**Suzuki and Traditional Methods: What’s the Difference?**

**SUZUKI METHOD**

The Suzuki Method is based on the teaching philosophy of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki (1898-1998). Suzuki realized that learning to play an instrument can happen in much the same way that children learn their native language: at an early age, with lots of listening, repetition, and in a supportive, loving environment. Suzuki students typically begin lessons between ages 3-7. A parent or consistent adult helper commits to assisting the child with daily practice and listening homework, taking notes at weekly lessons and group classes. Music reading is learned after the child has achieved basic technical skills with the instrument.

[Benefits of an early start](https://emilyrhale.com/education/lessons-2/why-start-music-early/) with music include cognitive, motor and social skill development, building confidence, a healthy parent-child relationship, and a lifelong musical habit. For more information on the Suzuki Method, please visit the [Suzuki Association of the Americas website](https://suzukiassociation.org/about/suzuki-method/), or learn about Dr. Suzuki’s philosophy in [Nurtured by Love or Ability Development from Age Zero](https://suzukiassociation.org/store/books+by+dr.+shinichi+suzuki/).

**TRADITIONAL**

Older children or adult students may be better suited to beginning violin with traditional lessons, where music reading and theory skills are developed alongside instrumental skills. The student and teacher work together to define and achieve an individual’s goals, drawing on various musical styles or pedagogical tools. There is less intensive parental involvement with traditional lessons than with Suzuki Method, but parents of traditional students ages 12 and under are highly encouraged to attend their child’s weekly lessons and assist with daily home practice as needed.

In the same “Every Child Can” spirit of the Suzuki Method, I believes that every adult can learn too. It’s never too late to begin!

Emily R. Hale | July 2015