

Teaching Children

Thanks for your interest in Cornerstone Music! It's always a privilege to teach both children and adults. Since different ages often require different teaching methods, here are some of my approaches to instructing children under the age of 10.

Every person is unique – regardless of their age. Each student here receives specialized instructions based on their skill level, goals, and experiences. We take into consideration that every person learns in their own way and at their own pace; that's the benefit of private instruction compared to classes of multiple students. Younger children require an even greater degree of specialization – they're often still busy exploring their world and processing all the new sights, sounds, and emotions that music can provide. It's especially common that their attention span will be much shorter than an older child and they will often interject a story that happened at home or school, or something from a video game or cartoon, or even a story from their imagination. Please understand that this is completely normal – and expected. My intention is to allow them to explore these thoughts and feelings while still maintaining a degree of structure. Studies show that children must release before they can focus.

It must be noted that children will typically develop their physical skills much more slowly. This can be frustrating to the parent who is not seeing much progress or is hearing “noise” coming from the teaching room. Over time, noise can develop into music (even noise can be musical when done properly!). I encourage exploration of all sounds and we always discuss whether a certain sound or technique is appropriate. A child may ask to try an instrument that they are currently not learning. If you hear drums during a piano lesson, that's why! I want to feed the child's creativity and allow them to explore their curiosity as they discover the “art” side of the mechanical things they must learn first. Practicing, of course, is essential and I recommend a minimum of 10 minutes per day. Beyond that, frustration can result and lead to feelings of failure.

Thanks again for allowing me to impact your child. It may be helpful to know that besides my experiences musically, I also take safety very seriously and offer a trusted environment. I have a background check performed annually and am committed to providing a healthy development that will impact all areas of life. Many students (of all ages) may, on occasion, just want to talk about life. I have several degrees, one of which is Adolescent Psychology, so discussing issues of life sometimes outweighs the need to “force” a music lesson. My promise is that I will never waste your time or finances. If children truly are our future, I consider it an honor to invest in them!