



The Quarter Note

Volume 47 Issue 2 Spring 2017

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News from Council

News from Council	1
Calendar of Events	2
NBRMTA	
Branch Reports	3
Annual Conference & AGM	4-5
Student Composer Competition	6
Canada 150 Virtual Competition	7
Flag Facts	7
Reflections from Baltimore	8-9
Membership Classes	10
Code of Ethics	11
NSRMTA 80 TH Anniversary	12
Dues Notice	13
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Out of Sync Child	15
Senses Can Hit a Nerve	15-16
Honour Bands: Why & How	17-20
Why Spring Time is "Prime Time to Fill Your Teaching Schedule"	22
5-Step Plan When Life Makes Practice Difficult or Impossible	23-24
7 Rules for Texting & Emailing Parents	25-27
NBRMTA Yearly Calendar	29-30
NBRMTA Directory	31

The 2017 MTNA/CFMTA Commemorative Conference in Baltimore March 18-22 was a wonderful opportunity for professional development! There were lots of wonderful workshops and concerts.

Barbara Long [president] and Catherine Bartlett [vice-president] attended as the NBRMTA delegates to the CFMTA National Executive Council Meeting held in Baltimore, Friday March 17.

Please see page 8-9 for reflections on this conference from Catherine.

The CFMTA/FCAPM National Piano Competition was held on March 20 and 21, 2017 at the MTNA/CFMTA Commemorative Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Paul Williamson from Manitoba was the first place winner with Christine Pan [PQ] and Markus Masaites [BC] placing second and third respectively. Please visit <http://www.cfmta.org/en/national-piano-competition/> for complete details, competitor bios, adjudicator bios and sponsors.

NBRMTA Canada 150 Virtual Competition - NBRMTA is hosting a virtual music competition to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday. Please see pages 7 for details.

NBRMTA Canada Music Week Poster Competition - NBRMTA will be offering a poster competition in the fall of 2017 to continue the celebration of Canada's 150th birthday. More details to follow.

NBRMTA Annual Conference and General Meeting - This year's event will take place Saturday, June 17 in Woodstock. Council has invited Jennifer van Gennip to present workshops on teaching children with learning disabilities and using music to teach social skills. More details in the next *Quarter Note*. Plan to attend and invite a friend or your local school's music teacher to join you! See pages 4-5 for more details and a registration form.

NBRMTA Student Composer Competition is under way. Please see pages 6 for more information.

Articles, reviews and announcements for the Quarter Note are welcome.

Please send to editor, Barbara Long, at editor@nbrmta.com

Deadline for next issue is July 15

Mark these dates:

If you have any dates for this newsletter calendar please send to editor@nbrmta.com

May 31-June 3 - NB Provincial Music Festival Finals, Mount Allison University, Sackville

June 9 -10 - Nova Scotia RMTA's annual conference and 80th anniversary celebration. NBRMTA members are invited. The conference will include RCM Workshops with Janet Lopinski.

June 16 - NBRMTA Council Meeting in Hartland

June 17 - NBRMTA Conference and AGM in Woodstock



If you have dates or other information to post on the new website, please send to webmaster@nbrmta.com

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From Fredericton ...

The Fredericton Music Teachers' Association has been busy this winter and spring. In January, we had a business meeting followed by an intriguing discussion led by Brenda Smith entitled: "First impressions are important: What do you cover in the very first lesson?". It was both interesting and inspiring to learn about the different approaches teachers use in the first lesson.

On February 11, we hosted a "Canadian Music and Original Composition Recital" at Christ Church Parish Church. Six participants in this year's Original Works Competition performed their compositions and received their awards at this event. The recital was a nice mixture of Canadian compositions, original compositions, and some non-Canadian works as well.

In March, we held our annual auction and luncheon, hosted by Jane Bowden. The auction is always a highlight of the year where we share many laughs and raise money for the association. We thank Chris Freeman for being such an entertaining auctioneer!

This year, the FMTA offered multiple recitals at Christ Church Parish Church in March and April to give students many opportunities to perform prior to the Fredericton Music Festival. On March 25, we hosted an Intermediate and Senior Recital. Recitals were offered for students of all levels on March 26, April 2, and April 8.

The FMTA is embarking on a big project to raise funds to purchase a new piano. Our goal is to raise \$65,000 within a two-year period. We have a dedicated piano committee that has been working very hard this year. Please visit our Piano Fund website at frederictonpianofund.com for more information or to give a donation. Fundraising is underway and there will be many special activities and events planned to help us reach our goal.

The Fredericton Branch wishes you all the best in your teaching during this busy time of year.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Bettle,
President, FMTA



From Moncton ...

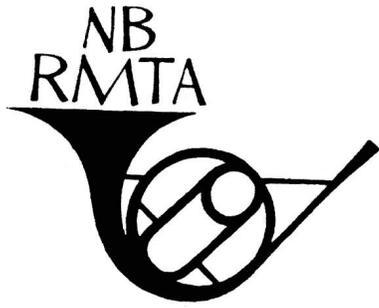
We began 2017 with an informal meeting and lovely luncheon at the Manuka Restaurant.

Our February meeting was a brainstorming one for ideas to involve more of our teachers and their students in various activities – initially to commemorate Canada's 150th anniversary – but hopefully to carry on in future years.

In March, our agenda was a full one. We made preparations for and held our annual "Festival Practice Recital" where students can test run their festival pieces or other repertoire to prepare for their upcoming Music Festival performances. Our annual scholarship application forms were reviewed and distributed to local area high schools. Proposals from both the Moncton Community Concert Association and the NB Symphony Foundation were entertained and voted upon. Welcome bags for the adjudicators of the Greater Moncton Music Festival were filled and distributed.

Two regular meetings, plus our annual meeting in May and a final recital, will finish out the 2016-2017 year.

Respectfully submitted
Doris Sabeau
President, MMTA



2017 Conference and Annual General Meeting

Saturday, June 17

Woodstock Baptist Church

694 Main Street, Woodstock, NB

Bag of Tricks for Your 21st Century Studio

Are you finding that more and more of your students have needs that aren't being met by your traditional methods?

Are you Interested in offering group classes now and then for your private students, but have no idea what to do with all those kids at different levels at the same time?

Are you itching for a few new ideas to incorporate into your teaching, on and off the bench?

Jennifer van Gennip will be here to offer you two workshops that will give you a (big!) bag of tricks to take back to your studio or classroom to help you better meet the needs of students on the autism spectrum and/or with sensory/coordination considerations, and revitalize your group or classroom sessions with new activities that will be an instant hit with the kids.

University Preparedness

Have you ever wondered if you've prepared your students adequately for continuing their education at the university level? Do you wonder what universities are looking for during entrance auditions?

Get some answers during our panel discussion on University Preparedness when we hear the perspective of both the university professors and students.

Tentative Schedule

8:30	Registration and coffee
9:00	Bag of Tricks Workshop 1
10:15	Coffee Break
10:30	Workshop 2
11:30	Stretching
11:45	Panel discussion on University Preparedness
12:30	AGM Lunch

Registration Fee

Member \$40
Non-member \$45
Student \$20
Lunch – additional \$12

Registration Deadline - June 12

Recommended Reading - *The Out of Sync Child* by Carol Stock Kranowitz - See page 15

Plan to attend and invite a friend and your local school's music teacher!

Jennifer van Gennip



Jennifer van Gennip holds a Bachelor of Music degree with Honors in Piano Performance from the University of Western Ontario. During her studies, Jennifer represented New Brunswick at two national competitions and won numerous scholarships for both performance and academics.

After graduating, Jennifer joined the Piano Faculty at the Merriam Music Centre in Oakville, Ontario, teaching private and group piano classes, preschool music classes, and helping with curriculum development as the Assistant Head of the Piano Department.

In 2007, shortly after moving to Halifax, NS, Jennifer was contracted by a music education software company to develop the curriculum, lesson plans, and teacher resources that are used with their software in schools and studios around North America, the UK, South Korea, and India. While in Halifax she also maintained a successful private studio and began adjudicating music festivals.

Since then Jennifer has become very interested in the many benefits of music groups for children with special learning needs. She has focused her studies on bringing the best of what today's top music educators are teaching and tailoring for the special needs student, particularly those living on the autism spectrum. She has presented on this topic in both Canada and the US.

Jennifer now lives in Barrie, ON with her husband and their three children and is active as a teacher, workshop clinician, and adjudicator.

NBRMTA Annual Meeting & Conference Registration Form

To register, please email the following form by June 12 to: Rita Raymond-Millet at jrmilray@nb.sympatico.ca
For further information please call Rita at 506-849-3917

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

_____ NBRMTA Member \$40

_____ Non-Member \$45

_____ Student \$20

_____ Yes, I'd like to order lunch at \$12

Registration fee coffee breaks. Please indicate any food allergies _____

Payment can be made by e-transfer to treasurer@nbrmta.com or PayPal through the website.



NBRMTA Student Composer Competition

Ross Simonds [NBRMTA Student Composer Competition Convenor]

The 2017 NBRMTA Student Composer Competition is in process even as this note goes to print. Nine entries were received by the submission deadline, April 15th, and are now being compiled with all the necessary information and documentation for the Adjudicator, Beverly Porter, to complete her work by the 3rd week in May.

Our best wishes to Beverly as she looks at compositions represented from various places around our province, and to all the students who await results.

The NBRMTA Student Composer Competition is an annual competition. Students can enter their original compositions in various categories as per the chart and guidelines that follow. Compositions will be judged, with eligible winners advancing to the CFMTA National Student Composer Competition.

2017 Adjudicator - Beverly Porter

Beverly Porter was born in Calgary, Alberta and grew up in Vancouver. By age 19, she had completed the pedagogy requirements for both the Associate of Royal Conservatory, Toronto and the Licentiate of Trinity College, London. This was followed by studies with Alberto Guerrero and Clifford Poole in Toronto. Beverly obtained a Bachelor of Music in voice and composition at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. She continues to teach piano in Kingston and her compositions are both inspired by, and written for, her young students.



Beverly is a founding member of Red Leaf Pianoworks and has written and published 6 collections of piano works which include "Lady Bug and Friends," "Land of the Silver Birch" and "Into the Woods." Her duets and trios, published separately include "Turquoise Tangle, Fireweed Rag and Don't Bug Me." A complete listing is available on the Red Leaf Pianoworks website.

Janet Hammock Composition Awards

NBRMTA Member, Janet Hammock offers two awards in the amount of \$25 each to be awarded annually to the best original compositions, in the opinion of the adjudicator, written by students 15 years of age and under.

Born in Vancouver, BC. Janet Hammock holds an Artist Diploma from the University of Toronto, and both Master and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from Yale University.

A university professor of music for 31 years, Dr. Hammock was appointed Professor Emeritus of Music at Mount Allison University in 2003. For over 50 years, her recitals of solo and collaborative piano music have been presented across Canada, in the United States, and in Europe. She consistently showcases new works written especially for her by Canadian composers including James G. Code, Anthony Genge, Richard Gibson, Martin Kutnowski, Alasdair MacLean, Michael Miller, Kevin Morse, and Ann Southam. In 2009 Dr. Hammock was honoured as one of 50 Ambassadors of Canadian Music by the Canadian Music Centre -- a lifetime distinguished achievement award.

She is a member of the CFMTA, the NBRMTA, the Sackville Music Teachers' Association, is a frequent examiner for Mount Allison University Local Centres, and enjoys festival adjudicating.

Inquiries may be directed to Ross Simonds at cmw@nbrmta.com or 506.474.2905



NBRMTA Celebrate Canada Virtual Music Competition 2017

To commemorate Canada's 150th birthday, NBRMTA has launched its first virtual competition.

The competition is designed in the same manner as the NB Music Competition that has been held now for quite a few years.

There are two significant differences for this competition:

- The two selections will both be by Canadian composers.
- The competition is not live – entries are being sent electronically.

We received nine submissions for this competition – all by pianists. They are spread over three categories: Division 1 consisting of Grades 1 and 2; Division 2 consisting of Grades 3 - 5; and, Division 3 consisting of Grades 6-8.

The performance entries will be adjudicated by NBRMTA members.

The written comments will be sent to the competitors by June 1.

Results will be announced on July 1, Canada Day.



10 Things You May Not Know About Canada's Flag



1. The flag is known as the Maple Leaf or l'Unifolié, which means "the one-leafed" in French.
2. We got the Maple Leaf flag after Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson brought up the idea of a new flag in 1964.
3. There were over 5,000 designs submitted and looked at before George Stanley's Maple Leaf was picked.
4. The Maple Leaf was made the official flag of Canada and raised on Parliament Hill on February 15, 1965.

5. The Canadian Red Ensign was the unofficial flag of Canada since the 1890s until we got the new Maple Leaf in 1965.

6. The dimensions of the flag are twice as long as it is wide, which is unique to Canada. No other national flag uses those dimensions.

7. Red and white, the colours of the flag, are the official colours of Canada as declared by King George V back in 1921.

8. Want a flag? The ones flown on Parliament Hill in Ottawa are replaced everyday, and given away to citizens for free, BUT there's a 40-60 year wait to get one.

9. In 1984, The National Flag was launched into outer space on NASA's Challenger space shuttle with the 1st Canadian astronaut, Marc Garneau.

10. In 1982, the National Flag went to the highest point in the world when Canadian mountaineer Laurie Skreslet took it to Mount Everest.

Source: CBC Kids

Reflections from Baltimore

Music Teachers' National Association's National Conference 2017

Submitted by Catherine Bartlett, NBRMTA Vice-President

In 1998, CFMTA president, Hugheen Ferguson, having recently attended an MTNA conference, invited Dr. Gary Ingle, MTNA Executive Director and CEO, to Canada to speak to her executive committee about the possibility of a joint conference between these two organizations. In 2004, an official steering committee was formed and in 2007, the COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE: EXPLORING PEDAGOGICAL DIVERSITY became a reality with Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Associations and the Royal Conservatory of Music, acting as hosts for this memorable event. It was the first time in the 121 year history of the MTNA, that their national conference would be held outside of the USA. One of the largest music conferences ever held in Canada, the Collaborative Conference offered the 2300 attendees a plethora of exciting concerts, recitals, masterclasses, competitions, poster sessions and workshops, all with a strong Canadian presence and a great sense of CFMTA/FCAPM pride.

CFMTA/FCAPM announced earlier this year that we would once again be collaborating with the Music Teachers' National Association (MTNA). I recently had the privilege to attend Music Teachers' National Association's Commemorative Conference at the beautiful Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel and Conference Center located in the inner harbour of Chesapeake Bay in downtown Baltimore, March 18-22, 2017. I attended in my capacity as NBRMTA Vice-President and delegate.

It was very interesting to attend the CFMTA council meetings for the first time and hear of innovative teaching, the competitions and initiatives being carried out at the national level across the country. The reports on the working of the CFMTA were informative and gave a good picture of this national body which serves the teachers of all provinces in the country and provides an excellent network for all.

An illustrious Canada 150 project representing Canadian composers and artists was presented at the conference as a gift to MTNA. This project represented hours of calling for submissions, receiving entries and selection for inclusion in the presentation. CFMTA's Canada Music Week Chair, Po Yeh, was the lead on this memorable book project.

The opening ceremonies of the MTNA conference made special reference to the background of Calixa Lavallée, the composer of our Canadian National Anthem and his connection to both countries over the years. It was wonderful to hear both anthems played so well by the Eastman Brass group. The conference was well organized and provided great diversity as far as interest areas. I very much enjoyed attending the concerts by the young students at the Junior level and at the senior level in composition as well as the different divisions and seeing the level of achievement of these students who had reached this place of national recognition.

This Activity Report will highlight the sessions that I attended

Saturday March 18 Pre-Conference Event "Pedagogy Saturday"

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 8:00-9:00 am | Musician Wellness: Overcoming Obstacles – Advocating for musicians |
| 9:15-10:15 am | Recreational Music Making (Practical Solutions for the Classroom)
Jazz Improvisation – Bradley Sowash |
| 10:30-11:30 am | Technology for Teaching; ipad and Future of Teaching |
| 1:00-2:00 pm | Technology for Instant Calm; Managing Performance Anxiety |
| 2:15 – 3:15 pm | Thriving/Surviving: The Entrepreneurial Musician |
| 3:30-4:30 pm | Learning from overcoming obstacles with Leon and Leah Fleicher |

Official Opening /Remarks and Concert

Sunday March 19

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 8:00-9:00 am | Exhibitor's Showcase – FJH Music Company |
|--------------|--|

- 9:15-10:15 am Improvisation Master Class in Classical, Popular and World Music Styles
- 10:30-12:00 am Exhibit Hall Representation
- 1:00-2:00 pm Exhibitor's Showcase - Alfred Music
- 3:30 -5:00 pm National Student Winners Concert (Junior)

Monday, March 20

- 8:00-9:00 am Exhibitor's showcase – Stipes Publishing, LLC “Piano for Adult Beginners”
- 9:15–10:15 am Connecting the World Through Music: Teaching in Kenya in person and online
- 10:30-10:50 am Better Than “Good” – Words Carry Weight
- 1:00-2:00 pm Exhibitor's Showcase – Neil A. Kjos Music Co.
- 2:15-3:15 pm Panel: North American Innovative Teaching in USA and Canada
- 3:30–5:00 pm National Student Winners Concert (Senior)
- 7:00-9:30 pm Canadian Piano Competition National Semi-Finals

The workshops on improvisation and performance anxiety applied directly to studio work and recreational music-making and teaching older beginners; use of technology in teaching will be useful in class instruction. Also present were the representatives of major music companies with materials for teaching to showcase to teachers. There are always new materials to capture the imagination of young students and introduce them to history, theory and performance selections. Companies have been created to provide apps for organizing your studio, managing financial aspects of the studio, practice apps for young students and testing knowledge and progress of young musicians.

Of particular inspiration to me were sessions that demonstrated the strength of character in musicians who have faced illness or injury and have persevered despite incredible challenges. “When Your Body is Your Instrument – Research advocating for health care/recovery/career impact” by Katherine Rohrer was thought-provoking, to be sure. I also was affected by the session, “Words carry great weight” as Andrea McAlister, NCTM, Oberlin College, Ohio explored how best to use our words to create maximum impact and excitement. She focused on the words we use when teaching and the immense effect our words can have on an individual. Words can lift and words can damage so quickly. Words can inspire and words can hurt, even without intension. It was a challenging reminder to choose words carefully in the studio, in the classroom and perhaps could be applied to many of our other exchanges and conversations. A conference like this serves our need to continue to seek information and continue to learn as much as possible.

Thank you for the privilege of attending this Commemorative Conference on behalf of NBRMTA!





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NEW!!

NBRMTA Classes of Membership

NBRMTA's Act of Incorporation has been amended to allow for three classes of membership:

I. Active Registered Membership

1. Active Registered Membership is open to anyone who:
 - A. Is eighteen years of age or older
 - B. Is living or teaching in New Brunswick
 - C. Possesses one or more of the following qualifications:
 - i. Has a degree or diploma equivalent to that of a teaching/performing associateship or licentiate from any School of Music, Conservatory, or University recognized by the Board of Examiners.
 - ii. Has been teaching music in a professional capacity and under conditions satisfactory to the Board of Examiners for at least two years, or has passed such tests and examinations and has satisfied such conditions as to teaching experience as may be required by the Board of Examiners.
 - iii. Is a member in good standing of a Registered Music Teachers' Association of a province other than New Brunswick and who presents a letter of transfer and submits a New Brunswick application form.
 - iv. Has an established reputation in the fields of performance and teaching, and the application is approved by the Board of Examiners.
2. Active Registered members shall be entitled to use the designation "Registered Music Teacher" or the abbreviation "R.M.T." so long as dues are not in arrears.
3. An applicant for membership shall submit an official application form and required documentation as determined by the Board of Examiners and outlined in the current Policy & Procedure Manual of the Association.

II. Active Affiliate Membership

1. Active Affiliate Membership is open to anyone who:
 - A. Is sixteen years of age or older
 - B. Is living or teaching in New Brunswick
 - C. Possesses one or more of the following qualifications:
 - i. Has a certificate equivalent to that of Grade 8 Practical and Advanced Rudiments from any School of Music, Conservatory, or University recognized by the Board of Examiners.
 - ii. Has satisfied such conditions as to teaching experience as may be required by the Board of Examiners.
 - iii. Is an Affiliated member in good standing of a Registered Music Teachers' Association of a province other than New Brunswick and who presents a letter of transfer and completes a New Brunswick application form.
2. Active Affiliated members shall be entitled to use the designation "Affiliated Music Teacher" or the abbreviation "A.M.T." so long as dues are not in arrears.
3. An applicant for membership shall submit an official application form and required documentation as determined by the Board of Examiners and outlined in the current Policy & Procedure Manual of the Association.

III. Life Membership

An Active Member shall be made a Life Member upon recommendation of the Council. A Life Member shall have all the privileges of membership without payment of annual dues. They will be responsible for their own insurance premium.

NBRMTA CODE OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

The CODE OF ETHICAL STANDARDS expresses our commitment to a high standard of the teaching of music in the community and ethical practices in dealing with students, parents and colleagues. Ethical behaviour on the part of all members enhances the professionalism of the organization and thereby, every member.

- All business matters should be conducted in a professional manner. Be factual, courteous and business-like in relationships with students, parents, and community.
- Students shall be treated with respect, consideration and patience. Every teacher is responsible for the well-being of every student during the time that such student is in the teachers' charge
- Members of the Association may fairly compete with one another, but misrepresentation of one's own or disparagement of another member's professional standing is unethical. Teachers shall make no false claims regarding themselves or their pupils.
- It is unethical, either by inducements, innuendoes, insinuations, or other acts to recruit either directly or indirectly, a pupil of another teacher.
- On undertaking to give instruction to a student who has formerly received instruction from another teacher, a member should be satisfied that the student has formally discontinued instruction with the former teacher.
- A teacher must be honest, candid, encouraging and constructive when advising a student as to his/her capabilities.
- When asked for an evaluation or a recommendation of a specific colleague, you have a responsibility to be honest, but it is unethical to criticize adversely that teacher's work.

As members of NBRMTA, we are professional music teachers who subscribe to and follow the conduct set out in our Code of Ethical Standards in both spirit and letter.



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The Nova Scotia RMTA is celebrating its 80th Anniversary - NBRMTA is invited to join the celebration!

NSRMTA 80TH ANNIVERSARY AGM & EVENTS 2017

Maritime Conservatory of Performing Arts, Halifax

Registration fee: \$75



FRIDAY June 9th 2017 [Tentative Schedule]

9:30-10:00 Registration (outside Room 4 MCPA)

10:00 – 11:45 Master Class with Dr. Janet Lopinski – advanced students playing Chopin pieces – by invitation only. (Room 4)

*Strings master class (Room 6) Set up in Room 3 for Lunch.

11:45 – 12:45 LUNCH Paid for by RCM (Room 3)

12:45 – 1:45 New Celebration Theory – Advanced levels 9, 10 and ARCT syllabus – Dr. Janet Lopinski (Room 6)

1:45 – 2:00 Break (Room 6)

2:00 – 3:30 Chopin Mazurkas Dr. Janet Lopinski (Room 6)

3:30 – 4:30 Scholarship Competition winners' concert (Room 4)

Dinner on your own

7:00 p.m. Optional Concert The Scotia Festival at the Dunn Theatre, Dalhousie Arts Centre. Featuring: Djokic Family Concert. Kodaly Duo: Marc Djokic, violin, Denise Djokic, cello. Beethoven Kreutzer Sonata: Marc Djokic, violin; Lynn Stodola, piano. Faure Quartet in G minor: Marc Djokic, violin; Philippe Djokic, viola; Denise Djokic, cello; Lynn Stodola, piano. Ticket price, special for NSRMTA/NBRMTA members \$15.

SATURDAY June 10th 2017

9:30-10:30 AGM (MCPA Room 6)

10:30-10:45 Break (Room 6)

10:45 – 11:15 Dr. Jan McMillan – paper presentation (Room 6)

11:15 – 12:45 ARCT Piano Viva Voce demonstration examination – Dr. Janet Lopinski – (MCPA Room 4)

*1:30 – 3:00 Gala luncheon – University Club – Dalhousie University. Forrest Kinney, DVD greetings and performing variations on a Happy Birthday and songs from Nova Scotia. Greetings from Dr. Janet Lopinski, Dr. Jan McMillan, Dr. Gary Ingle, Dr. Jennifer Farrell.

3:00 – 3:30 Power Walk with Paula Rockwell

3:30 – 5:00 Body and Voice Workshop with Paula Rockwell – University Club

Dinner on your own

7 p.m. Optional Concert - Scotia Festival - Dunn Theatre, Dalhousie University. Piano work - John Novack. Bartok Rhapsody No. 2 James Ehnes, violin; John Novacek, piano. Janacek string Quartet: James Ehnes, violin; Giora Schmidt, violin; Richard O'Neill, viola; Ani Azavoorian, cello. Mendelssohn Octet: James Ehnes, violin; Marc Djokic, violin; Giora Schmidt, violin; Airi Yoshioka, violin; Richard O'Neill, viola; Kerry Kavalo, viola; Denise Djokic, cello; Ani Azavoorian, cello. Ticket price \$35/30.

Please note: The \$75 registration fee includes all workshops, two special catered lunches including the Gala Luncheon at the University Club and all breaks. The only additional expenses would be the optional concerts in the evening.

To register contact Lorna Wanzel at lwanzel@bellaliant.net

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506-652-6620 <http://www.nbmusicians.com>



NBRMTA Membership Dues

Deadline: July 1, 2017

- Dues are: \$115 [with insurance]
\$ 80 [without insurance]
\$ 85 [Student with insurance]

The following methods are available for paying dues:

- E-transfer to treasurer@nbrmta.com
- PayPal at www.nbrmta.com/membership
- Cheque or money order made payable to NBRMTA and mailed to: Beverly McArthur, Treasurer at 449 Louis Street, Dieppe, NB E1A 6X7

Membership renewal form available at

www.nbrmta.com/membership

Dues not postmarked by July 1 are subject to a \$20 late fee.

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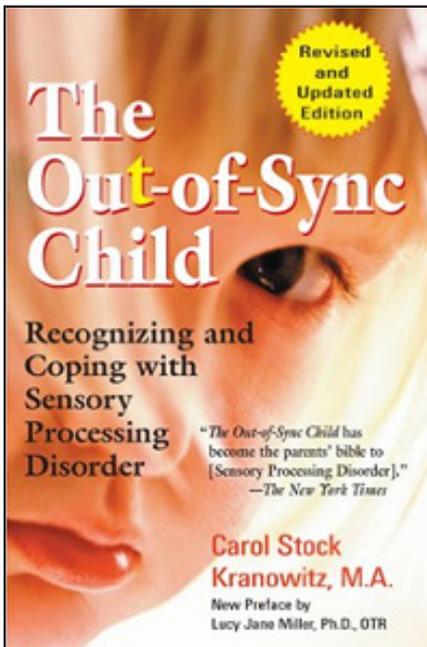


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The Out-of-Sync Child

by Carol Stock Kranowitz, M.A.



The *Out-of-Sync Child* broke new ground by identifying Sensory Processing Disorder, a common but frequently misdiagnosed problem in which the central nervous system misinterprets messages from the senses. This newly revised edition features additional information from recent research on vision and hearing deficits, motor skill problems, nutrition and picky eaters, ADHA, autism, and other related disorders.

Review by parent ... This is a great book about sensory integration disfunction that helps parents understand why their children react the way they do to certain stimuli. There is a companion book called *The Out of Sync Child has Fun* which is also good. It has activities to help children cope with their over or under stimulated nervous systems.

The *Out-of-Sync Child* has been:

- Translated into many foreign languages
 - Awarded Exceptional Parent magazine's Symbol of Excellence
 - Selected as one of Brain, Child magazine's top 10 books about parenting children with disabilities
 - Selected as one of 19 books that librarians say changed their lives
- Featured in Oprah magazine as one of the books that made a difference to Rachel Griffiths

Certain Senses Can Hit a Nerve

Sourced from The Irish Times Health Plus, April 24, 2012

Sensory issues often accompany autism or attention deficit disorder but sensory processing disorder is a standalone condition, writes Sheila Wayman.

When Carol Stock Kranowitz was a teacher of music and movement at a nursery school in Washington DC, she used to be puzzled by the occasional child who would not take part in the fun activities all the other young children enjoyed.

There was the boy who turned away, covering his ears with his hands, when music was played; the girl who lay on the floor "too tired" even to strike two rhythm sticks together; the boy who buzzed around the room while all the other pre-schoolers sat down singing songs. Their behaviour disrupted the fun for others.

"These children annoyed me. They made me feel like a bad teacher," she admits in a subsequent book, *The Out-of-Sync Child*. They were intelligent and healthy and did not have any identifiable special needs; some seemed to misbehave on purpose, others were listless – the one trait in common was an inability to enjoy activities that children usually relish.

It was only after a paediatric occupational therapist, who was also a parent at the school, offered to give staff a 90-minute workshop on early identification of problems stemming from neurological inefficiency, that the pieces fell into place for Kranowitz.

What is known as sensory processing disorder (SPD) is where there is difficulty in handling information that comes in through the senses – it can cause a "traffic jam" in the brain, resulting in over-responsive children to have, perhaps, a complete meltdown, or under-responsive children to withdraw from what is going on around them.

Sensory issues are a common feature of autism or attention deficit disorder but SPD is a standalone condition.

The three core sensory systems that most commonly cause problems are the tactile system (sense of touch), the vestibular system, which is our sense of movement and where we are in space, and the proprioceptive sense

which covers our muscles, joints and body parts.

“To say that a person has SPD, the person has to show problems with touch and/or movement.

“If a person has a visual problem or an auditory problem, that is not enough,” says Kranowitz who, after that initial workshop, felt she had a mission to help other teachers understand that children’s behaviour is filled with patterns.

“The child who complains about the tags in his T-shirt; hates foods like rice and crunchy peanut butter; doesn’t react well when somebody touches him unexpectedly so he is always punching the other kid when they are standing in line; wipes grandma’s kisses off his face” – that child has tactile over-responsivity.

“What we are looking for is children who have repeated, constant, atypical responses to touch and/or movement,” explains Kranowitz in a phone interview from her home outside Washington DC, ahead of a visit to Ireland next month.

She will give a one-day workshop in Dublin organised by Sensational Kids, a therapy centre in Kildare where children with sensory issues are treated in a state-of-the-art sensory integration gym.

Its chief executive, Karen Leigh, says, “*The Out-of-Sync Child* is often the first book parents of children with sensory issues are advised to read.

“Early intervention for SPD is crucial, when there is still much brain development going on and to help avert a snowballing of difficulties.

“SPD is not something you grow out of, it is something you grow into,” says Kranowitz.

Many children with SPD are extremely bright, which confounds adults. They may love math but can’t put one foot in front of the other and don’t have friends.

Their errant behaviour is not because they “won’t” but because they “can’t” and if it is affecting their daily lives, or those around them, a teacher or parent needs to act.

She tells parents to put on imaginary sensory goggles and ask themselves what stimulus is the child trying to avoid or what is he striving to get?

The first category, the avoiders, are the ones with their hands over their ears, or caps down over their eyes or who hide under the table; the sensory-cravers are the ones who are jiggling about all the time and climbing up the bookcase.

Physical therapy can greatly improve SPD, which has a wide range of symptoms depending on the type. If the condition is not recognised, it can go on to derail learning and cause psychological problems through low self-esteem.

Occupational therapists put children with SPD on a “sensory diet”, which is a programme of physical activities tailored to help over-ride their current sensory responses and develop new ones.

“Often techniques are the same for the over-responsive kid who is avoiding a sensation and for the child who needs more sensory input,” says Kranowitz.

Take swinging for instance: an over-responsive child, who is fearful to let his feet leave the ground, is introduced to the sensation very gently.

“At first it will be very scary; eventually that therapy builds neuronal connections which make it possible for the child to become comfortable with movement.”

For children who crave movement, the therapist would allow some spinning, but not as much as the child wants, before stopping the swing and pushing it back and forth in a different direction, or taking the child off and tipping him upside down so the head is in a dramatically different position.

Movement is key to improvements and some people would argue that it is no coincidence that SPD seems to be on the rise at a time when children’s lives are increasingly more sedentary.

“This is the big issue, are we over-identifying children or are there actually more of them?” asks Kranowitz.

Honour Bands: Why and How

by Dr. Alan Klaus

Many of my fondest musical memories are from my participation in various honour bands. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to play with the National Youth Band of Canada, the National Concert Band (now the Canadian Wind Orchestra), the World of Winds in Norway and Germany, and the International Youth Wind Orchestra in Sweden.

I distinctly remember my first year with the National Youth Band of Canada, in 1998 in Vancouver, and how the hair stood up on the back of my neck during our opening performance. I had never played with such a talented group before, so the high level of music-making made a big impact. But there was also something special about how quickly students from across the county bonded in that environment. Looking around the stage during that concert and recognizing those bonds, the unified purpose and friendship made the musical journey even better. I can definitely point to the overall experience of that week, and specifically the opening concert, as one of the major factors influencing my decision to apply to university music programs the next fall.

Along with a huge up-side, students' participation in national or provincial honour bands also requires some sacrifices. There are application and registration fees, travel and food money, missed classes and rehearsals at school, and the need to reschedule or drop other commitments. For many students (and teachers), some of those issues may create enough resistance that they avoid even auditioning for honour groups. Factoring in the busy schedules of today's students, including extra-curricular activities, jobs, and volunteer work, such sacrifices can seem even more difficult to justify.

That said, I believe the experience provided by these fine programs warrants serious consideration and a concerted effort by both teachers and students to conquer the challenges. So, this article has two main focuses: the "why" and the "how" of participating in honour bands.

Musical Development

From my perspective, the over-riding benefit from participating in honour groups is the high-quality learning experience. But the process of simply recording an audition, if taken seriously, can result in significant improvements in a student's playing. While some teachers encourage their students to record themselves regularly, many students lack the

motivation to undertake critical recording work. The clear purpose associated with honour-band auditions is one way to provide that often-missing motivation.

I'll admit that my initial audition for the National Youth Band was the first time I ever recorded myself, listening critically for strengths and weaknesses, practicing what needed improvement, and repeating the process. I remember recording for hours in my high-school auditorium, and needing dozens of takes before I was satisfied with the final product. But I viewed the process as a challenge to sound my best, as opposed to being negatively critical, and it ended up being fun and rewarding. This approach also proved invaluable when I later prepared for university auditions and solo competitions.

While the recording process provided an opportunity to learn through my own efforts, the honour-band experience of learning from inspirational conductors, excellent peers, and virtuosic soloists was of incomparable value. The conductors I played under in honour-band settings were all excellent musicians: Christian Lindberg, Gary Hill, Glenn Price, Gillian MacKay, Mark Hopkins, Jeremy Brown, Gerald King, and Bobby Herriot. The soloists were equally impressive, and included Ole Edvard Antonsen, Alain Trudel, Daniel Doyon, Julia Nolan, and John Griffiths. It was inspiring to interact with world-class experts, to learn from their musicianship and work ethic, to experience their generosity, and to see their humanity. I think that the energy inherent in the youth-band experience brings out something extra-special in conductors and soloists, as well as the student participants.

Honour-band members learn perhaps even more from each other. I can well remember enviable strengths in the playing of my peers, both trumpeters and others, that I worked hard to mimic over the years. Some played effortlessly and had a silky smooth tone, while others had power and chops to burn. There were those with fluent jazzy inflections, and still others with impressively polished classical technique. Each of the five years I was principal trumpet of either the NYB or the NCB, I felt lucky to have that opportunity, given the quality of the other players in the section.

Many of my honour-band peers have gone on to pursue successful careers as performers and teachers, while other fine players never had that intention. The principal trumpeter of NYB in 1998, for instance, clearly loved music but he was aiming for a medical career.

Regardless of anyone's career aspirations, for me the great thing about honour bands was how invested everyone was in the music. We all wanted to sound our best individually and collectively, and what resulted was superb.

Achievement and Motivation

Earning a position in a provincial or national group of any kind looks good on any student's résumé, and honour bands are no exception. While this latter achievement can help a student be accepted to, and receive scholarships for, university music programs, it can also be a great résumé builder even for those not planning to pursue a career in music. Earning a spot in one of these bands is a testament to a student's dedication and work ethic, which can make a student appealing in both academic and employment settings. Further, winning a competitive audition can provide the student with a genuine sense of achievement, while raising levels of both self-confidence and motivation.

Bringing it Back to School

Any high-school student who successfully auditions for an honour band is likely a leader in the school-band program already. That being the case, it may be painful for the school's band director to lose him or her for a week to participate in the honour band. But the long-term benefits to the program can far outweigh losing that musician for a few rehearsals or even a concert.

Participation in a group like the NYB can transform a young musician because it can be a truly ear-opening event. Many students will never have played in an ensemble with the quality of musicianship, intonation, tone quality, and rhythm that is standard in honour bands. For most students, it is an unforgettable

experience; for some, it may be the musical highlight of their lives.

When honour-band participants return to their school bands, the improvements they have made can rub off on others over time. For example, there will likely be changes in their approach to intonation and rhythm, which in turn will provide new standards for the rest of their section, and possibly for the band as a whole. They may also become stronger leaders in rehearsal etiquette, which could have positive outcomes in the efficient use of rehearsal time.

Outside of the rehearsal room, recognizing a student's achievement in winning a position in an honour group is something that both the student and the teacher should be proud of, and can provide great P. R. for a school-band program. Such a success might even help in obtaining more money from the administration and/or parent donations.

Finally, given an encouraging environment, one student earning the opportunity to play with an honour group can easily have a ripple effect on other students at the school, who will gain confidence from the success of one of their peers and practice harder to try to achieve similar results.

Networking and the Social Experience

Through my honour-band experiences, I have met remarkable musicians from every province in Canada and from around the world. I still keep in touch with many of them, and have visited a few on my travels. For example, I spent a memorable week with a trumpeter friend while he was studying in Munich. I was able to observe lessons, attend concerts, and learn new practice techniques such as trading off with

three players on fundamental exercises. On top of the musical elements, experiencing everyday German culture with the locals, and celebrating the World Cup (of soccer) with them, was very enjoyable.

In addition to networking with fellow students, honour bands present opportunities for participants to make connections with the conductors and soloists. Gillian MacKay and Glenn Price, in particular, had major impacts on my musical journey long after I played under them in the National Youth Band.



The bonding experiences that occur in honour-band settings are also unforgettable. The week normally consists of rehearsals, sectionals, and concerts, along with free time for sightseeing, jamming, and relaxing. In fact, my experiences with national honour bands were nothing less than musical utopias: like-minded individuals gathered in one location from all over the country with nothing to worry about other than preparing for, and performing in, a series of great concerts.

The positive energy was almost palpable, and was never quite replicated for me even in higher-caliber university ensembles. Unlike school ensembles, there was no grade attached to the outcome, no-one needed to participate to meet graduation requirements, and there were no outside distractions; music-making was the highest priority for members of the ensemble for the entire session.

Recording a Successful Audition

If approached correctly, the process of preparing an audition recording provides an excellent opportunity for students to improve. The most important factor in maximizing the learning experience is for the student to use the feedback from the recording to influence practicing over a series of recording sessions. A reasonable goal would be to start recording at least a month before the submission deadline. The student should then listen critically to the result of the first recording session, and focus on a few things to fix over the next week before recording again. Repeating this process a handful of times will do wonders for the final product, as well as the student's sense of accomplishment.

While everyone hopes to improve continuously, some students peak during the spring concert and festival season, and may not be quite up to that standard again when audition recordings are due in the late fall. Jim Forde, the long-time manager of the National Youth Band and an absolute idol of many participants, repeatedly suggested recording the audition in May or June. Of course, students can always try to record even better auditions in the fall and submit the best one.

It should not be overlooked that the audio quality of the recording plays an important role in the overall impression a musician leaves with the committee. While it may seem unfair, adjudicators have no way of determining how much better a musician's tone quality would be with better recording equipment; so, they must judge the audition recording submitted exactly as it sounds. Technology is improving so rapidly that high-quality recording devices, such as the Zoom H2, are now available for under \$200.

If neither the teacher nor the student has access to a good-quality device, it is worth asking around in the music community to borrow one.

Scales

Many students do not like practicing scales, but having full control over scales is incredibly important for a musician, and is valued highly on audition recordings. When I listen to auditions, the quality of the scales is the one aspect that sticks out the most to me; I find it easier to forgive small mistakes in the repertoire if the scales are solid, because I know that student has taken the time to learn the basics.

The three aspects of scales to focus on are rhythm, tone, and intonation. The rhythm needs to be absolutely steady with a subtle sense of pulse showing the intended metre. A trick for younger students is to try recording with a metronome silently flashing, as long as this does not become a crutch and the student realizes the importance of developing rhythmic independence.

The tone should be beautiful, sound easy, and be consistent across registers. A goal to strive for is to be able to play the scale ten times in a row without missing a note and with minimal tension. If this is challenging over multiple octaves, start with just one octave and build from there. Finally, poor intonation can unfortunately make the most beautiful tone sound rather sour. A great way to practice intonation is with a drone (and a tuner at first for further reinforcement).

I have my students start with long tones and experiment with purposely bending the note both slightly sharp and slightly flat in order to hear the "beats." I recommend *Tuning Tactics* by Chase Sanborn but there are also free drones available on-line. Once the student can hear and manipulate the "beats," they are ready to move on to slow scales and, eventually, faster scales



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against a drone.

Beyond the above basics, auditions are even more impressive with contrasting dynamics and articulations on various scales, unless otherwise specified in the audition requirements. Speed is also great but accuracy is more important. I can't stress enough the importance of obtaining virtually perfect scales on the recording – use as many takes as necessary! When I was preparing my first audition for NYB, I recorded each scale more than twenty times over the course of a few days, and that was after plenty of advance practice.

Repertoire

For the best success in the audition, repertoire the student can play well should be selected. Try to include technical skills that are not new to the student so the performance can flow naturally and musically. That said, hearing a student conquer challenging repertoire is, of course, always impressive. One solution may be to practice extra material that includes a difficult selection as a fun challenge in addition to contrasting selections that the student can already handle. After some hard work and a couple of recording sessions, it should be possible to narrow down the repertoire, if desired. The final selections should show variety in characteristics such as style, dynamics, articulation, velocity, range, and musicianship. It would be advisable to have a teacher listen to the recording at various stages to provide guidance throughout the process.

Fund-raising

One hopes that all the hard work preparing an audition recording pays off and the student is offered a seat in the honour band. At that point, money can become a major issue for many families but I would encourage students to attempt fund-raising before declining the opportunity. I know many students who have obtained significant amounts of money through donations, grants, scholarships, and fund-raising sales. Though such activity is typically more challenging at the high-school level, universities often have travel funds available through applications to the student union and/or music department.

If no money is available through the school, local businesses are sometimes interested in supporting talented students who are trying to participate in national-level undertakings. It is best to approach them with a polished proposal including: a description of the experience and why it is important to the student, the student's musical résumé, a list of expenses, other sources of funding, and how the student plans to recognize the business's donation. A similar approach could be used to raise money from family friends

and relatives, with perhaps the additional promise of providing a recording of the group if the donation is large enough.

Other options include contacting your city and/or province to inquire about grants or scholarships. These funds are likely very difficult to obtain in today's economic climate, but I was fortunate to obtain a modest level of support from the city of London in the late 1990s. Finally, it would be worth checking with your provincial band association to see if it has any funds available for deserving students, and for further advice on obtaining funding otherwise.

Conclusion

I am indebted to numerous people and organizations that have supported me in my musical career, but the National Youth Band of Canada, and honour bands in general, are near the top of my list. I developed a great deal musically and personally through these experiences, and cannot imagine I would be where I am today without those experiences. I hope that more and more students are informed about the quality of these opportunities, and are inspired to work hard on audition recordings, which can spark musical growth and value regardless of the result. I am confident that students fortunate enough to be selected and able to participate will have wonderful musical experiences and cherish those memories for the rest of their lives.

Dr. Alan Klaus is Assistant Professor of High Brass at Memorial University of Newfoundland after holding similar positions at both Montana State University and Mount Allison University. He has performed in Canada, the USA, Europe, and China, and is active as an adjudicator and clinician. His honour-band experiences include the International Youth Wind Orchestra, the World of Winds, four years with the National Youth Band of Canada (three as principal trumpet), and two years as principal trumpet of the National Concert Band.





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Editor's note:

Here are some blog postings from Trevor and Andrea at www.teachpianotoday.com I've been following this blog for a few months and wanted to share this great resource and some of the postings with you.

Why Spring Time is “Prime Time” To Fill Your Piano Teaching Schedule

By Andrea Dow

It's spring! Not only is it the season of new beginnings in nature... but it's also the season of new beginnings in the world of piano teaching. If you're looking to fill some empty slots in your schedule, spring is your time to shine.

Why can spring time be “prime time” for registrations?

1. The days are longer, the weather is better, and families are more energized and enthusiastic.
2. Many extracurricular activities either start or finish in the spring and families are therefore in “change-over” mode; ready to try something new with their free time.
3. Families who are overwhelmed during the fall registration season are more likely to try a new activity in the spring when their children are happily settled in school.
4. With summer on the horizon, you have the opportunity of advertising a naturally-shorter session of lessons which is attractive to families who are unfamiliar with piano lessons and want to “try it”, with a lower level of commitment (until you hook them for life with your amazingness!)

So, how do you fill those empty time slots with eager, excited and energetic piano students? Check out today's blog post where we share some advertising hints PLUS give you access to editable advertising materials that you can personalize to your studio and use to attract a bunch of students!

Spring into Spring And Fill Your Schedule!

One of the best ways to fill your studio in the spring is to choose a niche market and then advertise directly to that market. Be specific in your advertising and then tailor the subsequent lessons to offer something that is unique to your area. Choosing a niche makes it easier to determine: a) what your advertising materials should look like, and b) where your advertising materials should be placed for maximum impact.

Two great “Spring Niche” ideas include:

Adult students – by offering a spring session of piano lessons you can appeal to adult beginners who have always yearned to play and are looking for a trial period.

Preschoolers – by offering a spring session of piano lessons to preschoolers you can appeal to parents' desires to provide their young children with rich experiences and school readiness skills before they start kindergarten in the fall.

Adult lessons require only small changes to your typical lesson offerings, but preschool piano lessons require age-appropriate materials to meet their unique learning needs. And while musically-keen preschoolers used to be advised to “wait until they were 6”... the availability of method books specifically designed for 3-5 year olds means that they can experience the benefits of piano lessons early; a advantage to them and to the long-term growth of your studio!

Check out our NEW Advertising Templates at <http://wunderkeys.com/create-advertising-materials/>, choose your design, and get started on building a thriving studio that will carry you through the summer and into a fabulous fall registration!



A 5-Step Plan to Follow When Life Makes Piano Practice Difficult or Impossible

By Andrea Dow

As most of you know, I'm the "happy conductor" of the piano practice train. I spend a good deal of my life (okay... way too much) composing music that makes students want to practice, creating games that make it easier for them to practice, and finding materials that teach them how to practice... phew!

So when one of my sweet, young piano students didn't touch her piano for two whole weeks, my ego was a bit bruised. This never happens... what have I done!?

The piano teacher in me took over first. I did an overhaul of her repertoire, I re-organized her binder to remove any distractions, I set up a practice plan, I sent her home with some fun practice activities, and I boosted her confidence as high as I could. She bounced out the door with promises to practice.

But it didn't happen. For a third week in a row she looked at me sheepishly and made an excuse about how busy she had been. Clearly something was up.

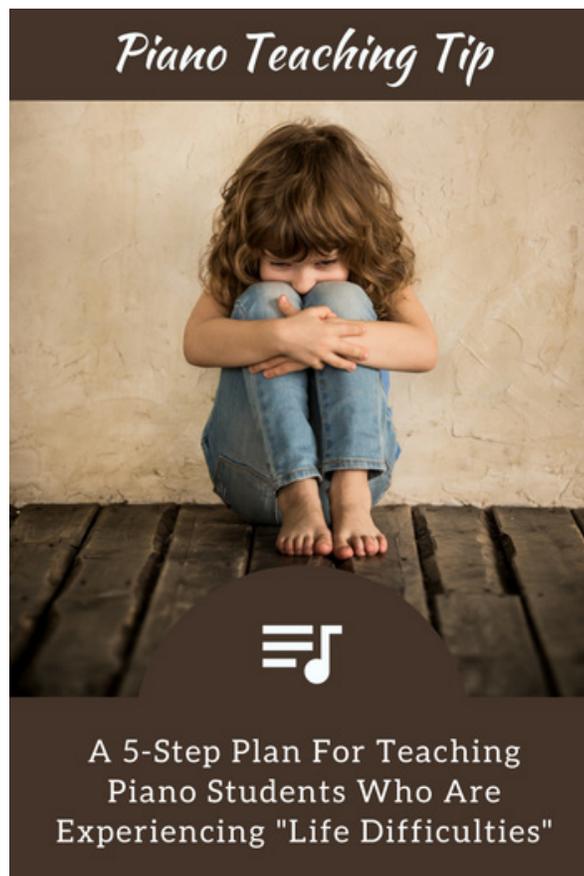
If you're nodding and thinking "That sounds just like <insert student name>" then today's post could be your solution.

The Piano Practice Reminder That I Needed

At this point, my "mom's intuition" that is almost never wrong, finally stepped in. After her lesson I texted her mom; not with the typical "I've asked Anna to practice more this week... can you help her to make sure this happens?", but with a simple "I've noticed Anna is not quite herself – how are things going at home and school?"

A text popped back immediately with an outpouring of how Anna was being bullied at school and of her resulting anxiety, of missed days of school and a reluctance to do anything but curl up in her mom's arms and cry.

This was a different kind of piano practice reminder. Not a reminder that I send to my parents and their students, but a piano practice reminder that I myself needed.



Teaching Piano Lessons... When Piano Practice Can't Happen

This was the nudge I needed to remind me that no matter how exciting my lessons are, how motivating my materials may be, how enthusiastically I send my students out the studio door... sometimes, life just gets in the way.

We will all have piano students who go through difficulties times in their lives. Students will experience loss, fight with their best friends, change schools, and have parents who divorce. The list is (unfortunately) long and comes with disruptions to their ability and desire to practice the piano at home.

However, as a "constant" in their lives; and as a caring adult who spends one-on-one time with them every week, **you can have a positive impact at a time when piano lessons are not about practicing the piano, but rather finding solace in music.**

A 5 Step Plan

for teaching

piano lessons when practice "can't" happen...



The next time you have a piano student who needs a break from practice due to difficult life circumstances, follow this 5-point plan to get them back on track:

1. **Remove practice expectations both visually and mentally:** Allow your students to breathe a sigh of relief as you verbally acknowledge that you understand home practice is difficult at the moment. Then, physically remove any sort of practice chart or log that you may use. The stress of disappointing a favorite adult in their lives is one more layer of emotion that your piano students don't need. I like to simply say, *"If you want to play at home, that's wonderful, and I'll leave it up to you to tell me if you were able to."*

2. **Set your student up for immediate success:** If home practice can't happen, then your students need to be playing music that is immediately accessible. Stressed brains don't process information as easily as "happy brains", so it's important to set your students up for success with carefully-chosen repertoire that is fun, enjoyable, and reasonably easy. Incorporate rote teaching into your lessons, seek-out music that is "one level down" from your students' current levels and provide plenty of guidance as they learn to play new pieces. If pieces become "stalled", move on and find something new.

3. **Re-structure your lessons to focus on happy music-making:** Now more than ever your piano students need to discover that music can be a happy escape. Instead of focusing on progress, spend enjoyable time on the bench playing duets, and exploring improv together. Listen to beautiful recordings and discuss the composers. Re-visit previously-completed, favorite pieces. Play piano games and have a good laugh. Slow down and simply enjoy making and learning about music.

4. **Provide opportunity for creativity:** Young children won't immediately turn to writing music to soothe their souls in a stereotypical fashion, but composing can be a welcome outlet and a chance to create music that is both accessible and enjoyable. Teach your students to create simple "ABA" format pieces with a repeating motive or theme, a simple left hand accompaniment and a catchy title that makes them proud.

5. **Gradually return to normalcy:** You'll be able to tell when your piano students have "turned a corner"; when home life has settled, when routines are back in place and when they are once again ready for a challenge. Make the return to normalcy gradual. Take your time reintroducing practice expectations and adding more difficult repertoire. It may take a week or it may take a month... but the time you spend gently guiding them over difficult hurdles is important, valuable and meaningful.

The principal task of a conductor is not to put himself in evidence but to disappear behind his functions as much as possible. We are pilots, not servants.

--Franz Liszt

7 Rules for Texting and Emailing Piano Parents

What you might not know can kill your message!

By Wendy Stevens, ComposeCreate.com



Texting and emailing piano parents is dangerous work! Though I've learned a lot about emailing piano parents from my husband whose job relies heavily on email, I've also learned a lot the hard way.

The danger of not knowing and using these 7 rules for texting and emailing piano parents is greater than it ever has been since social media is in our everyday lives. Some of these dangers include:

- Parents and teachers becoming seriously offended
- Your paying customers leaving you for another, seemingly kinder teacher
- Parents becoming defensive when they don't feel graciousness and kindness coming from you at all times.
- Stress and anxiety for you when trying to make policy changes.
- Parents becoming angry with you

But in addition to these dangers of emailing piano parents, we also sometimes experience some turmoil with other piano teachers on social media! We've all seen these things, right?

- Fights breaking out on social media
- A teacher innocently asking a question about teaching only to be torn apart by other teachers who misunderstand
- Teachers leaving a piano teaching group because of difficult comments people write
- Teachers completely misunderstanding our spirit in which we write or comment on a question.

It's sad when these things happen, but the good news is that so many of these situations can be avoided when you know and practice these 7 secrets about texting and emailing piano parents (and piano teachers). These can do wonders for helping to ensure that what you are saying and how you are saying it is really understood.

Here's the first and most useful lesson that my husband taught me about emails and texts:

1. A flat texting and email tone is almost always read in a negative way.

Here's an example from an email/text that I wrote to my mom a long time ago:

Hey mom! We're going to go out to eat next Thursday night and we haven't been out for a long time. We were wondering if you'd be willing to watch the kids?

Here's the answer I received:

Yes

But what I heard in my mind was a flat, unenthusiastic, "if I really have to" tone of voice. I'm sure she didn't mean it. I know she didn't mean it that way. But that's the way we tend to read texts and emails. A flat tone is a negative tone.

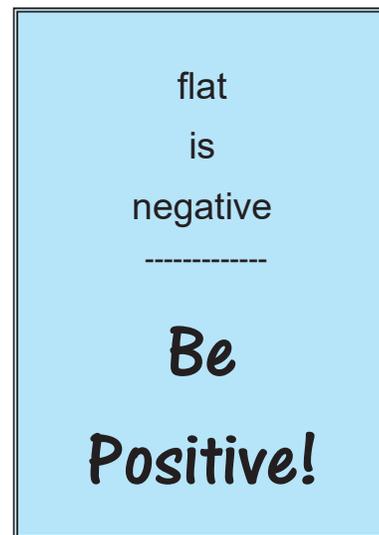
What I really wanted to hear was this:

Absolutely! I'd love to watch the kids!

Do you hear the difference?

So here is an example from the piano teaching world. Let's say your 4:00 Monday student's mom texts you this:

Hi! Amanda just found out that her debate team has advanced to the district semi-finals, so she won't be at



lessons Monday. Do you have spots open later in the week where she could come to lessons?

Let's say that you are at the grocery store and are in the checkout line and so you send her this quick response:

No

That's a flat response, right? Seemingly there is no emotion associated with it. But if you were a piano mom, how would that make you feel? Bleh. Angry. It would at least make you furrow your brow and be a little cranky for a little while. It would make you feel like your teacher doesn't really care about your child.

Listen to the difference in this response by reading it out loud (and yes, I mean listen, because we can hear with our eyes!):

Wow! Congratulations to Amanda and her team! What a great accomplishment! She's been working so hard at that. I'm sure you are proud of her. I don't really have any openings later this week, but if something comes up, I'll be sure to let you know! Good luck at district!

Hear the difference? Do you see the difference? As this article says, "Email misinterpretation tends to come in two forms: neutral or negative."

Yes, it will take longer to text or even voice text that response. But the extra 30 seconds is worth that relationship! It's worth it because it helps you have a great relationship with your paying customers! If you don't remember anything else about this article on texting and emailing piano parents, remember this:

A flat tone is almost always read as a negative tone.

2. Exclamations points are overused, but necessary.

For the first 10 years of my marriage, my husband told me I used too many exclamation points in my writing. I would get annoyed with this criticism, but after a while, I began to see that he was right. [For an example, my husband suggests that you count the number of exclamation points in this article thus far.]

Yes!

Show some enthusiasm!

However, now my younger sister (she's a millennial) has taught me the exact opposite lesson. When it comes especially to texting and even to email, exclamation points are crucial to demonstrating enthusiasm!

Both my sister and my husband are right. My husband's advice is good for articles, and more academic writing. But blog posts, emails, and certainly texts are usually very conversational these days. So it's okay and many times even necessary to use exclamation points to show enthusiasm when texting and emailing piano parents.

For example, in an email to a parents about Suzie's great practice week, this just doesn't cut it:

Susie had a great week of practice. Whatever you are doing to help her is working.

While you might think that the next sentence uses too many exclamation points, consider the difference in excitement level that you hear in your mind when you read it:

Susie had a great week of practice! Whatever you are doing to help her is working. Thanks so much for letting me teach her!

Communicating positive emotion when emailing piano parents is crucial.

3. All caps means you are yelling. Stop yelling.

If you know this already, feel free to skip this section. But if you have ever typed an entire sentence in all caps, STOP! Yes, I purposely yelled right there. If you send this to a parent (who is most likely a Millennial or a late Gen X'er), your ignorance of email etiquette will be the topic of their dinner conversation:

GROUP LESSONS ARE AT 4:00 TODAY. DON'T BE LATE!

Imagine someone calling you and yelling that at you on the phone. It's a

**STOP
YELLING!**

simple lesson, but one we all have to learn at some point: All caps is yelling. Please stop yelling when texting or emailing piano parents (or piano teachers)!

4. Look for and acknowledge emotions first when emailing piano parents

This next tip could be an entire blog post, but I'll just say that it's important to look for the emotion in any message and acknowledge how people feel before responding.

Look at the message I sent my mom about going out to eat:

Hey mom! We're going to go out to eat next Thursday night and we haven't been out for a long time. We were wondering if you'd be willing to watch the kids?

Can you hear the emotion? I was excited to go out to eat. I was desperate to spend some time with my husband. I was hopeful that my mom would be excited about watching the kids for me. I was three different emotions in less than 32 words! The emails you get from parents are the same way! Let me give you an example:

Dan is finally getting some time off work and we're going to go out of town for the weekend. So, when can you give a makeup lesson for Jon since the competition is so close?

Now, it's super easy to notice the brazen assumption from this mom that you will give a makeup lesson. And my gut instinct is to react to the email without first looking to find out what's really going on. What are the emotions that this parent is probably experiencing in this email? Can you hear the strain that this mom has been experiencing? Can you hear the stress that they've been experiencing because the dad has been working so much? Perhaps a little bit of desperation from this mom who has been trying to make everything work for her family during this stressful time?

Of course, acknowledging emotions doesn't mean that your answer to the question about make up lessons will change. Maybe you'll give this student a make up lesson, maybe not. That's not the point. The point is that it's very important to identify and acknowledge what's going on for parents before reacting to another part of the email.

For example, a response that acknowledges emotions first might be:

Oh, I'm so glad to hear that Dan gets some time off so that you can go out of town for the weekend! I know it's been stressful lately with everyone working so hard! I don't give makeup lessons, but I'm happy to let you know if someone else cancels next week and there is an opening. Otherwise, what you could do is have Jon video his piece and send it to me before you go out of town. Then, I can use his normal lesson time to watch it and send him back suggestions so he knows what to practice when he gets back.

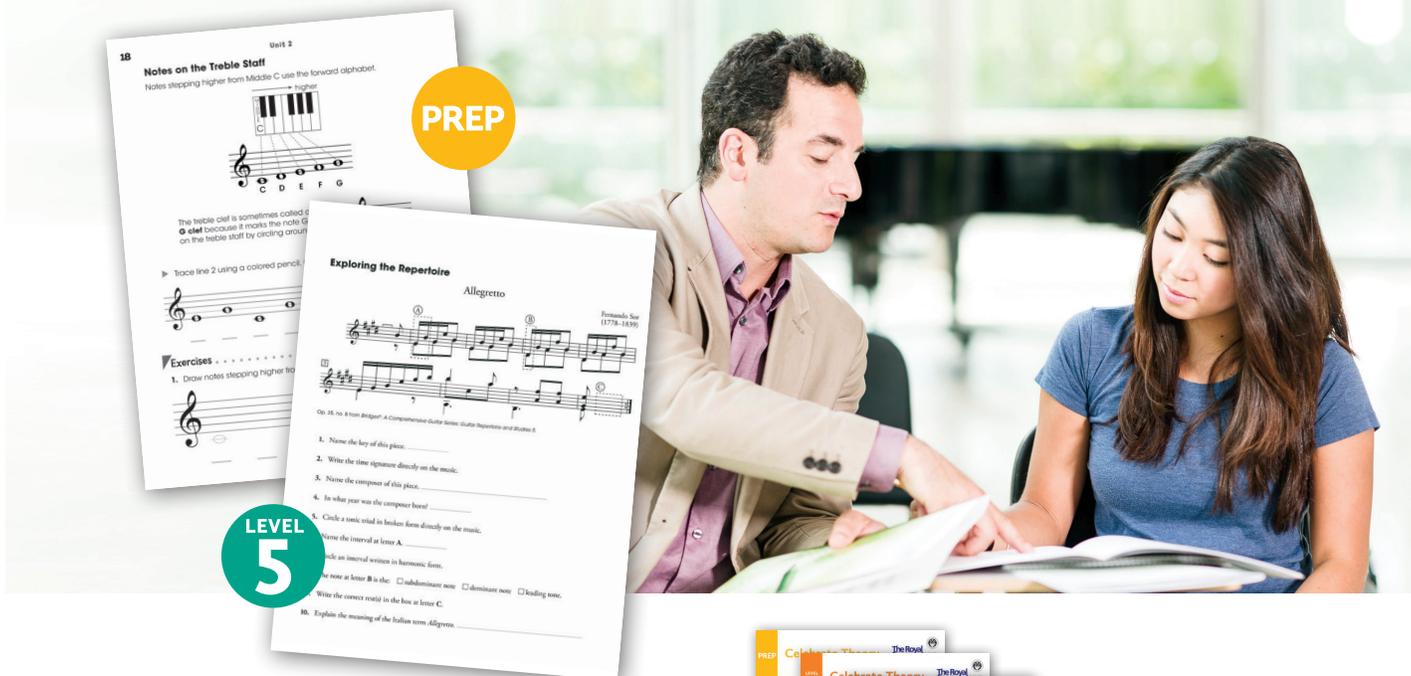
I hope you get some needed and much deserved rest and relaxation this weekend!

The last 3 rules for texting and emailing parents are ones that might make you bristle or be ones that you can't believe you never knew!

Please visit <https://composecreate.com/texting-and-emailing-piano-parents/> to read the remaining rules for texting and emailing piano parents!



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January 15	February 1
April 15	May 1
July 15	August 1

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Dates to send in accumulated points for certificates: May 1 and October 1 of each year

Memorial Scholarship

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Moncton	2002	2006	2014	
Sackville	2003	2007	2013	
Saint John	2004	2008	2016	
Victoria County		2009		
Carleton County		2010		
Festival of Musical Arts		2011		

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January 1, 2017 for points accrued from January 1, 2015

CF Magazine submissions

Winter Edition: Submission deadline – December 1
Publication – January

Topic: Canada Music Week Report

Submitted by: Canada Music Week Coordinator

Spring Edition: Submission deadline – April 1
Publication – May

Canada Music Week Edition: Submission deadline – August 15
Publication – September

Topic: Composer profiles

Submitted by: 1st Delegate

CF Piano Competitions (biennial)

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Regina	July 2011
Halifax (Piano and Voice)	July 2013
Vancouver	July 2015
Baltimore, Maryland (CFMTA/MTNA Commemorative Conference)	March 2017

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Dieppe	2008	Sackville	2014
Sackville	2010	Sackville	2016

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