

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.