

[View this email in your browser](#)



October 2025

From Resistance to Resilience: Navigating the Violin Journey

Author: [Dr. Lois Geertz](#)

Editor: [Danette Warren](#)

This special newsletter is usually just for our paid STXSA Family and Teacher Members — but for the month of October, we're sharing it with everyone on our mailing list! 🎉

If you'd like to keep receiving these updates, [renew your membership today](#) and stay connected with all the exciting events and opportunities coming up.

Why didn't you push me more, Mom?

After a recent recital, my high school student of many years and his mom were talking about his journey on the violin so far. His mom said “yeah now he complains that I didn't push him enough as a kid”! Vedanth has now become very active in his orchestra, volunteer music societies, and the Houston Youth Symphony with ambitions to do music in college at some level. When he first started with me in Violin Book 1, he had many other interests and seemed obsessed with basketball. So how much “pushing” is required by parents to

Balancing learning with competition.

Studying the violin can be an all-encompassing passion, or for some just a fun diversion from other activities. According to Dr. Suzuki, the growth of character develops with steady and consistent attention to music. Through patience, problem solving, attention focus and learning with others, a loving and compassionate human being emerges! So what happens when a student realizes they want to compete in the Texas All-State competition or go on to become a music major? How does the level of competition affect their chances and their level of commitment/anticipation of success? If their intrinsic motivation to practice leads to feelings of distress due to lack of practice time spent in earlier childhood, how do we help them overcome that in order to look ahead with confidence and resilience?

When inspiration strikes, practice!

It's easiest for the child who aspires to pursue music as a career to practice early. But as a teacher, and as a violinist who experienced similar resistance to early practice as a child, the answer to how to achieve success is to work hard now. We can't change the past. Our past interests can actually shape our artistry and musicianship! I am so proud of Vedanth's recent tireless actions towards shaping his future. This has taken the form of auditioning for region and All-State, attending summer camps, playing for other teachers, asking a lot of questions, working with other musician friends to audition for and play in youth orchestras, and most of all practicing in an increasingly intelligent/efficient way. His enthusiasm is contagious and in pursuing his own goals, he is inspiring others in the studio (including myself!).

What to do as a parent?

As a parent, Vedanth's mom, Krish, appeared incredulous at his frustration with not being pushed harder as a kid. She asked Vedanth "how could we push you any more than we did when it was a chore just to get you to lessons and to do what the teacher asked?!" They laughed about it and vented about their respective perspectives but her question is a good one. How does a parent help get the student beyond extrinsic motivation (pleasing the parent/teacher, earning prizes or getting trophies for graduating book levels, or just because "we said so"), to Vedanth's current level of commitment? For some, violin will always remain a hobby or an enriching experience but one that gets dropped at some point due to other interests and time constraints. For others however,

players and worse players. Some of the hardest lessons I ever learned involved the discovery of how unfair the audition process is. The outside pressures and odds can seem insurmountable at times and this is when that daily return to the practice room becomes more important than ever.

Helpful steps

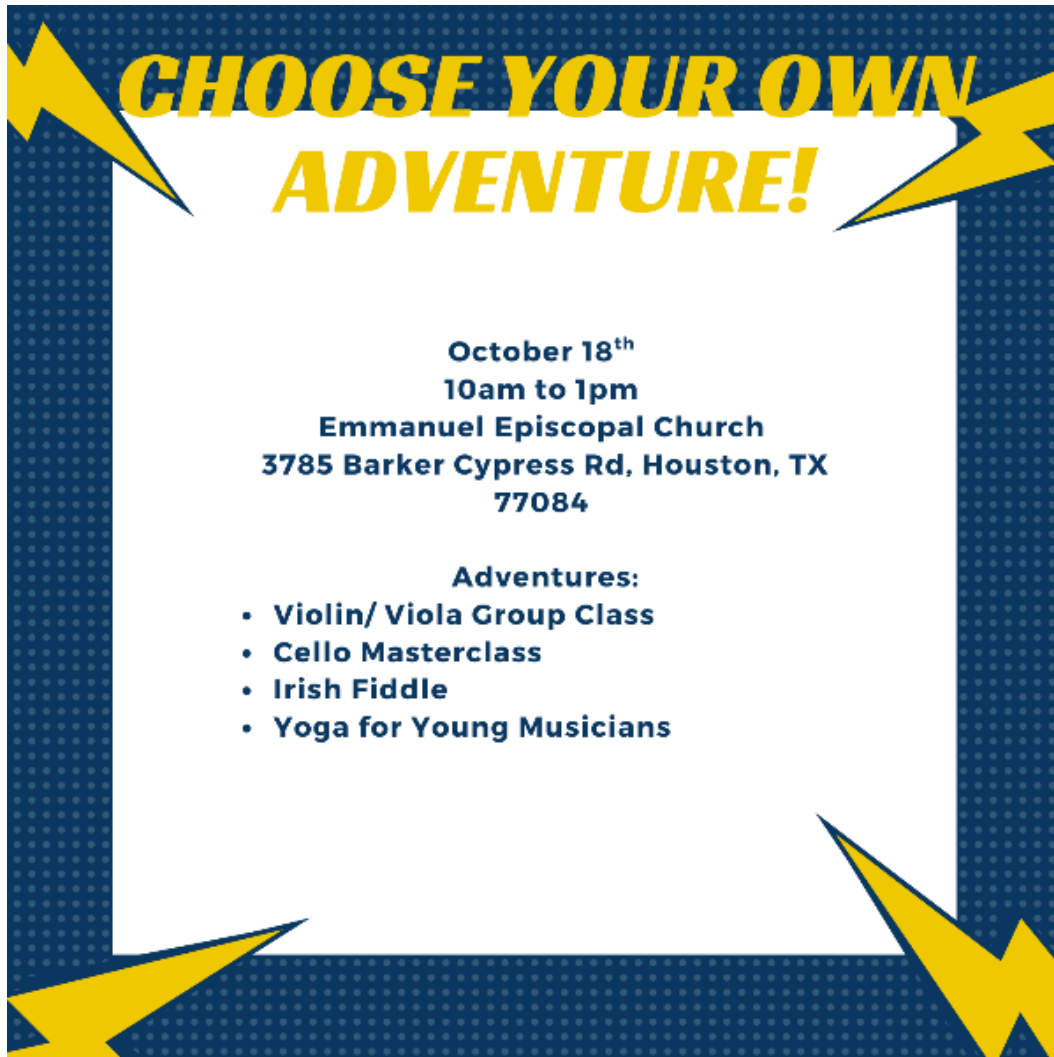
Here are some things that have helped my students and parents:

- Engage in social interaction with music as young as possible. Attend group classes, city wide Suzuki events, summer camps and institutes. Accountability with a social group mimics the camaraderie and dedication of a sports team and leads to intrinsic motivation!
- Find support among other Suzuki parents who struggle with similar issues. Attend parent education opportunities (such as the STXSA online parent talks!) or join Facebook groups to find discussions about how to navigate the journey.
- Set goals for practice and celebrate small victories along the way.
- Create an environment at home that encourages easy practice – if available, a space set up with a way to listen, practice, and explore music easily.

Keep trying!

Even with these efforts, as kids grow and change their commitment can waver and be distracted by other more fun activities, social circles, and electronics. During some periods, parents may just have to keep them going to lessons and orchestra even if they don't practice outside of them. Getting kids over the hump that almost everyone experiences isn't easy but keeping them going becomes such a gift later on. Showing that you believe in them, even in the face of anger and pushback, will often be the key to coming out on the other side with a lifelong ability to enjoy the violin.

Dr. Lois Geertz, a native of Boulder, Colorado, is the founder and director of the Houston-based Con Brio Violin Studio. Prior to her move to Houston to take a position she held for 6 years at the Houston Suzuki Academy, she spent 2 years serving as Artistic Director of the Greater New Orleans Suzuki Forum. Additionally, she developed the Strings department at the Ellis Marsalis Center for Music and created the Con Brio String Academy in New Orleans. During summers, she spent 6 years on the faculty of the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan as a performer and teacher. Dr. Geertz finished a Doctorate in Violin Performance and Pedagogy at the University of Oregon while serving on the faculty of the Community Music Institute of UO. She received her undergraduate degree in Music Education at the University of Houston. Her Masters studies in Violin Performance took place at the University of Wyoming and Louisiana State University. While in Wyoming, she served on the



***CHOOSE YOUR OWN
ADVENTURE!***

**October 18th
10am to 1pm
Emmanuel Episcopal Church
3785 Barker Cypress Rd, Houston, TX
77084**

Adventures:

- **Violin/ Viola Group Class**
- **Cello Masterclass**
- **Irish Fiddle**
- **Yoga for Young Musicians**

[Fall Festival](#) is this Saturday, October 18. Hope to see you all there!



Suzuki Graduation 2026! Apply now to insure you have plenty of time to make your recordings.

www.stxsa.org/graduation

STXSA Presents

PARENT NIGHT ONLINE SERIES

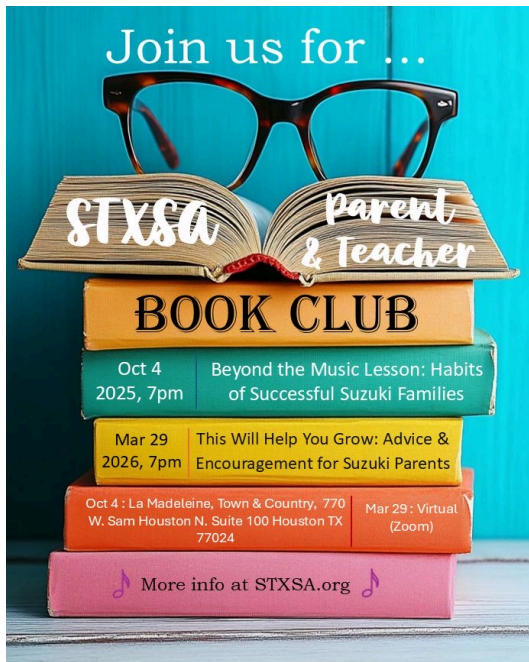
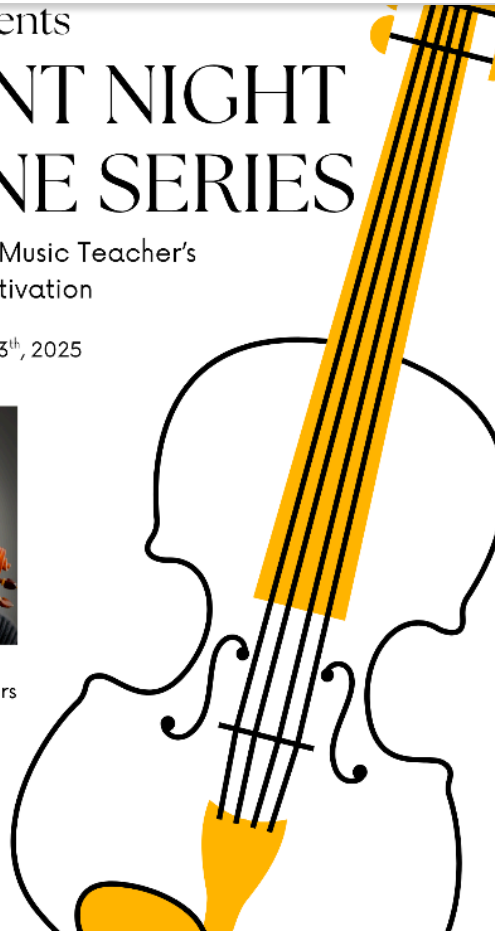
Ruth Meints, The Music Teacher's
Guide to Big Motivation

Thursday November 13th, 2025
7:30pm CT



\$25 for STXSA members
\$40 for non-members

[www.STXSA.org/
parenttalk](http://www.STXSA.org/parenttalk)
Please register
to receive the
link!



STXSA Book Club for teachers and parents!

Have you purchased the book yet? It's
time to start reading...

[This Will Help You Grow: Advice &
Encouragement for Suzuki Parents](#)

by [Brittany P. Gardner](#)

[Books available here](#)

See you on March 29, 2026!

[STXSA Parent Corner Newsletter Archives](#)
[Southeast Texas Suzuki Association](#)
[Suzuki Association of the Americas](#)
[International Suzuki Association](#)

PARENT CORNER ARCHIVES: CLICK HERE

Questions? Suggestions? CLICK HERE



- October 18 - Fall Festival
- October 30 - Graduation Application Deadline
- November 13 - Parent Night Online #1
- February 2 - Summer Institute Scholarship Deadline
- February 21 - Spring String Fling
- March 23 - Graduation Recording Deadline
- March 29 - Parent & Teacher Book Club
- April 11 - Ribbon Festival
- April 16 - Parent Night Online #2
- May 2 - Graduation Concert



[Subscribe](#)

[Past Issues](#)

[Translate](#) ▼

