**HOW TO PRACTICE PIANO**

As much as I would love to come home with each and every one of you to be sure you are practicing correctly, I know that is not possible**.**

**Students**

Successful practicing is more about HOW you practice and not just about how MUCH time you spend in front of the piano. Or any other instrument for that matter.

Since I cannot be with you, we try to talk through the correct way to practice during your lesson. To see success you need to use these strategies when you practice at home.

**Have goals**

If you sit down to practice without a goal, you will most likely ‘wander’ through your practice routine without a clear path. So keep the goals based in reality. Keep your piano goals simple and short. If you only have 10/30 minutes of free time, make it count. Concentrate on small parts that you want to improve. Be focused and clear. Don’t just run through the whole piece and think you have practiced.

**You can begin to feel like you can’t learn a piece and want to give up when really you can if you practice CORRECTLY.**

1. **Break your main goal into smaller goals**
2. **Be realistic with your time**
3. **Be happy with small gains!**
4. **Make your goals so easy that you are likely to succeed.**
5. **Try taking a video or recording as you play. Sometimes when you practice, you are so engrossed in finding the right notes you forget to slow down and implement proper practice techniques.**
6. **Practice slowly. Speed will come naturally as you master the piece you are playing. All the masters practice SLOWLY to start.**

**Be patient. Again, I PROMISE, if you practice CORRECTLY you will get more results in less time.**

**Parents**

I know you and your children can be overwhelmed with homework and after school activities as well as your own work schedules. But if your child is to make progress, it is important to have time and correct technique when practicing.

Some students will practice on their own and others may need a little nudge (insist) to get in regular practice. Again, time well spent not just time in front of the piano. Anyone can hit bumps and need encouragement to push through.

Billy Joel’s mom used to make him practice an hour a day. He hated the Mozart he was supposed to be learning and instead made up songs that sounded like Mozart so his Mom would think he was practicing his pieces… but he was practicing and doing so correctly. And we know how that turned out for him. Beethoven’s father made him practice. Mozart’s father made it a part of family gatherings with young Mozart and his sister. But guess what? They were practicing. Sometimes children need you to be their “self-discipline” until they can develop that skill themselves. This includes teens. Especially teens…

Please be sure your student has a quiet place to practice and a consistent schedule. Make practice a family affair, even if it is just letting them be the family entertainment. Encourage them to take the group classes and play with friends to make it a more social event.

**Playing the piano is NOT practicing the piano** so please review the practice strategies with your student and be sure they implement them.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions and will be talking more about this as the new term progresses.