S.O.S. FOR PRACTICING HELP!

By Katherine Johnson

You are a Suzuki parent, fully aware of the ongoing gift you've been giving both your child and yourself by pursuing the Suzuki Method of lessons. You've seen palpable evidence of your child's general growth that has been a direct result of the development of music skills. The time that you have both devoted to daily practicing with your child has forged a strong bond between you both that would have been difficult to duplicate under other circumstances. The time spent together has been considerable: it has sometimes been joyful, sometimes frustrating, it has sometimes tapped unknown pools of creativity and patience in you; it has always been worthwhile. You have been a careful, conscientious home teacher.

Until now. Suddenly, because you've taken on a new job or other responsibility, you no longer have the kind of time or energy you used to have for Suzuki practicing. The new baby’s schedule seems never to work with the practice times or you arrive home too late to catch your little musician’s freshest practice times. Or, your child, in a new round of “Mother, I can do it myself!” is mounting a major resistance offensive. The limited time you do have to spend together has become pressured and often unpleasant when confined only to practicing. You've been considering dropping lessons because you can no longer do them or your child justice.

Stop! Don’t drop out. There is another solution – a practice aide. Practice aides can be found in all shapes, sizes, ages, genders, and degrees of experience. The idyllic version looks like this: advanced junior high or high school student who may even have the same teacher as your child who will work with him on a regular basis. A little idol worship on the part of the child and a little avarice on the part of the aide are useful components. In the best of all worlds, the aide will also attend the child's lesson. Otherwise, the Suzuki parent, who will still be taking excellent notes, can show and tell the aide what needs to be done. The aide can be used as needed, can be afforded, and/or can be ensnared.

The logistics of finding practice aides are often complex. Some teachers have successfully incorporated a system of older children working regularly with younger students at the teacher's studio, but life is not always so simple. You might need to enlist the help of your child’s teacher who is in a position to encourage potential practice aides.

In addition to monetary rewards, practice aides certainly grow new depth and insight into their own playing by teaching others. In the short term, the same principles and techniques used in the aide's own playing will gain clarity when taught to the child. In the long run, virtually all adults find themselves in a position of having to teach, explain to or simply communicate with others, be they off-spring, fellow Senators, members of a ball team, etc. Any experience in the art of elucidation that can be garnered as a youngster will be turned to great advantage regardless of the eventual twists and turns of the aide's life.
5:45 Piano Note Reading Group: Alex, Jonathan, Mitch, Zara, Ryan and Lucien

5:45 Piano Note Naming Challenge
Top Prizes: Lucien, Ryan and Zara

Alexis McIntosh
100 Days of Practice

Alexis McIntosh
Crescendo Level 10!

Alyssa Tsu
100 Days of Practice

Anna Rosen
500 Days of Practice and Listening!

Roshni Flannery
Book 5 Graduation!

Ben VanderLey-Klaassen
100 Days of Practice

Bennet Van Blyenbourgh
100 Days of Practice

Charlie Kim
100 Days of Practice

Vivian Nguyen
1300 Days Practice and Listening!

William Zuo
100 Days of Practice
Frances McDonald
100 Days of Practice

Anthony Chen and Nicholas Fu
Perform for Residents at Tower Light

Interval and Note Naming
Winner with 100%
Carmen

Iris Kramer
100 Days of Practice

Jack Larson
100 Days of Practice

Samuel Tsu
100 Days of Practice

Key Signature Challenge
1st Place: Lila
Tie for 2nd Place: Gabby & Sanjay

Oskar Colon
Congratulations Book 1 Graduation
Attended 10 Concerts!

Matias Chen
100 Days of Practice

Nova Kunin
100 Days of Practice

Note Naming and Interval Challenge
1st Place: Maheeya
2nd Place: Zara
If your child’s teacher doesn’t have appropriate students, beg the teacher to beat other teachers’ bushes. For once found, a compatible practice aide is invaluable regardless of the cost and inconvenience to you. It will allow you and your child to restore the positive aspects of your relationship while permitting your child to continue to explore and deepen the gift you originally presented.

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**Do you know we have a Practice Aide program at MacPhail!**

*Summertime is a great time to get started in working with an Older/Younger Buddy! Our Buddy Program is Volunteer!*

Many Middle and High School Students enjoy earning volunteer hours for classes, towards graduation requirements, and to build up college applications.

**MacPhail Suzuki Buddy Program!**

The Buddy Program is a practicing program between students in MacPhail’s Suzuki Talent Education department. We connect students who are established on their instruments and who enjoy working with other kids!

The Buddy Program is open to all instrument groups!

- **Mentees:** Age minimum: 6 years old  
  Level Minimum: Folk Songs polished  
- **Mentors:** Age minimum: 12 years old  
  Level minimum: Book 4

Interested? Check out our new website and sign-up!
- Or Email: larusso.kamini@macphail.org
UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, June 11, Last day of Spring Semester
Sunday, June 11, Kelly Lehr Suzuki Violin Studio Recital, 1:00 pm, Antonello Hall
Monday, June 12, Susan Sophocleus Suzuki Piano Studio Recital, 6:30 pm, Antonello Hall
Monday, June 12, First Day of Summer Session
Friday, September 1, Last Day of Summer Session

Keep a Look Out in Early August for the Suzuki Program Mailing with 2017-2018 Welcome Letter from the Director, the Suzuki Department Calendar of Events, the Group Class Assignments and Schedules, and more!

Looking for a local string camp? MacPhail has a variety of string camps for various ages and levels.

String Chamber Camp - a wonderful camp for students to discover the joy of playing chamber music, Ages 9-12, June 26-30

String Chamber Music and Orchestra II Camp - Chamber music, string orchestra, partner lessons, theory, sectionals - the complete package for intermediate string players! Ages 12-18, August 7-11

Encore String Orchestra Camp - a leveled string orchestra camp for beginning to advanced students, Ages 8-18, July 24 - August 3

Ask your Studio Teacher for suggestions of local MacPhail Camps or Suzuki Institutes around the country!

2017 Suzuki Piano and Guitar Institute
MacPhail Center for Music
Student Programs: July 24–28, 2017
Teacher Training: July 22-28, 2017

The MacPhail Suzuki Institute, sanctioned by the Suzuki Association of the Americas, is an opportunity for Suzuki students of all ages, with their parent, to come together to share in motivating, enriching and wide ranging musical experiences. Students will work with master teachers and improve their skills both technically and musically.

http://www.macphail.org/for-youth/summer-camps/

Don’t see your instrument listed above?
 Ask your teacher about summer institute opportunity offered in a variety of states and countries!