

## WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT PLAYING THE VIOLIN?

Violin students and their parents will tell you...

As the violin teacher of 28 students, ages 4 through 16, I recently asked this question of my students and their parents. Their answers allowed me to reach a new level of understanding of how important studying the violin really is to them.

Young students enjoy playing songs that are familiar to them, such as Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. They look forward to spending time with their mother or father each week that is set-aside especially for them. They enjoy showing off at violin class, and are very proud of their accomplishments. Predictably, at the end of every lesson, my four year olds ask, "Miss Sharon, did I have a good lesson?" An affirmative answer means that they are rewarded with a lollipop for having listened and concentrated well. The parents are equally enthusiastic about having their children enrolled in violin training at a young age because it allows them to bond with their children through the learning process.

"Violin taught me that I can be a good "teacher" of my child as well as a good parent," one parent said. " Working with my child at home between lessons and watching her amazing progress gave me a new confidence that I can be a positive model to her not only as her mom." They are thrilled to watch their children's self esteem develop as their playing and performances improve through daily practice. They have high hopes that by having their child learn to play, it will help them to become unique and intelligent adults, more successful in years to come.

As students mature, their answers become more introspective, and it is evident that the violin has become a very important part of who they are. They often express their thoughts and feelings through their music. One female student said, "The part that I like the most about playing the violin, is that I show my feelings. I can play it strongly when I am mad, angry, etc. I can play it jumpy when I am happy, excited." Another student said, "I like the fact that I get to express myself". Still another said, " It relaxes me." They like the fact that playing the violin well presents a challenge to them, and that there is always a higher level of playing to strive for regardless of where they are. They feel a sense of accomplishment and an overall positive feeling after working hard all week to accomplish their goals, and are often excited to come to their lesson to demonstrate their improved skills. They often leave their lesson feeling happy and energized. Playing the violin is a source of fun, and a wonderful way for them to socialize with others who play an instrument. For some students, playing the violin will likely become their livelihood, and they will enjoy a career as concert violinists, orchestral musicians, and teachers.

If you would like to explore the possibility of having your child begin violin lessons or attend a monthly class, please call 248-865-3060 or e-mail Sharon Rothstein at [sharonrothstein@yahoo.com](mailto:sharonrothstein@yahoo.com).