



Welcome to the National Capital Suzuki School of Music, or SuzukiMusic! We are delighted to have you as part of our community. We look forward to helping you and your children develop and enjoy your musical adventure together. If you have not registered yet, please click [here](#).

This handbook is set up with all the information you will need to start your journey with us.

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## What is SuzukiMusic?

Our Suzuki community offers an encouraging atmosphere to nurture every child's full potential and love of music. We provide Suzuki method\* music lessons in Ottawa on violin, viola, cello, guitar and flute to children aged 3 to 18.

SuzukiMusic is an Ottawa- based school that teaches with the whole Suzuki method\*. We are a member of the [Suzuki Association of Ontario](#) (SAO) and [Suzuki Association of the Americas](#) (SAA), both of which contribute to the high standard of Suzuki teachers through training, workshops and accreditation.

The National Capital Suzuki School of Music's Vision is the first choice for Ottawa families looking for music education following the Suzuki method.

Our goals:

1. To nurture the whole child through their music education using the Suzuki Method\*
2. To be a place for parents to share precious family time with their children as they develop their ability and love of music.
3. To provide an environment where children can learn and succeed through private lessons with their Studio teacher and group classes and events
4. To provide the opportunity for children to discover the energy and joy created by making music together and sharing it with the community.

## What Is the \*Suzuki Method?

Dr. Shinichi Suzuki was a Japanese musician, philosopher, educator and the founder of the international Suzuki method. Dr. Suzuki's approach has spread worldwide and is recognized as a significant force in music education today.

Dr. Suzuki said, "The potential of every child is unlimited," and "any child who is properly taught can develop musical ability just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue."

What did Dr. Suzuki mean when he developed the Mother Tongue Method?

Dr. Suzuki observed that children learn to speak their native language or Mother Tongue without direct instruction. He studied language acquisition and began to apply language acquisition principles to music education. Children learn to speak by being immersed in their language. Following the principles of language development, Shinichi Suzuki's approach has children learning music by first listening and becoming familiar with the pieces, then playing them. Finally, around the age they read words in school, they begin

to learn to read music in their lessons. The earlier, the better for beginning music lessons with many children starting around the age of 3 or 4. However, it is never too late to learn, as many parents can attest who learn along with their children.

One of the core elements of the Suzuki method is Parent Involvement. This Parent-Child-Teacher teamwork is called the Suzuki Triangle. The supportive triangle of parent – child – teacher, nurtures musical growth through a process of loving – listening – leading – learning. Each participant in the triangle has a unique role and responsibility to ensure overall success. Parents attend lessons with their children and serve as “home teachers” during the week.

### **About our school:**

We are the longest-running school following the Suzuki method in Ottawa and the largest Suzuki School in Ottawa affiliated with local and international Suzuki Associations. For 35 years, we have followed the principles of the Suzuki philosophy, which, as you have read above, is an extraordinary pedagogical approach. The Suzuki philosophy and the vision of how to apply it are what make this school unique.

As the Suzuki Method states, “Every Child Can.” Our school strives to be inclusive, empowering children and their families. We promote a sense of community and belonging, teaching values and skills that encourage an empathic and harmonious relationship through music participation.

We offer a high level of musical excellence in an accessible way. Our qualified and certified faculty promotes music training differently from other music pedagogical approaches. We also develop transferable skills using music as a tool for social development and change.

### **What are the benefits of this program?**

The purpose of the Suzuki Method is to help every child experience the joy that comes from making music. Through the Suzuki method, children are supported in their learning. Each child is allowed to learn at their own rate. With encouragement and support, they develop confidence and self-esteem, a determination to try difficult things, self-discipline and concentration, a lasting enjoyment of music and the sensitivity and skill for making music. Dr. Suzuki's primary goals are "for the child to build a noble soul, develop an appreciation of beauty, give a sense of purpose to life, learn the discipline of acquiring a skill, and become a fine human being."

**Key elements of the SuzukiMusic program include :**

**Group Classes:** In addition to the weekly private lesson with the Studio teacher, students and parents attend group classes on Saturdays at a facility rented by the school. Group classes provide learning in a social context and a chance to focus on the beauty of making music with others. These classes will take place 15 times in the school calendar year.

**Private Lessons:** Each child and parent will receive one private lesson per week with their Studio teacher. Lessons vary in length from 15 minutes to one hour. Your teacher will advise you on the length suitable for your child. This is essential to ensuring that your child masters the instrument with focused instruction and will be in the teacher's studio, which is at their home. Private lessons are divided into four terms of 9 lessons each.

**Ensemble opportunities:** As students progress, they will participate in various ensembles and orchestras at junior, intermediate and senior levels to enhance their musical experience. Ensemble skills involve learning to play different parts together, learning different interpretations of music and enabling students to further develop their own musical ideas. There is a senior ensemble for the most advanced students of each instrument. These ensembles and students can participate in additional performances and community outreach events (see below).

**Musicianship lessons:** Musicianship involves learning to read music, rhythm practice, theory and a dash of music history. These skills are incorporated into the group classes.

**Solo Recitals:** Each student will participate in two solo recitals during the year. Your Studio teacher will announce the date, time and location over the year. To ensure the best performance, students will play with piano accompaniment, arranged in advance. This will be the responsibility of the Studio Teacher and an extra fee will apply.

**Ensemble Performances:** Opportunities for students to play together in different groups, such as their group class peers, or in other ensembles and orchestras organized by the school. This includes performances at our annual end-of-year concert (Viva Suzuki\*), the [Kiwaniis Music Festival](#), and performances at our annual Junior and Senior Ensemble and Orchestra concerts.

**Community performances/outreach:** Occasions present themselves whereby a group could be invited to perform in a retirement home, school, or community centre. These

are voluntary and are a chance to perform. They will be announced and planned by group teachers should these opportunities arise.

**Viva Suzuki:** Viva Suzuki is our annual end-of-year celebration concert. All students have the opportunity to perform together, celebrating the year's achievements.

**Other opportunities:** SuzukiMusic strives to create a musical community, and this includes organizing special workshops and musical and social events. There are also volunteer opportunities for senior students, a mentorship program and parent education. Information about these opportunities will be communicated as they arise.

### **Unique features of the Suzuki Method**

**Daily listening:** a child learns to speak by being immersed in their language; in the same way, a child first learns music by listening to the repertoire daily.

**Repetition:** early pieces learned become the building blocks to more complex work, and earlier pieces can be retrieved to focus on specific aspects of music learning.

**Carefully selected repertoire:** key technical aspects of instrument learning are taught through beautiful music rather than dry exercises.

### **Support for the Parent/Guardian**

The parent/ guardian is integral to supporting your young musician and is part of the Suzuki method. SuzukiMusic gives you the tools and resources for this learning journey.

These include:

1. A **Parent Orientation** with tips and tricks to help you start your musical journey.
2. Parent Education articles in each SuzNews
3. This handy Parent Handbook
4. Links to useful websites such as SAA (Suzuki Association of America ) and SAO (Suzuki Association of Ontario)
5. Recommendations for must-reads such as Nurtured by Love by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki
6. Support and directives by your Studio Teacher.

### **How to choose the instrument your child will learn?**

What makes you happy? Is there a special request from the student wanting to learn? Is there a sound you love? Are you drawn to a specific instrument? As a parent, what kind

of instrument are you interested in? Choose carefully as you will spend many hours with this instrument. You may be able to go to a music store, ask a SuzukiMusic teacher to sit in on a lesson and/or ask a friend who may play the instrument.

### **How do I acquire the chosen instruments?**

All students are expected to acquire their own instruments. Your private lesson teacher will assist you in selecting an instrument of the appropriate size and quality.

The SuzukiMusic program has some cellos, flutes and violas available in our instrument rental program. All rental fees are waived for the first year of study.

All rental instruments must be kept clean and in good repair at all times.

Whether rented or purchased, your teacher will advise you of any routine maintenance or repairs that need to be made. We recommend that instruments be insured against fire, theft and damage. The SuzukiMusic program is not responsible for any damage to your instrument.

### **How can I find out more and discuss enrollment?**

- The general manager is the primary point of contact for new parents. They will introduce you to the school and its policies and put you in contact with the faculty that can provide instruction for your chosen instrument. They will accept your payment for the school year.
  - Note that certain fees, such as registration, are non-refundable
  - Feel free to check out the [bios of our faculty](#) on our website.
  - If you would like to meet a teacher or observe a group class before enrolling, let the general manager know.
- The faculty member will arrange a time to meet with you and your child. They will direct you to review this parent handbook. They will also advise what instrument to acquire and the relevant fees for their studio.

### **School Fees**

School fees have the following components:

- Registration fee, paid once when registering.
- Term fees are paid in four instalments, one for each term.

The Term Fee combines the private lesson fees and operating fees. Students' fees will vary depending on which private teacher they have and the length of the lesson.

The Private Lesson Fee portion of the term fee goes directly and in full to the Private teacher and is the cost of 9 lessons each term. This portion of the term fee will vary depending on which teacher your child is studying with and how long the weekly lesson is.

The operating fee is fixed for each student, which helps to cover the school's operational expenses.

For the 2022 school year, the operating fees were \$101 per term and the rate for a private lessons was within the range of \$52-\$80 per hour. The final amount to pay per term depends on the length of your lesson, as well as the instrument and teacher you choose.

As SuzukiMusic is a not-for-profit organization, every dollar received goes towards providing musical education for the students. The school's operating expenses are covered by:

- Fees paid by families (operating fees)
- City of Ottawa Arts Grant
- Income from fundraising activities

The school's total income is related to the number of registered students, meaning the amount received in the form of operating fees. Since operating fees alone don't cover the total costs of running the school, other sources are vitally important.

The school's total income is carefully budgeted so that we can cover operating expenses such as:

- Salaries for the General Manager, Artistic Director and Assistant to the Manager/Volunteer Coordinator
- Cost of running group classes
- Liability insurance
- Performance venue rental costs
- Membership fees in Suzuki Associations
- IT costs

Many of these items are fixed costs, and they don't vary according to the number of registered students.

Ways you can help:

- Support our fundraising initiatives
- Support our Sponsors



- If you are a small business owner or work for a company looking to sponsor a non-profit, consider sponsorship of our school. You can find the Sponsorship info here: [Sponsorship 2022](#)
- Spread the word about our special music school. New students can begin their studies at any time in the school year.

Thank you for your support in helping us keep our school financially healthy and to allow us to keep our school fees as low as possible.

### **Volunteering**

We rely on and are incredibly grateful for family volunteer support and donations to supplement our operational costs and to keep our term fees as low as possible. All families with students registered in the school are expected to fulfil a volunteer commitment each year. A variety of volunteer positions and tasks are required throughout the year. The volunteer coordinator will send out requests for volunteers in the weekly email that is distributed to the school on Tuesdays.

For questions or feedback relating to volunteering, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteer@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:volunteer@suzukimusic.ca).

### **Commitment Fee Policy**

Each family submits a post-dated cheque for \$100 as a Volunteer Commitment Fee as part of the registration package. This cheque will be returned to all families who contribute a minimum of 6 hours of volunteer time to the school during the academic year. Your Volunteer Commitment Fee cheque is remitted as an alternative and equally helpful means of supporting the SuzukiMusic program for those families unable to volunteer. The volunteer commitment is per family, not per student.

### **Vulnerable Sector Check**

All participating parents are asked to submit a vulnerable sector check. Please email the volunteer coordinator at [volunteer@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:volunteer@suzukimusic.ca) to request a volunteer letter which will allow you to get the check completed at the volunteer rate. Recently, the Ottawa Police Services has streamlined the application process, and the vast majority of individuals can apply online.

<https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/contact-us/Types-of-Records-Checks.aspx>

We require the level 3 Vulnerable Sector check for volunteering with minors. If you have had a vulnerable sector check completed recently for another organization, you can send

a copy to the volunteer coordinator. Each vulnerable sector check is valid for 5 years from the issue date.

### **Log Sheet**

Each volunteer is asked to keep track of their own hours and fill in the form to record their volunteer hours. To keep track of your volunteer hours, you may print your own [log sheet](#) or pick up a copy at the front desk during group class. Your cheque will be returned upon receipt of the completed log sheet before June 1 of the school year.

### *Website Links*

All families can sign up for tasks, print forms and access additional volunteer information. Click [here](#) to access the volunteer page on the website.

### **How do I stay informed?**

Please watch for a weekly email from our General Manager. It is typically published every Tuesday. If you don't see them, please check your spam folder, and if they're not there, send an email to the general manager at [info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca) to make sure you get on the mailing list. This is where you will get the most up-to-date information about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities.

### **Studio Recitals and Special Events**

Please contact your private lesson teacher directly regarding any musical or logistical questions relating to recitals and special events.

### *Group Classes, Group Class Special events and Viva Suzuki*

Please contact your group class teacher for all information regarding your group class and their role in large group events. Group class dates and concert information will be posted on the [Calendar Page](#) of our website.

### **Private Lessons**

The Suzuki triangle of Parent-Teacher-Student depends on open communication between all three sides. Generally, your private teacher should address any questions or concerns concerning your child's weekly lessons directly. This is particularly true if you are concerned about the lesson dynamics or your child's behaviour towards the teacher. Your teacher will want to know about any questions or concerns as soon as possible.

If you feel that you cannot raise a specific concern with your teacher directly, please contact our Artistic Director at [artistic@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:artistic@suzukimusic.ca). Confidentiality will be respected.

### **Group Class/Ensemble Skills and Orchestra**

If you have a question or concern concerning your child's group class, ensemble, or orchestra class, the specific teacher for that class is the first point of contact. This is especially important if you are concerned about your child's behaviour, general group dynamics or repertoire. Your child's group class teacher will want to know about these questions or concerns as soon as possible.

If your concern is about your child's class placement after the first 3 group classes, please discuss this with your private lesson teacher. Your teacher will then address the issue with your child's group class teacher and the Artistic Director. You will be notified as soon as a resolution has been reached.

If you feel that you cannot raise a specific concern directly with your child's group class teacher, you may discuss the issue with your private lesson teacher or contact the Artistic Director at [artistic@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:artistic@suzukimusic.ca). Confidentiality will be respected.

### **Miscellaneous Issues - Who can answer my questions?**

**SuzukiMusic Administrative Matters** : If you have administrative questions about registration, financial matters, term fee dates, etc., please start by checking our website, [suzukimusic.ca](http://suzukimusic.ca).

If you cannot find the answer to your question, our General Manager will address administrative issues, problems, or concerns and can be contacted directly at [info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca) for assistance.

If your concern does not fit into any of the previously listed categories, please feel free to contact any member of our Board of Directors. These dedicated parent volunteers are always happy to help. You can find their contact information listed on our website [by following this link](#).

If you have an issue you would like to resolve at any point, finding the right person will help the situation can be resolved as quickly as possible. In most circumstances, your private lesson teacher will be able to help you with the issue or, at the very least, guide you to the person who will be able to help you. If you cannot discuss the situation with your private lesson teacher, please contact our General Manager at [info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca) or our Artistic Director at [artistic@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:artistic@suzukimusic.ca).

### **I have more questions**

Be sure to read the school's Policies and Procedures in Appendix 2 at the end of this document. It includes detailed information on all of the school's policies and procedures, including:

- private lessons and scheduling missed lessons and holidays
- fees payment, late fees and NSF fees
- bursaries and withdrawals

Registration information is located on the website [here](#).

We hope that this parent handbook has helped you to get some basic information to start your musical journey with SuzukiMusic. There are many faculty, volunteers and other parents that will help and encourage you along the way. Congratulations on choosing to give your children the gift of a musical education, and we look forward to watching your young musician grow.

## **Appendix One**

### **SuzukiMusic Directory**

#### **General Manager / Collaborative Pianist**

Liko Yamane

[info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca)

#### **Assistant General Manager/Volunteer Coordinator**

Susan Wooltorton

[volunteer@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:volunteer@suzukimusic.ca)

#### **Artistic Director**

Emma Grant-Zypchen, Cello Faculty

[artistic@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:artistic@suzukimusic.ca)

#### **Board President**

Hubert Furey

[president@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:president@suzukimusic.ca)

## Appendix Two

### Policies

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## **SuzukiMusic Policies**

### **1.1 Primary Contact**

If you require assistance from our General Manager please contact her by email: [info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca)

### **1.2 SuzukiMusic Year**

Each SuzukiMusic year is made up of 36 instructional weeks, basically following the public school calendar. These weeks are grouped into 4 terms of 9 weeks each. During the year, each student attends 36 private lessons, 15 group classes, solo recitals, ensemble and/or group concerts and other special events.

### **1.3 Payment of Fees**

At the time of registration, all fees must be remitted by post-dated cheques. SuzukiMusic registration fees are non-refundable.

### **1.4 Late Registration Fees**

Returning students who return registration packages after the posted deadline are subject to a late fee. More information can be found on your studio teacher's registration webpage.

### **1.5 NSF Fee**

A fee of \$25 is levied for each NSF cheque.

### **1.6 Bursaries**

Families experiencing temporary, short-term financial difficulties may apply, in confidence, for bursary assistance. Application forms, criteria and additional information may be obtained from the General Manager at [info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca)

### **1.7 Withdrawal**

We understand that at times withdrawal is necessary. Please share your notice of intention to withdraw from the school in writing by email to the General Manager, at [info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca). Notice of withdrawal must be received at least **two (2) weeks prior** to the beginning of the next term and must contain the date on which the student will formally cease being a student of the school.

If you need to withdraw after the start of a term, the fees for the remainder of that term cannot be refunded, however the following term fees will be returned as long as the two week notice has been given.

In all cases, registration fees cannot be refunded.

Upon withdrawal, all property of the school must be returned to either the faculty or General Manager on the last day of such student's group classes or private lessons, whichever is later.

### ***1.8 Switching Instruments and/or Faculty***

Sometimes a student decides they would like to learn a different instrument and sometimes a change of faculty is needed. These changes can be accommodated through communication with and approval of both the existing and new teacher. These changes need to be planned at least two weeks in advance of the end of a term and will take into effect at the start of the new term.

If a student would like to change instruments or faculty at any point during the school year, please provide notice in writing by email to the General Manager at [info@suzukimusic.ca](mailto:info@suzukimusic.ca). Notice of change must be received at least two (2) weeks prior to the beginning of the next term and must contain the date on which the change will take effect.

### ***1.9 Language of instruction***

While the language of instruction is English for administration and group classes, our faculty can offer private lesson instruction in any language as specified on their biography page on our website.

## **2. Private Lessons**

### ***2.1 Lesson Scheduling***

Lessons occur weekly each term and vary in length from 15 minutes to one hour. Your teacher will advise you on the length suitable for your child.

### ***2.2 Lesson Substitutions***

Your teacher may substitute coaching with an accompanist or attendance at your child's performance in Kiwanis Festival or an RCM exam for scheduled lesson time. These substitutions are at the discretion of your studio teacher and will be announced in advance of the special event.

### ***2.3 Missed Lessons***

Your lesson time is reserved for you and your child. Lessons missed or cancelled by the student will not normally be made up. Lessons cancelled by your teacher will be made up at a mutually convenient time.



### ***2.4 Holiday Policy***

Lessons that fall on statutory/legal holidays (ex. Thanksgiving, Good Friday) will either be given on these days or be rescheduled at a mutually convenient time. Holiday lesson schedules are at the discretion of the teacher.

### ***2.5 Instruments***

All students are expected to acquire their own instruments. Your private lesson teacher will assist you in selecting an instrument of the appropriate size and quality.

The SuzukiMusic program has some cellos, flutes and violas available as part of our instrument rental program. All rental fees are waived for the first year of study.

All instruments must be kept clean and in good repair at all times. Your teacher will advise you of any routine maintenance or repairs that need to be made. We recommend that instruments be insured against fire, theft and damage. The SuzukiMusic program is not responsible for any damage to your instrument.

### ***2.6 Recitals***

The SuzukiMusic program provides the opportunity for each student to participate in two solo recitals during the year. Your studio teacher will announce the date, time and location over the course of the year. To make the performance the best it can be, students usually collaborate with a pianist. The studio teacher will contact the parent to make arrangements. An additional fee is required for rehearsals with the pianist.

## **3. Group Classes**

Fifteen group classes and musicianship classes are scheduled each academic year. All group classes (except Pre-Twinkler groups) participate in the Kiwanis Music Festival in April.

Each year, the faculty carefully places students in the appropriate group class level. After the first 3 group classes, if you believe your child has been misplaced, please discuss the situation with your private lesson teacher. Your private lesson teacher will then discuss your child's placement with the group class teacher and the Artistic Director. You will be notified of the resolution as soon as possible.

### ***3.1 Attendance***

Part of what makes the Suzuki philosophy special is the combination of private one on one lessons and group classes. Group classes provide a rich learning environment and a more social atmosphere for students. Students are expected to attend all group classes in order to benefit from all that these classes offer and to contribute effectively to the

group's music making. If more than three group classes are missed, your child's participation in group class performances (ex. Kiwanis Festival, Viva Suzuki) will be at the discretion of the group class teacher.

Please be careful not to register your child for other activities that conflict with their group class times.

### ***3.2 Disruptive Behaviour***

After every effort has been made in collaboration with the student, parent and group class teacher to adjust disruptive behaviour that affects the ability of the student and classmates to learn, the student will be removed from group class in consultation with the group teacher, private teacher, parent, Artistic Director and Board of Directors. The student will be invited to return to group classes when they are ready to participate positively.

## Appendix Three

### Home Practice and Private Lesson Tips

Over time you will learn more about your young musician and about yourself. Practice sessions will evolve with the age and stage of the child, and your Studio Teacher will provide support for practice points. Here are some home practice reminders.

#### 1. Listen Daily

***“Listening until we remember is not enough. We must listen until we cannot forget.”***  
***Shinichi Suzuki***

**Different types of listening include:**

- **Passive listening** - make a playlist of your child’s working piece, the next piece to be learned and review pieces for use in the car, at mealtimes, during quiet play, and while reading.
- **Active listening** - requires the student’s undivided attention - children can actively participate by clapping to the beat or air bowing (practising the bow strokes without the instrument). They can think about how the music makes them feel, what colour it makes them think of, they can draw a picture while they listen to the piece etc. Your teacher can give you more ideas based on your child’s age and stage.
- **Listening as part of practice time** - follow along with music, listen right before practising the piece.
- **Advanced Students : Comparative Listening** - Students can look up their working piece on youtube and hear how different musicians interpret the music differently.

#### 2. Help the Child understand the WHAT and WHY of Practice

It is important to have a focus when practising as there are many different things to think about when mastering an instrument. Keep practice simple and focused by using the WHAT and WHY of the other techniques you are working on.

Examples:

WHAT are we focusing on? Examples: Bow hold, violin/instrument hand, curved thumb, placement of bow etc.

WHY are we focusing on this?

- Better bow control = better sound
- Correct violin hand placement = playing in tune.

With this, you can include the child as an ACTIVE participant – they need to watch and listen to themselves. Parent feedback helps focus them, but the child needs to be active, not passive.

Parent as the ACTIVE listener - listen for connected bow, stop when it gets choppy, do 3 beautiful bows in a row, and ask the child how many tries does it take?

### **3. Set aside special time for practice**

This is important as it sets the tone for the practice and ensures it has a beginning and end.

Find a way to limit distractions (a particular room or space in your house where you can be away from noise, TV screens and siblings). This is a special time for you and your child. End on a good note – a hug, snuggle while listening to a few minutes of beautiful music, silly dance, a quick game of hangman etc.

### **4. Take it one step at a time (forward and backwards!)**

- Refer to the notes taken in lessons during practice
- Review it and incorporate it into your practice once you have mastered a new technique.
- Practice one concept at a time
- Break tricky parts into small bits – one or two notes, then connect a few notes together.
- REMEMBER Review is as essential to practising new concepts and refining techniques.

### **5. REPETITION**

***“Knowledge is not skill. Knowledge plus ten thousand times is skill.” Shinichi Suzuki***

- Play repetition games - such as having a tally chart with a prize at the end
- Invest in an abacus or bead counter
- Have your musician roll some fancy dice

### **6. TWO MINUTES OF JOY**

***“Two minutes of joy, five times a day.” Shinichi Suzuki***

- While five times a day is a tall order, its important to highlight that the youngest learners will benefit from very short and frequent “practice” sessions, on the order of a few minutes to make the most progress.

- Listening to a song or clapping a rhythm while out and about, or practising a bow or violin hold for a few minutes before dinner all count as a practice.
- The more you can include small elements of “practice” in daily life, the easier the more focussed session will be and the more the child will be immersed in the musical language they are learning.

## **Private Lesson Tips**

### **1. Lessons**

- You are the teacher at home. The studio teacher/group class teacher is the teacher during lessons.
- Take notes – ask for clarification when needed; your teacher wants you to understand the what, how and why.
- Maintain positive or neutral face and body language.
- Set up a parent-teacher conference for one lesson to discuss questions and concerns outside of earshot of your child.

### **2. Studio Lesson Tips**

- Have all materials ready – put them on the stand or give them to the teacher
- Try to sit quietly
- Cellphone off or on silent
- Ask for clarification of practice points during breaks in the action or as your child is packing up.
- Bring up general questions at the beginning of the lesson.
- Let the teacher know if things are going on at home that affect your child’s practice ability.
- Take notes by looking for a theme in the lesson. Each small point is significant, and you will review this at home– i.e., placement of bow thumb or pinky, posture, sound etc.
- Write down the process the teacher wants for a specific practice point – ask for clarification if needed – separate/slurred/different tempos etc.
- For students using the book, make a copy of the piece for you to write notes on/follow along with.

### **3. Things to keep in mind about Practice**

- Regular practice is more important than total time per week
- There is a direct relationship between quality of practice and progress
- Time spent practising gradually increases as the child’s ability to concentrate grows