

# Parents of Band Students

## **How You Fit In**

Always keep in mind that your support is a key element in your child's success with music study. Music achievement requires effort over an extended period of time. You can help your child by:

- Providing a quiet place in which to practice
- Remaining nearby during practice times as often as possible
- Scheduling a consistent, daily time for practice
- Praising your child's efforts and achievements
- Selecting a reputable private lesson teacher that has experience and comes recommended by other parents.

## **What To Do**

To give your child the best possible support, you should:

- Encourage your child to play for family and friends.
- Offer compliments and encourage regularly.
- Expose your child to a wide variety of music, including concerts and recitals.
- Encourage your child to talk with you about his or her lesson.
- Make sure your child's instrument is always in good working order.
- Allow your child to play many types of music, not just study pieces.
- Listen to your child practice and acknowledge improvement.
- Help your child build a personal music library.
- Try to get your child to make a minimum two-year commitment to his or her music studies.

## **What Not To Do**

Your child's progress will be greatly enhanced if you:

- Don't use practice as a punishment
- Don't insist your child play for others when they don't want to.
- Don't ridicule or make fun of mistakes or less-than-perfect playing.
- Don't apologize to others for your child's weak performance.
- Don't start your child on an instrument that is in poor condition.
- Don't expect rapid progress and development in the beginning.

## **If Your Child Loses Interest**

In the event your child loses interest in his or her music studies, don't panic.

- Discuss the situation with your child to determine why their interest is declining.
- Talk to your child's music teacher to see what might be done to rekindle their enthusiasm.
- Encourage your child to stick with lessons for an agreed to period of time.
- Offer increased enthusiasm.

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As parents, our involvement and encouragement is vitally important to our children's progress. The following is a guideline to help your child attain their maximum instrumental achievement. Some of these suggestions apply to all students. Please refer to the specific needs of your child's particular instrument.

1. A regular schedule of practicing (ideally the same time each day) is necessary. When a specific practice time becomes part of your child's everyday routine, it will greatly aid in the mastery of their instrument. Fifteen to twenty minutes daily will make an astounding difference in your child's progress. Remember that children must occasionally be reminded to practice!
2. A music stand is essential for the development of correct playing posture. Folding wire stands can be obtained inexpensively at most music stores.
3. An instruction method book is required and is not covered in the tuition payment. Parents of beginning students can purchase these books at the band parent night, sign-up meeting.

## **Clarinet, Saxophone, and Oboe**

1. A supply of 4 or 5 reeds every few months is required. Students should always have 3 in their instrument case. Beginning students should use a #2 reed and progress to harder reeds as their lip muscles develop. A second year student should be using a #2 ½ or #3 reed. *Rico* reeds are fine for beginners as they are the least expensive. More advanced players may want to try some better brands. *Mitchell Lurie*, *Vandoren*, and *LaVoz* are recommended for clarinet. *Rico Royal*, *LaVoz*, *Vandoren*, and *Hemke* are recommended to sax students. Oboe reeds last longer. Ask your teacher for advice. Two oboe reeds on hand should suffice.
2. A cleaning swab to dry out the inside of the instrument after use is required. Most new rental instruments include them, but they do wear out with time and should be laundered regularly.
3. Reed guards are very practical for any reed, keeping it clean, flat, and dry. The cost is usually around \$2.00 and it can many times double the life expectancy of the reed.
4. Rental instruments come with plastic mouthpieces, which are fine for beginners, but more advanced players should consider a mouthpiece upgrade to make a considerable difference in sound production and tone. For clarinet and sax, a *David Hite* mouthpiece is made of hard rubber and is a reasonably inexpensive, quality alternative.

## **Brass Instruments**

1. Brass players need certain oils to keep their instruments properly lubricated.
2. Valve oil is necessary for trumpets and baritones.
3. Slide oil is needed for trombones
4. All brass instruments need tuning slide grease for the moveable slides
5. All music stores carry cleaning kits, which are important for maintaining a sanitary and functional horn.