered their whole assignment, or helping them during an entire practice period.

Don't expect your child to maintain a consistently high level of interest in their music study every day of every week throughout the year. Months of high interest are apt to be followed by short periods of lower interest. You should expect this. Progress is an interesting paradox; sometimes when it's happening fastest, it shows the least.

When should the student practice? Every day. Learning to play a stringed instrument involves developing new mental disciplines and acquiring new physical skills. A short, regular practice session every day is worth far more than a longer period every other day or than an irregular schedule. We are developing inner discipline. We want the student to be drawn toward the instrument, not pushed to it. The practice session should be long enough to cover the assignment, short enough to stay within the student's attention and interest span. For this reason, two short periods are often better than one long one, especially for young children. Don't insist on your child's remaining with the instrument for a specific length of time. Practicing is not a matter of time spent, but a matter of mind spent. When the student has completed the outline for his daily practice, he is through for that day.