

MOM AND DAD ARE STILL THE MOST IMPORTANT AUDIENCE!

By. Dr Tim Lautzenheiser

Ask any young musicians who they want to have hear them play, sing, march, etc., and they will tell you, "My parents." Although we are living in a day and age where the family unit is struggling against divorce, economical strains, change in social standards, and a heavy emphasis on the 'I, ME' concept of living, there is still a basic desire to "please Mother and Father." When a young person spends countless hours in preparation for a performance, and a parent is not 'on hand' to support and acknowledge this accomplishment, then something is 'incomplete' for the student.

Granted, parents have all kinds of 'extra duties' to handle and time is certainly at a premium. It is easy to rationalize: missing a booster meeting, promising to make the 'next concert,' pleading 'too tired for any more responsibilities.' We can always find excuses for not going the extra mile, and sure, there will be future booster meetings and certainly other concerts to attend and, perhaps, there will be a surge of energy when we will look forward to extra responsibilities. (DREAM ON!!)

Since 'Mom and Dad' ARE the most important audience, there is much to be gained when they are on hand to witness this musical accomplishment, not to mention what might be lost when they are absent.

When parents are present at a concert it says:

1. They care about me
2. They support me in my musical growth.
3. They think it is important I go the distance.
4. They want to see me attain excellence.
5. The priorities in my life are important to them.
6. I'm worth their time, even though they have other choices.
7. They think my efforts are worthy—and I'm worthy.
8. They recognize my dedication and encourage my learning.
9. They know being there means a lot to me.
10. My performance and their attendance is an expression of our love for one another.

It seems that so many parents think they are just coming to a concert when, in reality, they are attending a performance of their child. We have all seen Mom and Dad give standing ovations to musical performances which left much to be desired. They were not acknowledging the music, they were expressing their heartfelt pride in the effort put forth by their child. The worth of this action in regards to the self esteem of the performers is immeasurable. It means: "All my efforts, all my sacrifice, all my learning was worthwhile. I made a difference—I count." Needless to say the impetus to do even better is planted securely in the mind. And the mind leads itself in the direction of its most dominant thought.

Parent approval is the most potent fuel when it comes to insuring success for any young person. After hearing countless excuses and questioning yourself "Is this really all worthwhile," just keep remembering: for the students, Mom and Dad are still the most important audience in the world.

HOW PARENTS CAN HELP AT HOME

- 1. Show an interest in the music study of your child.**
- 2. Arrange a regular time for your child to practice.**
- 3. Find a quiet place where he can practice without interruption.**
- 4. Help him with his practice as much as possible by counting, studying music texts, etc.**
- 5. Help the student keep a daily record of her practice.**
- 6. Give him a safe place to keep his instrument.**
- 7. Keep the instrument in good repair with reeds, mutes, etc. Every student should have their own metronome.**
- 8. Be very careful with school-owned instruments. The cost of repairs is very high.**
- 9. Help your child to be prepared and on time for each rehearsal and lesson.**
- 10. Even though private study is not required, it is strongly recommended as an extension of the classroom.**
- 11. Make faithful attendance at all activities important.**
- 12. Encourage your child to play for others when the opportunity arises, in the home, at school, church and in the community.**

AT SCHOOL

- 1. Keep a record of the students various musical activities.**
- 2. Notify the teacher if the student is to be absent or tardy at lessons, rehearsals, etc., and explain why.**
- 3. See that he takes his instrument and music to school.**
- 4. Teach him to be punctual at lessons at rehearsals.**
- 5. See that your child keeps up with classroom studies and makes up work he missed.**
- 6. Visit rehearsals and lessons occasionally.**
- 7. Discuss with your music teachers anything that will help them to better understand your child.**
- 8. Attend concerts and other performances whenever possible.**
- 9. Attend Band Booster meetings whenever possible.**
- 10. Volunteer for parent committees.**
- 11. Purchase band sweatshirts, hats, etc., and wear them to all band functions.**