

Music Institute of Chicago

January 2020 MIC Suzuki Sentinel

*“The real essence of art turned out to be not something high up and far off – it was right inside my ordinary daily self – If a musician wants to become a finer artist, he must first become a finer person.”
- Shinichi Suzuki*

Greetings, Suzuki families! Welcome to MIC's Suzuki e-newsletter. Each month, we'll be sending you the latest news and information from MIC's Suzuki program. For more information about any of the items in this newsletter, please contact your private teacher. You may also contact Avi Friedlander, Director of the Barston Suzuki Center at afriedlander@musicinst.org or Sarah Montzka, Associate Director of the Barston Suzuki Center at smontzka@musicinst.org.

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Suzuki Family Resources

For information about the MIC Suzuki program including group classes, free practice consultations, and more, please visit our Suzuki Family Resources page at musicinst.org/suzuki-family-resources

Practice Tip Spotlight

When is the best time of day to practice?

Arlene Stokman, Suzuki Piano Teacher

These are hectic times we live in. Most households have both parents working and the children busy with activities, thus making time for their daily instrument practice quite challenging. The importance of daily practice warrants it to be prioritized and written into their daily schedule. When? Whenever they can do it, as long as it gets done.

But for those lucky ones who have more flexibility and want to know when is the best time of day to practice, here are some ideas. The best time can be any time of the day when one is still fresh and can handle challenges with the minimum amount of frustration. This designated “prime practice time” depends on the student’s and parent’s schedule, availability, and varying energy level throughout the day. Once this “prime time” is identified, this should be written down into the student’s daily schedule.

Ideally mornings are the best so one gets it done before “everything else” happens. However, this may not always be possible due to school or work. So then it can be done after school or after dinner... again, as long as it gets done.

The parent of a young student can be of tremendous help by planning what and when to practice. The most challenging part of the student’s repertoire should be practiced during “prime time”. This may be learning a new piece or polishing an old piece for performance. Review pieces can be done throughout the day - during breaks between activities, or after-dinner family concerts. All the while, the parent is making mental notes of what needs to be practiced on the next day’s “prime time”.

And if you don't get everything done today, remember tomorrow is another day... and you will try again.

Aki Tanaka, Suzuki Violin Teacher:

Because every family has a different home environment, the best time to practice will be different for each child. Among my own students, some said the morning works best. Others preferred to practice right after school.

My suggestion is to make practicing a priority in everyday life. Children have sports, homework, and many other activities. Therefore, write down all of their activities and establish priorities. Then stick to the schedule at least a few weeks before adjusting. Some parents have told me that practicing is more important than doing homework, because children get too tired after finishing their homework. Setting priorities may help families figure out how to manage all of the activities in their child's busy everyday life.

Another suggestion is to find as many opportunities as possible to perform on events such as Suzuki Sundays, and Campus Recitals. Instead of only playing a well-polished piece once or twice a year on a recital, students will play better and progress faster when they perform as often as possible. Therefore, children have a consistent short-term goal and purpose for practicing their musical instruments. Some students do not want to perform in front of people for different reasons. If students do not want to perform, I recommend at least taking them to watch concerts as often as possible. Therefore, students may be inspired by seeing other students or professional players.

The final point is, teachers and parents cannot push children to practice. We should encourage them and be their cheerleaders.

Suzuki Sunday

The next Suzuki Sunday will take place on Sunday, February 9, 2020 in Thoresen Performance Center at the Winnetka campus, 300 Green Bay Rd. For more information about these performances, please contact your private teacher.

- 1:00 Piano/Guitar jamboree
- 2:00 Cello/Flute jamboree
- 3:15 Solo recital
- 4:00 Violin/viola jamboree

It's Time for the 100 Day Practice Challenge!

The Challenge: To practice every day for 100 days in a row without missing a day.

When: You must begin the challenge by February 1. Students must complete the challenge by May 25.

Lame Days:

- Each participant is allowed one and only one "lame day" per week.
- Does a "lame day" mean you don't have to practice? NO!
- A "lame day" might be a very busy day when you have little time. So, instead of a full practice, just take out your instrument and perform two review pieces with maximum focus and heart. This counts as a "lame day" practice.

The PARENT Challenge: Join us! Challenge yourself to do something every day for 100 days in a row without missing a day. Possible examples include sit ups, meditation, cleaning a high-traffic spot in your home--you pick!

Celebration: All students who complete the 100-Day Challenge are invited to attend the 100-Day Celebration on June 6 (time and location TBD).

Want to chart your progress? Record a 30-second video either playing your instrument or talking about a daily "win", share it with the [Suzuki at MIC Facebook page](#) and we'll post it!

Dear Parents,

Are practice sessions suddenly stale? Do you ever feel "stuck"? Are you looking for ways to reduce frustration and bring back the joy? If so, then the SAA Parents as Partners video series and our companion discussion club, the Practice Café, may be just the remedies for those practice blues!

Led by MIC Suzuki program Associate Director, Sarah Montzka, Practice Café is an ongoing conversation for parents and practice partners. Practice Café participants will have weekly homework (10 minutes of reading or watching a Parents as Partners video selection) followed up with in-person discussions where we create new practice possibilities.

Here's how to sign up:

- 1) Use this link to register and access the online video library: suzukiassociation.org/parents-as-partners/registration/ (No time for videos? That's okay. Audio "podcast style" versions are also available!).
- 2) Email Sarah Montzka at smontzka@musicinst.org to receive weekly assignments and a curated video list.
- 3) Mark your calendar and attend our first Practice Café discussion group on Sunday, February 23, 2020 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM (Winnetka campus, Room 108).

Please note the online *Parents as Partners* video library requires a one-time fee of \$30 (or check with your studio teacher about the reduced rate for studio participation).

The MIC Practice Café discussion group is free for Suzuki program families.

Sign up and transform your practice dynamic today!

-Sarah Montzka, Associate Director of the Barston Suzuki Center

Register now for the MIC Suzuki Cello Workshop!

The MIC Suzuki cello workshop is a wonderful way for students to strengthen their skills while fueling friendships. Led by internationally recognized Suzuki teachers, special activities include master classes and enrichment activities.

Suzuki Cello Workshop

Saturday & Sunday, February 22 - February 23, 2020

Evanston East Campus

1490 Chicago Avenue, Evanston

Saturday, February 22, 2020: 10:00 am - 8:45 pm

Sunday, February 23, 2020: 12:30 pm - 6:30 pm

The final registration deadline is Saturday, February 7, 2020. Register now at musicinst.org/suzuki-cello-workshop

MIC Suzuki student/faculty news

- Six of MIC Suzuki flute teacher Meret Bitticks' students were accepted into the Flute Performing Ensemble for the Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA) conference on Memorial Day Weekend, 2020: Gabriella Evans, William Godbolt, Hana Levy, Orli Littmann, Linden Wadsworth, and Carmen Yanguas. 24 total students from the Americas were accepted into this audition-only group. In addition, Orli Littmann was accepted to play for the Bart Feller Masterclass (Book 3 and up), and Linden Wadsworth has been asked to play for another SAA conference masterclass.
- In November, Linden Wadsworth and Carmen Yanguas (students of Meret Bitticks) participated in the Chicago Flute Club competition and got Honorable Mention and 3rd place, respectively.
- Matthew Hahn (piano student of Christina Tio) earned honorable mention in the Early Music Division at the Walgreens Concerto Competition on December 28, 2019.
- Noah Kim and Jayden Kim (piano students of Yumy Kim) recently received several honors. Jayden was selected to perform at the master class for Paul Wirth at the SAA Conference and Noah won the overall Junior Division of the Walgreens Concerto Competition on December 28, 2019. In addition, Noah and Jayden are both winners of the DePaul Concerto Competition and will perform as soloists

with the Oistrakh Symphony on February 16, 2020 at 7:30 pm at DePaul University's Gannon Concert Hall.



- Antonia Aliferis (piano student of Yumy Kim) played a full Suzuki Book 2 recital on December 19, 2019.



- Alina Liu (piano student of Yumy Kim) played a full Suzuki Book 4 recital on December 19, 2019.



- Blake and Liam Hartmann (violin students of Gretchen Rebar) performed for their family at Christmas.



- Left to right: Twin sisters Eloise and Arden Donnelly (piano students of Arlene Stokman) performed on Ms. Stokman's holiday recital on December 16, 2019.



- Fun at the Lincolnshire/Lake Forest All Campus recital! Christine Smith, Ryan Shaffer, and Fernanda DiMartino (violin students of Melissa Arbetter) performed on January 18, 2020 at Dickinson Hall.
- MIC Suzuki flute teacher Meret Bitticks was a guest clinician for the Suzuki Association of Minnesota's workshop in November.



- MIC Suzuki cello teacher Tanya Carey taught a Suzuki Book 2 teacher training course in Houston, Texas on January 1-5, 2020.

List of December Suzuki Sunday performers

- **Piano jamboree:** Tiffany Dai, Matthew Hahn, Edie Park, Ethan Riddle, Avery Tin
- **Cello jamboree:** Nathaniel Florin, Emmett Hourihane, Rachel Lee, Dillon Leong, Avery Oppenheim, Caleb Tang, Ella Wimbiscus
- **Violin/viola jamboree:** Ming Moline

Solo Recital



Simon Updegraff



Ella Wimbiscus



Matthew Hahn



Lavie Huang



Emily Hu

2020 Suzuki Events Calendar

- **Suzuki Sundays (Thoresen Performance Center in Winnetka – unless otherwise indicated)**
Sunday, February 9, 2020
Sunday, March 8, 2020
Sunday, April 19, 2020 **Nichols Concert Hall (Twinkle Graduation)**

Mixed Instrument Jamborees – Evanston East Room 9 at 3:00 & 4:00 pm

- Sunday, March 1, 2020
- Sunday, June 7, 2020

Suzuki Workshop Dates

- Violin Workshop (Evanston East)
January 25, 2020: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
January 26, 2020: 12:30 am - 6:30 pm
- Flute Workshop (Winnetka)
January 25, 2020: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm
January 26, 2020: 9:00 am -5:00 pm
- Viola Workshop (Winnetka)
Sunday, January 26, 2020: 12:30 pm - 6:30 pm

- Cello Workshop (Evanston East)
February 22, 2020: 10:00 am - 8:45 pm
February 23, 2020: 12:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Suzuki Level Graduation Recitals

Sunday April 5, 2020 Nichols Concert Hall

1:45 pm - 2:45 pm Rehearsal

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm Performance and trophy presentation

Suzuki Festival Concerts (Nichols Concert Hall, Evanston East Campus)

- Saturday May 16, 2020
Cello Rehearsal: 9:00 am
Cello Concert: 11:30 am
Flute Rehearsal: 1:00 pm
Guitar Rehearsal: 1:00 pm, **Room 9**
Guitar Concert: 2:00 pm
Piano Concert: 3:00 pm
Piano Concert: 4:15 pm
Piano Concert: 5:30 pm
- Sunday May 17, 2020
Flute Concert: 12:30 pm
Violin/Viola rehearsal: 2:00 pm
Violin/Viola Concert: 4:30 pm

100-Day Challenge Celebration

Saturday June 6, 2020 Time and Location TBD