

## NEW PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' GUIDE TO THE SSSPI

This sheet contains a few questions and answers that may be of use to you as you begin your journey.

Your first two group lessons of the year will be devoted to orientation. They will be held in September from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Walter Murray Collegiate, on the corner of Preston Ave. and Taylor St.. There will be room assignments posted as you enter. We ask that all new parents please attend these sessions. You may wish to have another adult accompany your child to observe the other group lessons that will be in progress. There will be no activities provided on those 2 days for beginner children. You will not need your instruments for the orientation, but a notebook and pen or pencil would be helpful.

The purpose of the orientation is to guide you in getting the best value from your participation in this program. The orientation is meant as an introduction to the stringed instruments we teach, and a look at how the world-famous Suzuki Method works. Along the way, don't hesitate to contact your private teacher if you have any questions at all, as the material is probably quite new to most people. September will have the first group lesson your child will attend. Please bring your own instrument at that time as well!

On behalf of the SSSPI staff, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new families and children in our program, and wish you the best on this new journey you have undertaken with your child. Thank you for choosing our program.

John Payzant, Program Director, SSSPI

### 1) Do we have the correct equipment?

Checklist:

- **Essential reading:** *Nurtured by Love Or Ability Development from Age Zero* by Shinichi Suzuki
- C.D. of Suzuki Method Volume 1 of your chosen instrument
- Suzuki Method Volume 1 for your chosen instrument
- Violin, viola, or cello outfit for your child
- Violin, viola, or cello outfit for yourself
- Notebook, pencil and bag to carry everything
- Instrument accessories: rosin for the bow, "rock stops" for cello, shoulder pads for violins or violas, cloth to clean instruments

## **2) Where can we obtain our equipment?**

**Sheet music** can be purchased at at Darren's Music Place (5-405 Circle Dr. E. across from Value Village) 244-1823 , [www.darrensmusicplace.com](http://www.darrensmusicplace.com), Long and McQuade (721 - 43rd St. E. behind Staples), 664-1966, [info@long-mcquade.com](mailto:info@long-mcquade.com) ), , 244-1823) or by mail order or internet from Calgary (Rideau Music, 1-800-661-6874, [www.rideaumusic.com](http://www.rideaumusic.com) ), or Toronto (The Sound Post, 1-800-363-1512, [www.thesoundpost.com](http://www.thesoundpost.com) ), among many other places.

**Small- and full-size instruments** can be rented or bought in Saskatoon from Long and McQuade Musical Instruments (721 - 43rd St. E), Western Music Sales (sales only, Unit 6, 318-105th St., 665-0949), or by mail-order or internet from Vancouver (Northwest Musical Services, 1-800-663-6797 [www.northwestmusic.ca](http://www.northwestmusic.ca)) or Toronto (The Sound Post, 1 800-363-1512, [www.thesoundpost.com](http://www.thesoundpost.com) ), among many other locations in Canada. Instruments can also be purchased through the SSSPI Instrument Marketplace listed in the quarterly SSSPI newsletter, or on our website, [www.saskatoonsuzukistrings.ca](http://www.saskatoonsuzukistrings.ca). The SSSPI also owns a number a number of cellos, a viola and a string bass which it rents out. Contact Phav, the SSSPI Instrument Convenor at 230- 1708 for more information about these instruments.

## **3) What size instrument do I need for my child?**

Proper sizing of children should be done by a teacher, preferably by your private teacher. Parents will most likely need a full-sized instrument.

## **4) What do I do with the CD after I have bought it?**

Listen to the CD daily as soon as you buy it on a consistent daily basis. Having a burned copy or MP3 download will enable you to listen in the car or on other machines. Listen to it as often as you can.

## **5) What does the parent do at the lesson?**

The parent's job is to learn the instrument in the early stages and to take notes at all private and group lessons. Bringing a tape recorder to tape the lessons can also be useful. If you don't understand something, please ask.

## **6) Is observing important?**

The more times you and your child observe a lesson , the easier learning becomes. Ask your private teacher if you can observe other lessons or come a few minutes earlier or stay a little later so you can observe. Children often learn through watching. By watching someone else have a lesson, the pressure of the lesson is removed and they can concentrate on the skills they are learning or will soon learn. Observing a group lesson where the pieces are above or below the level of the child provides help in building new skills and review of old ones.

## **7) When is the best time to practice?**

Morning practices are often the best because your child is fresh. If this is not possible, try to pick the same time every day when the child is not tired. In the very beginning, you could start with one or more short spurts of 5 or 10 minutes of practice done throughout the day, depending on the age of the child. When a routine is established, gradually increase the length of the practice. Your teacher can advise you on a recommended minimum practice time to aim for, and any other advice you may need on practicing. Varying the activities will make practicing more interesting. Sometimes more than one practice session in a day is helpful. The main thing is to practice consistently every day or at least six days a week.

## **8) What should you do if there are difficulties?**

Talk openly with your teacher over the telephone or at a lesson without your child present. Explain what difficulties you are experiencing. The book *To Learn With Love* by William and Constance Starr can provide some insights into solving problems. Communication is most important.

## **9) What do we do if we need to withdraw from the program?**

If the need to withdraw is necessary, new parents have up to the first 4 weeks to withdraw without penalty for group lessons, and you will be refunded your group lesson fee on a prorated basis. After a month, your group lesson fee for the first term will not be refunded. Withdrawing from private lessons requires 6 weeks written notice, and you will not be refunded for those 6 weeks.

## **10) Who makes the decisions regarding the program?**

The SSSPI is a volunteer organization made up of equal parent and teacher representation. All decisions are voted on by the board. The SSSPI is a non-profit organization. Parent volunteers are needed to fill the positions on the board.

## **11) If we have any concerns what should we do?**

Contact your private teacher, that's what we're here for! We will help you in any way we can as you and your child are getting started. Sometimes talking to "veteran" Suzuki parents is also helpful, if only to know that they have been through what you are experiencing. They will often offer useful suggestions to help you through the beginning stages of learning an instrument that worked for them.

