

## The Suzuki Approach - Building on Success

1. **Begin as Early as Possible**
  - Early beginning is important - babies hear sound even before they are born. Children's hearing ability is the strongest from age 0-7.
  - Mother-tongue approach
2. **Develop the Home Environment**
  - Daily CD listening is essential - listen to the whole CD; aim for 1 hour of background listening; make copies of the CD for every single machine at home and in the car (making each track repeat 4 times is also a good idea.) The more the child listens to the CD, the faster he learns and the more motivated he is.
  - Be the mode- parents should bring the child to concerts - e.g. OSM's Children's Corner/Jeunesse Musicale. Show your enthusiasm in music, talk about, share or play music together. The child's interest in music will grow.
3. **Move in Small Steps**
  - This allows the student to master the material with a total sense of success, thereby building confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Each child progresses at his/her own pace.
  - One-point-focus - teach and learn one thing at a time, not two, three or four things. Beware that adults tend to demand too many things at the same time. Ignore the other things that the child is not able to do well yet.
4. **Mother or Father Attends All Lessons**
  - During the lesson the parent acts as a silent partner, only one adult is talking, i.e. the teacher. Parent takes notes, does not echo the teacher. Bring the book to the lesson, but it is for the parent to follow, not for the child to read.
  - At home the parent is the child's most influential helper- providing constant encouragement and motivation.
- Team work - parent/child/teacher - therefore, parents are encouraged to communicate often with the teacher. Ask questions, etc. If parent doesn't play piano, ask teacher to spend last 5 minutes of class to show you, so the parent can be confident and comfortable helping the child at home.
5. **Create an Enjoyable Learning Environment**
  - Praise often and specifically - learn to say 5 good things that you observe from the child (thin that are usually too obvious or taken for granted.) Be specific when you praise, not giving general praises. This will make the parent-child relationship better, especially on the bad days when the child doesn't want to practice. Stay positive, be the cheer leader.
  - Be creative - you can create games with your child. The goals of the games are for repetitions.
  - Practice daily - just like brushing teeth, eating breakfast...the child follows the structure provided by the parents, but they can be involved in the process by having the choice of practicing five or ten minutes later, or which games to play.
6. **Group Lesson**

Group lessons are required attendance. These are a big motivator for the child to watch and learn from others, as well as practicing performing in a relaxed setting. The social time with other pianists builds friendships and fosters community.
7. **Foster an Attitude of Cooperation**, not competition, among students. Be encouraging to other students - you are setting an example of how to be supportive of each other's accomplishments.

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8. **Begin Music Reading** only when the child's aural and instrumental skills are well established.

- Expect 1st year progress to be slow- the first year is for establishing good habits: listening, practicing, developing the ears, learning how to listen, how to break down tasks and developing basic techniques. Be patient. The second and third year's progress will become faster.

9. **Follow the Suzuki Repertoire Sequence**

- Each piece is a building block for the student's development. The order of the pieces are established for special reasons.
- Same repertoire- it is beneficial to the students because they can relate to the music when they hear other students play it. Always try to find opportunities to observe other students, ie. listen to the student before and after your lesson.
- Constant repetition of the old pieces in a student's repertoire is the secret of the performance ability of the Suzuki students.

10. **All Suzuki teachers** receive extensive training on how to teach.

11. **Summer Institute** - [www.suzukimontreal.org](http://www.suzukimontreal.org)

12. **Suzuki Association Website** - [www.suzukiassociation.org/](http://www.suzukiassociation.org/)

If all of these things are done, we create the right environment for the child to develop his/her musical abilities! Aim for long term, not just one or two years of learning. There are seven books in the piano series!

**For more information about lessons in my studio, please visit:**

<https://lacroix.mymusicstaff.com/Welcome>

