

Practising Tips

Laurie Goodman's 'Silly cube'

Make two cubes, one with the names of the pieces that your child is practising, and the other with a number of 'silly' ways of practising – e.g., stand on one foot, lie down, walk around the room, hold the bow at the tip, smile/frown all the time, eyes shut... When your child has finished the agreed amount of practising, they get to use the Silly Cube.

Judy Olmstead-O'Regan's 'Fishing trip'

Make up paper fish, and write the practising tasks on the fish. Attach the fish with string or strong thread to pencils/pens. Put the 'fishing rods' in a row in your practise studio (e.g., top of the piano, top of the bookcase), well spaced out so that the strings don't tangle. When your child catches a fish, that determines what they practise next.

Miscellaneous

Never forget to look to praise your child's practising – even if it is merely the fact that practising took place at all!

Don't forget that talking about what we're practising is important too.. Many of us remember to Ask our kids what they did at school. We need to make talking about practise just as much a part of dinner-time conversation as is school. In particular, this allows the non-practising parent to express an interest in what is being achieved. You might even prime the non-practising parent to ask strategic questions – what is hard/easy about what you're working on? When will I be able to hear you play? ...