



PO Box 11477 \* Spring, Texas 77391  
(281) 320-9656 \* Andrea@CannonSong.com

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***HASSA Parent Meeting  
February 27, 2015***

***“Helping Your Child Practice – Through Every Stage”***

***Suzuki Triangle***

“A parent is the teacher’s assistant in teaching (the instrument.) The teacher is the parent’s assistant in developing character.” ( Margery Aber, Suzuki Violin Teacher )

***Raising Fine Citizens (Developing Character)***

young beginners cannot remember when they didn’t play  
a house full of music  
daily practice  
a routine; a ‘team’  
Recitals (The Old Town Concert every year....)

***Child Development***

Change from year-to-year  
Listening to their thoughts  
Sharing your feelings

***“Music Builds Bridges In The Brain”***

(an article by Greg Miller in Science NOW!) minimum 2.5 hours a week

***Developing Independence***

From teacher	gigs, apprenticeship
From parents	higher level, “image” within the studio
Peer Approval and Identity	no kids their age?
Practice	Jason Vieaux Practice story
Making it relevant	trips, gigs

***Endurance (or When They – or YOU – Feel like Quitting)***

“Looking at the Long View”  
“A True Story”

***"How to Get Your Child to Practice- Without Resorting to Violence"***

Child Development, pgs. 2; 4-5

Environment, pgs. 28-29

Practice Time, pgs. 64-65

***Some Very Important "Don'ts"***

**Don't Say: 'someday you will be sorry' or 'someday you will thank me'.**

They don't see 'someday', it's too far away. This attitude hurts them, as if you are not really listening. They really are feeling these feelings, so don't minimize it. They take it as you questioning their judgement.

**Don't Make Deals:** 'well, maybe if you stay in six more months you will feel differently...'. They are smart. They can count the days and will hold out. It's a game and it's a trap. Better for both of you to stay out of that one.

**Don't "take time off"** They may promise you they will come back to it, but over 90% never do. Once a discipline is left behind, it is almost impossible to get into the routine again. Then it's too late.

**Don't complain about all the money you've spent!**

***A Games List:***

1. Hang Man – build a person – add more parts and things s/he likes to the picture
2. Smiley Face – one for each direction quickly followed!
3. Race Game – Parent vs Child (choose a toy, mark off spaces to cross)
4. Bead Counter – child pulls a bead for each success
5. Make-A-Square – the old game of "dots" – need four sides to complete one square
6. Tic-Tac-Toe
7. Anything-In-Anything  
(Pennies, M&M's, Erasers...) (Cup, Monkey Barrel, Ice Cream Cone...)

***Polishing Pieces***

Three Stages of Learning:

*Acquisition* (Learning the notes), *Fluency* (Smoothness), *Artistry*

Have child start from anywhere in the piece

While playing, have them move around in different ways (move foot, look up, look down, stick out elbow, etc)

Interview (ask polite questions while playing)

Rude Audience (make faces, comments in funny voices and noises)

Say the Melody Notes all the way through (fingerings...?)

Perform as many "Practice Concerts" as possible

Enlarge Image



## Music Builds Bridges in the Brain

By Greg Miller  
*ScienceNOW* Daily News  
16 April 2008

**SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA**--Taking music lessons can strengthen connections between the two hemispheres of the brain in children, but only if they practice diligently, according to a study reported here 14 April at the annual meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society. The findings add to a long-running debate about the effects of musical training on the brain.

### Keep practicing.

Musical training may build connections between the left and right sides of the brain for children who practice regularly.

CREDIT: DAVID DE LOSSY/GETTY IMAGES

In 1995, a study led by neurologist and neuroscientist Gottfried Schlaug found that professional musicians who started playing before the age of 7 have an unusually thick corpus callosum, the bundle of axons that serves as an information superhighway between the left and right sides of the brain. Schlaug and colleagues saw this as evidence that musical training can bolster neural connections, but skeptics pointed to the possibility that the musicians had bigger corpora callosa to

begin with. Perhaps their neural wiring had enhanced their musical pursuits instead of the other way around.

To investigate further, Schlaug, now at Harvard Medical School in Boston, and colleagues including Marie Forgeard and Ellen Winner at Boston College, studied 31 children. The researchers collected detailed magnetic resonance images of the children's brains at age 6 and again at 9. Of the original group, six children faithfully practiced at least 2.5 hours a week in the time between the scans. In these budding musicians, a region of the corpus callosum that connects movement-planning regions on the two sides of the brain grew about 25% relative to the overall size of the brain. Children who averaged only an hour or two of weekly practice and those who dropped their instruments entirely showed no such growth. All of the children practiced instruments, such as a piano or a violin, that required two hands.

In every subject, the researchers found that the size of increase in the corpus callosum predicted the improvement on a nonmusical test that required the children to tap out sequences on a computer keyboard. Schlaug says the findings should settle the earlier debate by showing that musical training can enhance neural connections related to planning and coordinating movements *between* the two hands. His team is now following up with the same children to investigate whether their training had other benefits, such as improved memory or reasoning skills.

"I'm very excited about this," says Steven Swinnen, a neuroscientist who studies movement control at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium. "Everyone thinks musical training results in changes in brain structure and function," Swinnen says, but so far the hype has exceeded the evidence. Although he'd like to see the findings replicated in more subjects, Swinnen thinks the study is one of the first to provide a strong suggestion that training of any kind can cause substantial changes to the axon bundles that link together far flung regions of the brain. Whether training later in life can change the brain in a similar manner is a promising topic for future study, he says.