

Make Practice Time Part Of Your Daily Routine

Schedule a time that doesn't follow a less enjoyable task like homework, but comes before a fun activity such as playing with friends or dinner. That way your child has something to look forward to when they're finished. Keep piano practice high on the daily priority list along with homework. A practice routine is only rewarding when it's routine (regular).

Attend Live Concerts

Nothing inspires the mind and increases excitement like live music! Your child will be motivated to go home and practice. Ask your child what kind of music they like. Find a concert that is a month or two away. Tell your child that if they reach their practice goal, you will take them to this concert. Involving your child in this process allows them to be excited about the concert for awhile and motivates them to practice. When the concert rolls around, watch them celebrate and be inspired by their favorite artist and the live performance that they experience! Take them to a symphony concert or a musical that would inspire them. Many communities have free outdoor concerts every summer. Let them be immersed in various styles of music performed at a high level.

Talk To Musicians

Have your child discuss what they are learning with skilled musicians. Encourage them to talk to the musicians playing at a live concert, a restaurant, in the mall, at your place of worship, etc.



much practice = much progress 😊
little practice = little progress 😐
no practice = no progress ☹️

creative ideas to

Motivate

🎵 **Your**
Child
To 🎹
Practice

compiled from various sources by W. Timothy Bailey for JeFirst Music, LLC.
www.wtimothybailey.com

Schedule Family Concert Night

Pick an evening [preferably a couple of days before the weekly lesson] and make it Family Concert Night. Instead of preparing for their lesson, the child prepares for Concert Night. Being a performer takes on a different meaning to children than getting ready for a lesson. Let them select the pieces they want to play. Pop a bowl of popcorn or bake a batch of cookies together. If a song has lyrics, everyone can sing along. Applaud loudly for them. They'll have such a sense of pride to "perform" just for their family. They'll feel special and will love the applause!

Initiate Informal Family Concerts For Relatives

Periodically, include grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc in your Family Concert Night. These relatives often provide additional support and motivation.

Record A CD Or Video

Have your child record a CD or video to give as gifts to grandparents and other family members and/or special friends. Perhaps you could post the video on the Internet.

Sit With Them

Many times, your presence is motivational. Try sitting in the same room where your child is practicing and work on a project or read a book. Show your support by listening to your child practice. Make it fun by pretending to be an audience member. When they finish a piece, offer them praise for a job well done. Or offer encouraging support when more work is needed. Show your child that you care by making it a family effort.

Student As Teacher

Ask your child to "teach" you [or the least musical parent] the piece they are supposed to be practicing. "Play" along with them. The child may end up playing the song twice as many times because you just don't "get it".

Offer Tangible Incentives

Once your child reaches their weekly practice goal [100+ minutes for smaller children or 150+ minutes for older] reward them. Post a chart or graph as a visual reminder of their progress. Think outside the box. You know your child. What little trinket or reward would they enjoy? An ice cream cone, toy, Popsicle, rubber band bracelet, music gift card, etc.

Offer Activity Incentives

For every 30 minutes of piano practice, the child earns 30 minutes of time for computer, TV, video games, play time, etc. Or once they reach their weekly goal, they could earn breakfast in bed, a trip to the bookstore, their choice of movie for movie night, their choice of menu for Sunday dinner, a trip to the mall, etc.

Offer Monetary Incentives

For every 30 minutes of piano practice, the child earns 30¢.

Encourage Them To Perform

Encourage your child to use their skills to improve the world by playing to raise funds for charity, creating awareness of important events or playing at a hospital or retirement community.

Remind Your Child Of The Lasting Benefits

Does your child know the value music brings to them and society? We've all heard an adult say, "I quit taking piano when I was young and it was such a mistake. I wish I could go back and take lessons again." It's challenging for a child to understand the future benefits of today's hard work. [Most of them don't even see the future benefits of eating their vegetables!] But parents can help their children know the value that musical talent brings to them and society. Help them visualize the future benefits they'll enjoy and opportunities where they could be of help with their talent. **[Early musical training helps develop brain areas involved in language and reasoning # Students who study the arts are more successful on standardized tests such as the SAT # Music study develops discipline and other skills necessary in the workplace # Music performance teaches young people to conquer fear and to take risks # Students of the arts learn to think creatively # There is a causal link between music and spatial intelligence # Students of music learn craftsmanship # Through music study, students learn the value of sustained effort to achieve excellence and the concrete rewards of hard work.]*

Watch Music Videos

Have your child check out videos from the library of songs they are learning. Consider performances on YouTube. [*Ode to Joy* seems much more impressive and exciting when played by an orchestra!]

Create A Music Friendly Home

Play music in the house and car and enjoy it! Play *their* music in the house and *enjoy it too!* Help your child learn about the music they are hearing. Go to the library or search online and teach them interesting facts about the music they enjoy.