



Suzuki Inspired: From Title I to Collegiate to Community Outreach

Presented by: Yvonne Davila-Cortes and Lucinda Ali-Landing

The Suzuki Method provides a solid foundation in music education and lends itself to community building. Families from all backgrounds respond positively to the parent involvement model and provide educational opportunities to diverse communities. This session will discuss strategies and resources for a successful string program and building community. In addition, we will share stories of Suzuki in the Schools at a Title I Middle School, Music Education at the Collegiate level, and a Community Outreach program for students who would not have the opportunity to quality string education.

Here are some key points related to the Suzuki Method and its success stories in various settings:

1. ****Parental Involvement****: The Suzuki Method places a strong emphasis on active parental involvement. Parents attend lessons with their children and serve as home teachers, helping with daily practice and providing a supportive learning environment. This model has been found to be highly effective in nurturing young musicians and creating a strong bond between parents and their children through music education. Within the One City Strings, the parents have multiple opportunities to work with their children and be a part of their music education. One City Strings also provides support among the parents, building relationships, and fostering community. This session will provide strategies to foster community across various cultures.
2. ****Community Building****: The Suzuki Method often creates a sense of community among families. Parents connect with each other through shared experiences, and students build friendships as they progress through their musical journeys together. This sense of belonging can extend beyond the immediate Suzuki community, fostering a broader appreciation for music and the arts within the local community.
3. ****Title I Middle School Program****: One successful application of the Suzuki Method is its implementation in Title I middle schools. These schools serve economically disadvantaged students, and Suzuki programs can provide students with quality string education they might not otherwise have access to. The parent involvement model can also engage parents in their children's education and strengthen the school-community relationship.
4. ****Collegiate-Level Music Education****: The Suzuki Method is not limited to early childhood education. It can be adapted to collegiate-level music education, where aspiring musicians can benefit from the foundational skills and techniques it offers. Collegiate-level Suzuki programs can provide a strong musical foundation for students pursuing careers in music.
5. ****Community Outreach Programs****: Suzuki-based community outreach programs are essential for extending music education to underserved populations. These programs can reach students who may not have the financial means to access quality string education. By offering free or low-cost instruction and instruments, these initiatives open doors for young musicians who might otherwise miss out on the opportunity to learn and appreciate music.



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In summary, the Suzuki Method's focus on parental involvement and early childhood education has made it a valuable tool for providing quality music education in various settings. Whether in Title I middle schools, at the collegiate level, or through community outreach programs, the Suzuki Method has a proven track record of fostering musical skills and building strong communities around the joy of music. It continues to be a source of inspiration and opportunity for students from all backgrounds.

Strategies

1. Title I MS orchestra
 - a. A sense of Family
 - i. Older students mentor younger ones
 - b. Many of the same strategies in private lessons
 - i. Mother Tongue - Ear Training
 - ii. Game Theory
 - c. Checklists
 - i. Opportunities for the students to work as a team
 - ii. Gives guidelines
 - d. Involvement of the school campus
 - i. Invite teachers and administrators to concerts
 - ii. Opportunities for the students to perform for teachers
 - iii. Flash mob performances
 1. Holidays
 2. Just because
 - e. Parent education
 - i. Weekly email explaining the accomplishments of the week and purpose
 - ii. Invitation to chaperone or help out during a concert
 - iii. Opportunities to meet at the beginning of the year with a potluck
2. VanderCook College of Music
 - a. Focus on music education
 - i. String techniques
 - ii. Orchestra lab
 - b. Strategies
 - i. Similar to private lessons
 - ii. Explain the "why", similar to parent education
 - iii. Opportunities to teach one another
 - iv. Various performances, including Playdown Concert
3. One City Strings
 - a. Partner with Hyde Park Suzuki
 - b. Strategies for Group class instruction
 - i. Play group class in a circle
 1. As we get closer to concerts we move into rows.
 2. Screen with powerpoint behind the instructor
 - ii. Instruction: Parent Education is Key
 1. Parent role at One City Strings
 - a. Start the year with a One City Experience
 - i. Playdown Concert with returning students and Teachers



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1. Explain the Suzuki Philosophy and Method
 2. Explain the parent role as Home Teacher
 - b. Group Class
 1. Parent sits next to child during instruction
 2. Teacher explains new concept
 - a. Parent learns the skill first
 - b. Then student learns the skill with parent assistance
 - c. Parent education classes
 - i. Weekly online
 - ii. Explain the purpose of activities and skills during the class
 - iii. WhatsApp
 1. Celebrations
 2. Support
 3. Questions
 4. Practice Videos
 - iv. 100 Days Club
 - v. PotLuck
 - vi. Supporting Family Businesses
 - iii. Basic Format of Instruction: Good Teaching is Good Teaching
 1. Review the basics
 - a. Posture
 - i. Bow hold
 - ii. Left hand position
 2. Social Emotional Learning (SEL)
 - a. Use of Suzuki Early Childhood Education (SECE)
 - i. Ball rolling
 1. Older and younger students working together
 2. Calming effect
 - ii. Fallen thirds
 1. Ear Training
 3. Transfer of Knowledge
 - a. We teach through songs (Twinkle Theme)
 - i. Beehive
 - ii. Baby Bear Wrist
 - iii. Theory: ABC's of Music
 4. Other examples
 - a. Chords to get into playing position
 - b. Pattern and Play for theory
 - iv. Training our Collegiate Teachers: Apprentice or Long Term Training Structure
 1. Group Class
 - a. Lucinda and Yvonne present the new material while student teachers observe
 - b. Next week they students team teach with the master teacher
 - c. Student Teacher on their own
 - i. Teachers who are not leading are observing, assessing, and silently correcting posture.



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- d. More experienced teachers mentor and team teach with the newer student teachers.
 2. Teaching different learning styles and Social Emotional Learning
 3. Private lesson structure with Lucinda
 - a. Lucinda models
 - b. Student Teacher instructs the student in front of Lucinda
 - i. Receive immediate feedback in real time
4. Other tips:
 - a. Use of a Pretend violin and bow
 - b. Name tags for students and teachers until names are learned.
 - c. Placing a rubber band on the frog to help parent and student to know where to place the pinky.
 - d. Themes like Halloween
 - e. Lots of games to play with the parent
 - f. Provide parents with class notes

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Score

Getting Into Position Chords

Piano



Green feet Hamburger hand Statue of Liberty Find your ear Bring it down

f



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Mahler's Lullaby

Music by Gustav Mahler
Arr. by Davila-Cortes and Felicia Vintila

Largo ♩ = 56



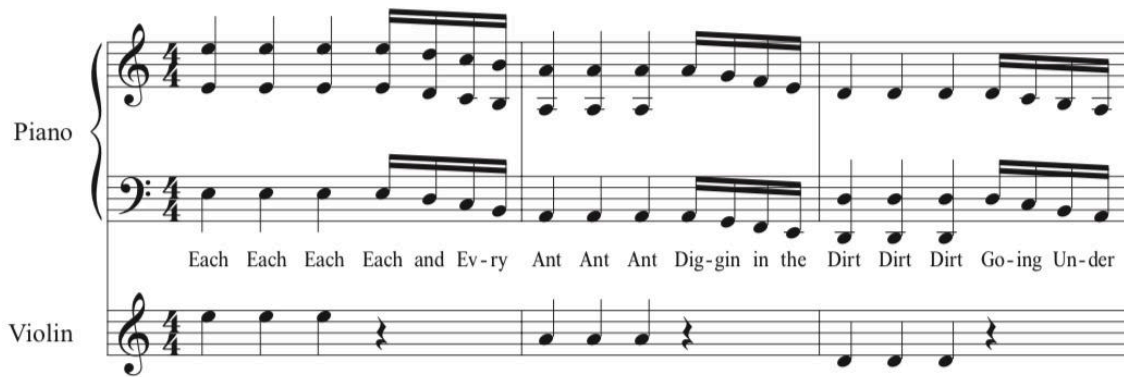
The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes a Piano part and a Violin part. The Piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat. The Violin part is on a single staff with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat, marked 'Pizzicato'. The second system includes a Piano part and a Violin part. The Piano part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat, starting at measure 6. The Violin part is on a single staff with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of one flat, also starting at measure 6. The score concludes with a double bar line.

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Score

Ants Song for Violins Only

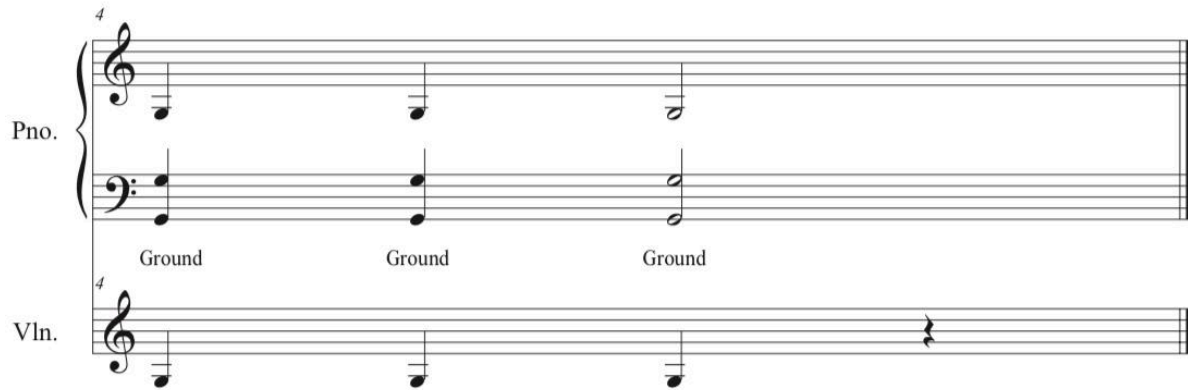
Piano



Each Each Each Each and Ev-ry Ant Ant Ant Dig-gin in the Dirt Dirt Dirt Go-ing Un-der

Violin

Pno.



Ground Ground Ground

Vln.

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Funky Bunny Song

Open Escalator Song

M. O'Boyl & B. Dick & L. Scott/ Y. Davila-Cortes

Alto



Piano



See the li-ttle bun-ny climb-ing up the lad-der Tak-ing ti-ny steps and climb-ing way up high to

3

A.




Pno.




get a pink ba-na - na see the lit-le bun-ny climb-ing down the ladd-er tak-ing ti-ny steps and

5

A.



Pno.



climb-ing way down low to eat the pink ba - na - na

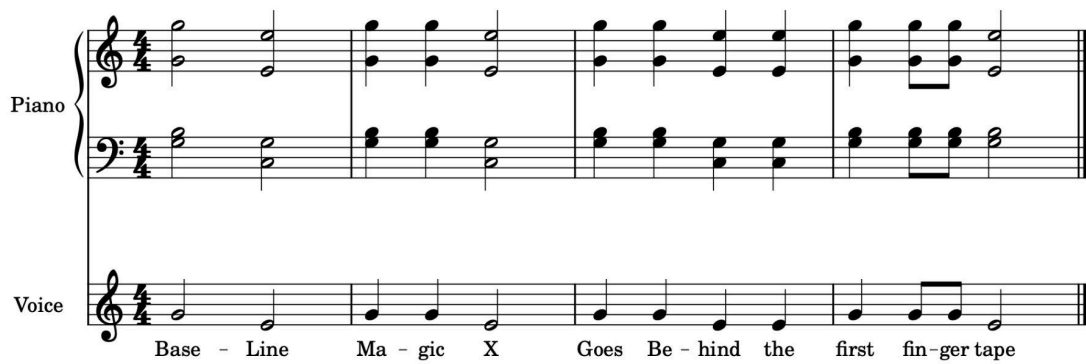
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Baseline Magic X

Setup Left Hand Song

arr. Davila-Cortes

Piano



Voice

Base - Line Ma - gic X Goes Be - hind the first fin - ger tape

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Critical Connections: The Fundamental Concept at the Hyde Park Suzuki Institute in Chicago is Love



MAY 13, 2021

By Lucinda Ali Landing | From the [May-June 2021 issue](#) of Strings magazine

For years, I've known that one day I would need to find a way to articulate precisely what makes our music school unique. By that, I mean what makes us who we are, why this experience feels special, and why our students generally do so well in music and life.

The short backstory is that the [Hyde Park Suzuki Institute](#) is a music school that I started on Chicago's "South Side" (that's code for mostly Black people) near the University of Chicago. We teach music

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lessons like every other music school in the city. But the question that I've been asked from day one has been, "Why does it feel different than any other music school when I walk in the door?" And the answer is exactly what inspires my passion in teaching: my connection and commitment to families in our music community. But community isn't something that just happens, and it isn't something I could create on my own. It takes the will to connect by everyone involved. These are a few of the things I've learned about creating the right environment for that spirit to thrive.



Lucinda Ali Landing

Building an intentional space where families can come together with a shared purpose for the children is only the start of building a community.

As a child, my dad drove my sister and me to the "North Side" (that's code for mostly white people) for lessons at a community music school. It was really far, so we spent a long time in the car. We learned how to play our instruments well, and the people were nice enough. However, that music school was not where I went to see my friends, laugh, or have fun—or find lifelong relationships.

When I started the Hyde Park Suzuki Institute, I was young. I didn't know much about business. I did have a vision that I wanted the kids to have what I didn't have growing up in classical music. I wanted friends and fun, with rigorous classical-music education close to home. In hindsight, I realize that I must have willed this into existence. With no strategic plan, metrics, or data, I just knew that individualism would not work for us. We have to connect socially in love to thrive.

That meant this community music school needed to be more than just a school—it had to be a part of the fabric of life for the students and the teachers. And it is. An early personal experience of this connection in



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love is when I had my first baby. When I opened my eyes from my C-section, I saw my mom. Then I saw my student's mom, Imani, who was there to help with my baby's first latching on to nurse. When I got home, my Suzuki-parent-class teacher Martine was there, teaching me how to wrap the baby and bringing me meals.

Neither of these love actions had anything to do with music. Still, we became connected forever because of those acts of love. Martine recently spoke about her experience at HPSI in an interview. "Parents, families, students, teachers, and staff all come together to create first and foremost a community, and music is taught in this environment of trust, love, and care. When new students join my class, I work on connecting them to the rest of the class."

Maintaining relationships is part of the job.

Showing up for celebrations, crises, or just taking responsibility for another person's child are acts that bind the community together: parents, faculty, and staff know it is part of the job. The *best* part of HPSI is that "bring your child to work day" is every day. For parents with multiple children at HPSI, there is the peace of mind that comes with knowing your children are loved even when you're not watching. In the hallway, teachers will say hello to your child with a smile. Someone else is going to ask your child how they're doing, and someone else's mama is going to sternly tell them to stop running in the hall, but with love. There's always a built-in babysitter around to give parents a moment to breathe!

Today in education, I think they call it (SEL) Social Emotional Learning. But at HPSI, we've always known intuitively that when children feel emotionally connected, that is the foundation for all learning. The commitment to connect, help, and collaborate as parents and faculty is contagious and almost palpable to a new parent as soon as they walk in the door.



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I am passionate about teaching families that are committed to learning and committed to each other, resulting in children who excel. The children are friends beyond music. They encourage and cheer for each other to be their best, or at least not to quit so they can see each other.

My passion for teaching children intentionally to a high skill level is fueled by this extended family, however, this ideology doesn't always come naturally, and our school is not a good fit for everyone. After 21 years of nonstop parenting, I understand wanting to be a "JDO" (Just Drop Off) parent. My favorite sign we have posted at the entrance says, "Children without a parent will be given an espresso and a puppy." Families do best here when they're deeply involved—and there is definitely extra encouragement not to be a JDO parent!

Perpetuating and sustaining this community model into the future is my new work.

How do you mandate love in an employee manual? How does one convince funders that this critical connection is the measurement that creates excellence in children? How does one train teachers to be open to the extended family concept?

We shall see: HPSI is a work in progress. But for now, I use this as a gauge: I tell our new teachers in training, "If you're not receiving invitations to students' birthday parties, bat mitzvahs, baby showers, and anniversaries, then you haven't connected to the family yet." Just start with being genuinely interested in the student and family, and then teach the lesson.



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