

Ways to Help Encourage and Support Your Beginning String Player

Cider Mill Strings Department



Provide him/her a safe place to keep the instrument. Encourage students to be protective of their delicate instruments!

Arrange a regular time for him/her to practice and encourage them to stick to it. Keeping a practice chart at home is a wonderful way to manage practicing. Practicing at least 5 days per week is highly important. Just as an athlete must train to stay fit, a musician must also train consistently.

A room with good light and a music stand is necessary for healthy practice habits.

Make certain that brothers and sisters are away from the student during the practice period. If they have an older sibling or babysitter who plays a stringed instrument, they may assist.

First year students are encouraged to practice a minimum of 15-20 minutes daily. Students may divide their practice time into smaller segments of time if that works better.

Show an interest in his/her practice! Ask them to play for you or show you what they learned at their lesson. Asking them on the day of their lesson is best as that is when the material is most fresh in their minds.

Have "living room" concerts where students can play their songs for the family! Facetime or Skype with relatives is a fun way for students to share what they have learned with relatives that live far away!

Understand that you may hear some new sounds and be positive! Be generous in your support and encouragement!

Help him/her to remember to bring his/her music and instrument on lesson and rehearsal days. Help them set their things by the door the night before morning orchestra.

Emphasize the importance of faithful attendance at his/her lessons, rehearsals and concerts. Early mornings may not be natural for everyone; however, it is over 50% of our course and regular attendance is integral to the success of the student and ensemble. Orchestra rehearsals are a time when we go into greater depth with our music and explore the details of a polished performance.

Understand that playing an instrument will be challenging at times but the greatest joy lies in overcoming these challenges.

Exposure to different types of string playing can be incredibly inspiring. Youtube videos, live concerts (there are many orchestras in our area!), and listening to the radio are all great ways to engage a child in listening to string music. If you are interested in concerts in the area, please see the link on the Cider Mill Strings Website entitled, "Local String Performances."

Parents, students, and teachers working together form the strongest basis for supporting string students in their early years of instruction.