For Mum
Acknowledgements

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Abstract

This study examines the nature and influences of the change in parental involvement in boys’ instrumental practice within a single school context. Questionnaire data was collected from the parents of male students in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9. Three types of parental involvement were found: instruction, verbal encouragement and monitoring. A statistically significant decline was found in the average reported use of instruction and average reported levels of child cooperation to reminders. Parental involvement was found to be significantly related with perceived parental responsibility and child response to involvement. Follow-up interviews were conducted with three mother–son dyads as case studies of high, medium and low levels of parental involvement in Year 9 boys. Interview findings explored the dynamics of mother and son interactions in music practice. Common themes emerged among the high and medium level case studies in regard to perceptions of parental responsibility, preferred methods of involvement, and reasons behind involvement. This study opens new avenues for further research into the parental involvement of adolescents’ music practice.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Study Overview

The purpose of this study was to examine the ways in which parents change their involvement in their son’s instrumental practice from childhood to adolescence, focusing on the influences of parent–child relationships. The study was conducted using the mixed methods approach to address the two-fold purpose of the study. Research Questions 1 to 3 are addressed by questionnaire findings to extend on previous research literature regarding parental involvement in children’s music practice. Research Questions 4 and 5 are exploratory; addressed by interview case studies to add a new dimension to music education research regarding parental involvement in adolescents’ music practice.

Why Parental Involvement?

Parents are among the most significant figures in children’s musical development. In conjunction with individual talent and personality, the home environment plays a critical role in building the foundations for future achievement. Often the instigators of children’s instrumental learning, parents are key influences in motivating and sustaining musical success (Sloboda & Howe, 1996). “Beginning at a young age, children develop resilient attitudes, beliefs and expectations about their potential to learn music that have been instilled in them through interactions with their parents.” (McPherson, 2009, p. 91) One important aspect of this interaction is their involvement in instrumental practice.

Parents can be involved in children’s instrumental learning in various ways. Some parents nurture their child’s musical interest by taking them to concerts, listening to music together, or sharing musical tastes (Zdinski, 1996). More direct methods of involvement include giving instructions and verbal feedback during the actual practice session (McPherson & Renwick, 2001). This study will focus on the direct involvement of parents who actively guide and support their children for the purpose of improving their instrumental skills.
Parents may change their involvement throughout their child’s developmental process. Transformations of family relationships often occur during adolescence (Santrock, 2007), which can influence the ways that parents contribute to their child’s music practice. Despite consensus on the importance of parental support throughout all developmental stages (Creech & Hallam, 2003), little research has focused on how and why involvement in music practice changes during the adolescent transition.

Gender differences exist in the ways children learn and develop during adolescence. Compared to girls, boys tend to exhibit greater academic decline in secondary school and are less motivated to study (Barber & Olsen, 2004). Furthermore, Western society generally perceives music as “feminine” domain and this may lead to boys’ lower self-belief in their musical abilities (McPherson & Davidson, 2006). In light of such gender distinctions, this study will focus on parental involvement in boys’ music practice and its implications for motivational development.

**Significance of the Study**

According to the social cognitive framework, actions and decisions of individuals are influenced by the environmental context (Bandura, 1986). The motivation of children to practise and persist in their music can be significantly influenced by parental support. By providing a loving and stimulating learning environment, parents shape children’s musical values and the beliefs they have about their instrumental abilities. This can have a lasting impact on their musical development (McPherson, 2009). These motivational outcomes are strong predictors of future musical achievement, highlighting the need to examine the ways in which parents continue their involvement in adolescence.

The changes that occur during adolescence are often typified by heightened conflicts between the parent and teenager (Santrock, 2007). One of the highest sources of tension is between teenage assertions for autonomy and parental restriction (Smetana & Asquith, 1994). In music practice, this may mean adolescents wanting less
intervention from their parents. Research into how parents and adolescents perceive parental involvement in instrumental practice can reveal any discrepancies in attitude that may be a source of conflict in their relationship.

The optimal balance of parental control and freedom is seen in authoritative parenting (Baumrind, 1966). This parenting style is positively associated with academic performance, increased self-esteem, self-regulated behaviour and social competence (Smetana, 1995). Educational research shows that parents decrease their assistance in homework but increase their use of verbal reinforcement as the child becomes older (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Teenagers are found to respond positively to this change because their parents are being supportive whilst affirming their autonomy (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Similar research into how adolescents respond to parental involvement in music practice can help identify strategies that support adolescents’ freedom whilst maintaining a reasonable framework of authority.

**Outline of Research Questions**

The study will be based on the following research questions:

1) In what ways do parents become involved in their son’s instrumental practice in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9 according to parents?

This question addresses the different ways in which parents are involved in their son’s instrumental practice from Years 3 to 9. Such behaviours include sitting in the practice session, giving instructions, reminding him to practise, listening and giving verbal support. Out of the different ways that parents can be involved, this study aims to identify the main types of activities used by parents.

2) How do the ways in which parents become involved in their sons’ instrumental practice change in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9 according to parents?

This question addresses how parents change their involvement in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. The ways in which parents assist in their son’s practice may or may not change as he

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1 School years have been chosen to include the transition from primary to secondary school.
grows towards adolescence. It is hypothesised that, like homework (Hill & Tyson, 2009), parents will decrease their direct assistance, such as giving instructions.

3) a) According to parents, how do the following change in Years 3, 5, 7, and 9?
   i) The responses of their sons to parental involvement
   ii) The responsibility that parents take on for their sons’ practice

   b) How does parental involvement relate with a) and b)?

This question addresses how filial responses to parental involvement and parent perceptions of their responsibility change and relate with parental involvement. It is hypothesised that as the son’s response to direct assistance becomes more negative with age, as has been found in homework (Hill & Tyson, 2009), parents will decrease their efforts to help. Similarly, it is hypothesised that parents will reduce their involvement when they see their responsibility decreasing and their son’s own responsibility increasing.

4) How do mother–son relationships influence the change in parental involvement in the instrumental practice of Year 9 boys?

5) How do mothers’ perception of parental involvement compare with their Year 9 son’s perception?

The last two research questions are exploratory in nature. Research Question 4 explores the influences of mother and son relationships to parental involvement within different families. Research Question 5 explores the various ways in which mothers and adolescent boys view parental involvement.
Organisation of Thesis

This thesis is organised into five chapters. Chapter Two reviews existing literature and research studies on parental involvement in children and adolescents within both academic and musical domains. Chapter Three outlines the mixed methodology employed to address the research questions of the study. Chapter Four discusses the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study. Chapter Five draws conclusions from the research findings, and their implications for education and further research.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews existing research literature in the ways that parents influence the musical development of children and adolescents. Parental involvement in homework and music will be compared, with implications for further investigation into the relationship between these two domains. Transformations of parent–child relationships in adolescence will be discussed to reveal the significance of more research into the parental involvement of youths’ instrumental practice.

Parental Involvement in Children

The role of parents in children’s growth and socialisation has been researched in a growing body of literature in developmental psychology, especially within the past three decades (McPherson, 2009). Many sources from this literature indicate that parents can influence children’s motivational development, resilience and self-esteem (Grolnick, Kurowski & Gurland, 1999). Children internalise the values and standards provided by parents, which affects their social and psychological development (Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde & Whalen, 1997). Reciprocal influences of the parent–child relationship have been found, where the child’s behaviours affect the parenting practices chosen, which in turn influences the child’s response (Grusec, Goodnow, & Kuczynski, 2000). Thus, the ways in which parents adjust to children’s varying needs are significant in developing children’s autonomy and social adaptability.

Homework

One major focus in educational research is the parenting practices employed in children’s homework and its links with student outcomes. Parental support with homework bridges the separation between the home and school context. Through this, teachers and parents can collaborate to enhance children’s academic development (Grolnick et al., 1999). The positive influence of parental involvement includes the development of motivation and a higher perception of their competence in academics (Gonzalez-DeHass, Willems, & Doan-Holbein, 2005).
Hoover-Dempsey and her colleagues (2001) describe three main features of involvement in homework: modelling, reinforcement and instruction. Parents are influential models because they are perceived as powerful and competent figures that children observe and imitate. Positive reinforcement in homework, such as giving verbal support or tangible rewards, encourages desirable skills and attitudes. Instructional interactions, otherwise known as guided learning, include the use of questioning, explanations and discussions in problem-solving activities to develop cognitive processes.

The relationship between parental involvement in homework and children’s academic outcomes has been examined in various dimensions. Discrepancies have been found among research studies in regard to parental involvement and academic success. Whilst some have reported positive links between parental involvement and performance outcomes, others have found negative relationships (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). These contradictory findings may in part be explained by the reasons for homework involvement: whether it was initiated by parental support or by external demands, such as the child falling behind performance standards.

However, the positive relations between parental involvement and motivational development are well-established. Parents who encourage pleasure, persistence and autonomy in learning are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation in children, where they find enjoyment in learning (Gottfried & Gottfried, 1994). Conversely, parents who emphasise external control and use rewards and punishments for achievement are related to children’s negative motivation towards learning (Gottfried & Gottfried, 1994). The fear of failure and lower self-confidence is also highly associated with such controlling parental behaviours, regardless of students’ actual competency (Eaton & Dembo, 1997). Thus, different parenting practices can have positive or negative influences on children’s motivational development.

Children are found to develop greater resilience and autonomy when parents encourage self-management strategies, such as coping with distractions and regulating emotional responses in difficult situations (Hill & Tyson, 2009). In a study
of observations and interviews with parents and third-graders, parental mediation in homework was found to help children concentrate and deal with challenging tasks (Xu & Lyn, 1998). Similar observation and interview studies in music practice can help compare the influences of parental involvement between the musical and academic domain.

Children’s perceptions of their abilities have been found to relate with how parents evaluate their school performance. In a three-year longitudinal study, Wigfeld and his colleagues found that children’s confidence in their abilities were influenced by parental judgements of their competence. Thus, children’s self-perceptions are continuously shaped by parents from a young age (Wigfield et al., 1997). Children who receive parental assistance tend to find more enjoyment in homework and choose to spend more time and effort on completing it. They also display greater attention span and positive behaviour within the classroom (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). This combination of positive self-concept and intrinsic motivation are key features in self-regulation, where students take on personal responsibility for their learning (Austin, Renwick, & McPherson, 2006). In general, parental contributions in homework have been found to benefit children’s academic development. This is also the case for instrumental learning.

**Instrumental Practice**

Like homework, instrumental practice is often perceived as a chore by children, and parents employ similar strategies to support their practising (Austin et al., 2006). Learning an instrument is a physically and mentally challenging task, and parental involvement is particularly important in sustaining children’s musical engagement (McPherson & Davidson, 2006). Interview case studies have shown that high parental involvement in the early years of instrumental learning is a strong precursor to musical success (Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sloboda & Howe, 1996). These studies also found that parents’ own interest in music were often transferred to children.
In some respect, music requires greater demands on parents than homework because of the time, transportation and financial resources needed to support instrumental learning (Grolnick et al., 1999). Other activities include taking the child to concerts, attending school and non-school performances, and listening to or talking about music (Zdinski, 1996). Parents can be directly engaged in a child’s practice session that can help develop cognitive, performance and attitudinal outcomes (Zdzinski, 1996). These strategies include instruction, correction and verbal reminders, which are common parental behaviours found in the childhood of successful musicians (McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002).

Direct involvement in children’s practice sessions was examined in detail by McPherson and Renwick (2001) in longitudinal case studies that identified three types of behaviours similar to the involvement used in homework: teaching, passive listening, and giving verbal encouragement. Over the three years of instrumental learning, parental presence during music practice decreased from 65% to 23%. This has implications for further research into how and why parental involvement may decrease over a longer period of time.

Similar to homework, children’s motivation in instrumental practice can be shaped positively or negatively depending on the parenting strategies used. Verbal praise has been found to facilitate the motivation to continue instrumental training and develop higher self-competence beliefs (Austin et al., 2006; Sichivitsa, 2007). In an interview case study with parents and children of varying musical abilities, Sloboda and Howe (1996) found that the most successful children had parents who listened to their lessons and practice, and enjoyed music themselves. In a follow-up study, eight of the most successful children were found to have higher maternal support and attended more musical activities in childhood (Moore, Burland, & Davidson, 2003). Further research into the influences of different types of involvement, especially those of mothers, can help find parenting activities that lead to musical success.

Children’s values towards music are shaped by parental attitudes, where their decisions to continue music lessons are associated with parents’ own musical values.
Parents who value the intrinsic benefits of music, such as personal enjoyment and enrichment, are more likely to have children who excel in music (Davidson, Howe, & Sloboda, 1997). One reason may be because they develop intrinsic motivation to continue musical training. When students are interested in music, they become self-motivated and more resilient to the challenges of practice (Renwick & McPherson, 2002). They are more likely to exhibit autonomous behaviour in their practice and use self-regulated strategies, such as monitoring accuracy, managing effort and using corrective techniques (Austin et al., 2006).

Conversely, parents who emphasise the extrinsic values of music, such as social recognition and fame, may push their child to succeed (Dai & Schader, 2001). Parents who carry overly ambitious goals may exert excessive pressures on the child (Kemp, 1996). In a longitudinal study of first-year beginner instrumentalists, McPherson and Davidson (2002) observed that children who gave up their instruments tended to have mothers who used external pressures to enforce practice, whilst continuing instrumentalists had positive maternal support, such as verbal reinforcement and helping to cope with emotional distress. In summary, parents who provide a supportive home environment with realistic expectations and positive musical values help develop children’s motivation and self-regulation in instrumental practice that can continue into adulthood.

**The Adolescent Phenomenon**

The next critical stage of development is adolescence – a period typically associated with “storm and stress”, characterised by biological, psychological and social changes (Santrock, 2007). This period has been the focus of much research in recent decades because it is a strong indicator of future life directions (Eccles et al., 1993). In addition to personal changes, external changes of school environment and family dynamics combine to form often negative impacts on academic outcomes (Barber & Olsen, 2004).
Academic Decline

Research has found a declining trend in school achievement and motivation among adolescents. Secondary school is often associated with an increase in anxiety, a sense of helplessness, truancy, and class absences (Eccles et al., 1993). In extreme cases, the high school transition can be the start of a downward spiral of academic failure and school dropouts (Eccles et al., 1993). In a four-year longitudinal study, Barber and Olsen (2004) found a decline in the school achievement, intrinsic motivation and self-perception of students from Years 6 to 9. This trend was most pronounced between Years 6 to 7 as a result of school transition. Furthermore, boys were found to have greater declines in academic performance and motivation, less classroom autonomy and more parental conflicts. These findings highlight the need for more research into the development of boys’ motivation in school.

Musical Decline

Similar declines have been found in youth musical engagement. Children’s self-perceptions of their musical abilities decrease with age, which can lead to the loss of motivation (Austin et al., 2006). In a self-report study of students in Years 4 to 12, Asmus (1986) found that students increasingly attributed their musical achievements to personal factors of talent and ability, as opposed to the controllable factor of effort. Hence, adolescents are more likely to perceive musical competence as an unchangeable ability, irrespective of how much they practise, which may lead to greater discouragement when facing challenges.

Teenagers become more selective in their areas of interest and their values towards music are highly influenced by their social context (Austin et al., 2006). As music is placed in the periphery of elective subjects in high school, the value of instrumental learning may diminish if not sustained by other external means, such as attending concerts and playing in ensembles (Davidson et al., 1997). The secondary school transition is marked with a drop in instrumental band participation (Sandene, 1994), which may be instigated by increased academic pressure.
There are gender differences in the problems faced during adolescence. Boys tend to exhibit greater declines in academic performance, motivation and classroom autonomy (Barber & Olsen, 2004). Boys may have less confidence in their musical ability because of Western society’s feminine associations with music (McPherson & Davidson, 2006). Boys tend to be less intrinsically motivated than girls and rely more on external support, such as parents (McPherson, 2009). Boys also tend to be less motivated than girls in their music, and are therefore more likely to give up instrumental learning (McPherson & Davidson, 2006). A more detailed examination of parental involvement in boys’ music practice may be beneficial to their motivational development.

Evolving Parental Involvement

Parental Conflicts

The past two decades of research studies in the area of adolescence has focused on the transformation of family relationships influenced by teenagers’ developmental need for autonomy (Steinberg, 2001). Longitudinal survey data has shown that the parent–child relationship in adolescence can influence the quality of future relationships in adulthood (Aquilino, 1997). This is significant in light of the heightened parental conflicts faced by teenagers.

Due to social and cognitive changes, teenagers tend to push for greater personal freedom as they become more independent (Steinberg, 1993). However, readjusting parental authority can sometimes be difficult. Some parents may become more restrictive in response to teenage assertions for autonomy, further exacerbating the situation (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Discrepancies in parents’ and teenagers’ perceptions of authority are among the most common sources of conflicts (Smetana, 1995).

In a survey study of parents and adolescents in Years 6, 8 and 10, adolescents were found to perceive the legitimacy of parental authority on various issues with less importance than their parents (Smetana & Asquith, 1994). It was reported that conflicts most often occurred concerning everyday issues, such as cleaning the room.
Whilst adolescents perceived these tasks to be matters of personal jurisdiction, parents perceived them as issues pertaining to their authority. Since instrumental practice is often treated as an issue of personal freedom, research comparing how parents and adolescents perceive the role of parents in music practice may produce similar differences.

**Authority and Autonomy**

The balance of parental authority and adolescent autonomy is incorporated in Baumrind’s (1966) typology of parenting styles, which has been widely researched in terms of its impact on children’s cognitive, social and psychological growth. Smetana and Campione (2003) identify four types of parenting styles according to varying degrees of “demandingness” and “responsiveness”:

1. Authoritative - both responsive and demanding; parents set clear expectations of responsible behaviour whilst being loving and sensitive to the child’s needs.
2. Authoritarian - demanding but not responsive; parents assert rigid submission to rules without accounting for the child’s needs.
3. Permissive - responsive but not demanding; parents tolerate the child’s behaviours without consequences and avoid exerting authority
4. Rejecting-neglecting - neither demanding nor responsive; parents who are disengaged from their child

The most favourable parenting style is authoritative parenting, where parents are warm, firm and accepting of the teenager’s psychological needs for autonomy (Steinberg, 2001). This parenting style is associated with the development of intrinsic motivation in learning, self-esteem and social skills (Deci & Ryan, 1985). A questionnaire study of high school students found benefits in joint family decision making (Dornbusch et al., 1990). Reasoning and discussions were used to negotiate family decisions by reinforcing personal responsibility through parental mediation. These activities were found to be associated with academic achievement and motivation. Further research is needed to explore how involvement in adolescent
instrumental practice can reflect the appropriate balance between autonomy-support and control.

**Parental Involvement in Adolescence**

Previous studies have focused on homework involvement in primary school, with little account for the parental roles in high school (Hill & Tyson, 2009). There is even less research on parental involvement in youths’ music practice (McPherson, 2009; Zdzinski, 1996). Reasons for this gap in literature may be because parents play less significant roles in adolescents compared with children. Teenagers spend less time at home to participate in school, extracurricular and social activities. Peer acceptance and teacher relations become more important whilst parental authority is questioned (Steinberg, 1993).

Studies comparing primary and secondary school students have shown a dramatic decline in parental involvement in school work as children move into early adolescence (Eccles & Harold, 1996; Jodl et al., 2001). This may be because parents feel less equipped to help as the work becomes more complex (Eccles & Harold. 1996). Parents may also view themselves as less important as their teenager increasingly desires independence (Jodl et al., 2001). However, parents are still significant contributors to the adolescent development, only in a different sense compared to that of childhood.

A survey study involving senior high school students found that parental background contributed to their youths’ educational aspirations (Wilson & Wilson, 1992). Similarly, in a questionnaire and interview study with seventh-graders and their parents, parental values were found to influence the teenager’s attitude to education, sports and occupational aspirations (Jodl et al., 2001). This method of surveys and interviews can also be used to examine parental influences in teenagers’ attitudes to music. In addition, the educational values of mothers have been found to influence adolescents’ educational goals greater than those of their fathers (Wilson & Wilson, 1992). Similar to school involvement, mothers are often more highly involved than
fathers in their child’s music practice (Jodl et al., 2001; McPherson, 2009). This reveals the significance of more research examining mother-and-child interactions in music practice.

As family relationships transform to become less hierarchical, parenting strategies in music practice may also change. Teenagers often value parental support in school work, on the condition that they have some control over what happens during their involvement (Creech & Hallam, 2003). Whilst parents may reduce their assistance in practice sessions, they continue using verbal reminders and positive reinforcement to encourage instrumental learning (McPherson, 2009). Longitudinal case studies of children’s instrumental practice show a declining trend in parental involvement (Davidson & Borthwick, 2002; McPherson & Davidson, 2002; McPherson & Renwick, 2001). In a single case study of violin students, parents reported a decreased level of confidence in their abilities to help with children’s practice by the age of eleven, which may account for the decline in involvement (Creech & Hallam, 2003).

Due to the paucity of research in this area, findings from the academic domain can be used to draw implications for instrumental practice. In a meta-analysis of existing studies, Hill and Tyson (2009) found positive relations between parental involvement and high school achievement. It was found that parents change the nature of their involvement in high school as a response to the teenager’s growing independence. Instead of direct assistance with homework, parents use indirect methods of academic socialisation, which includes communicating parental expectations, emphasising the value and utility of education, and fostering educational and vocational aspirations (Hill & Tyson, 2009). This change in approach to involvement can be explored in relation to instrumental practice.

Parents have been found to be motivated to help with homework for three major reasons (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001):
1. Parental role constructions - they believe it is their responsibility
2. Sense of efficacy in helping child success - they believe they will make a positive difference
3. Perceptions of invitations - they perceive their child to want their help

This can account for the changes in the parental involvement in adolescents’ school work. As children increase in autonomy, parents’ perceptions of their role decrease and they are less likely to perceive their child wanting their help. As the school work becomes increasingly difficult, parents may be less confident in their ability to assist (Hill & Tyson, 2009). This has strong implications for music, where parents’ perceptions of their role and adolescents’ responses to parents may have bi-directional influences to parental involvement.

**Research Need**

There is a need for greater research into the ways that parents change their involvement in music practice from childhood to adolescence, especially in light of the transforming relationship between the parent and the child. Explorations of parent and adolescent perceptions of parental authority in relation to instrumental practice can reveal potential sources of tension. Furthermore, insight into adolescents’ responses and attitudes towards various types of parental involvement can reveal those parenting behaviours that can stimulate motivation. The current study addresses some of these broad issues within a case study context, the methodology of which is outlined in the following chapter.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Mixed Methods

A mixed methods approach was implemented to address the various dimensions of the research problem. This method involves the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to provide a deeper and more complete understanding of the research topic (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The use of a quantitative method meant a larger sample size could be examined cross-sectionally and the generalisation of trends could be statistically analysed without interpretation biases (Jick, 1979). The use of a qualitative method provided a deeper understanding of the context, and allowed for the opinions of the researcher and participants to have a voice (Jick, 1979). This enabled the various dynamics of parental involvement to be examined.

By using a mixed methods approach, the two-fold purpose of the study to extend on previous studies and generate new findings could be fulfilled through the integration of confirmatory and exploratory data (Teddie & Tashakorri, 2009). Quantitative data was used to test the hypotheses on the change in parental involvement drawn from the findings of previous studies (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative data was used to explore the relationships underlying parental involvement in adolescent boys’ music practice within different families. Since this is an area of limited research attention, findings were exploratory and required the qualitative method to provide contextual descriptions of the different case studies (Burns, 2000).

The sequential strategy of mixed methods was used: a two-phased design that begins with initial quantitative results that are further expanded by more in-depth qualitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2003). In this study, Phase One was a cross-sectional analysis of self-report questionnaires of parents to address Research Questions 1 to 3 (p. 3 and 4). Phase Two consisted of interview case studies with three parent-child dyads to address Research Questions 4 and 5 (p. 4). Data gathered from the questionnaires was used to determine the recruitment of the interview participants (Creswell & Plan Clark, 2003).
Single Case Study

The research was conducted as a single case study of one school. This method allowed for an in-depth investigation of a naturalistic situation where the effects of context could be taken into consideration within a bounded institutional system (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Due to time and resource limitations, this approach best suited the purpose of the study. By concentrating on a single context, the uniqueness and complexity of the case could be examined as the primary focus (Stake, 1995). This intrinsic case study method allowed for a detailed examination of parental involvement within a particular environment where participants had similar socio-economic and educational backgrounds.

The case study involved an independent school in northern Sydney. The distinguished profile of the school and its geographical location defined the upper-middle class status and Anglo-Australian background of a majority of the parents. Students shared common educational and musical training within the school. An understanding of the trends of this school can enable a greater understanding of other cases within similar social contexts (Burns, 2000).

The school covers Years K–12 and provides a broad academic curriculum and a wide range of extracurricular activities. The annual enrolment fees are over $15 000, which is reflected in the high quality of teaching, discipline and resources received by students. In 2008, it was one of the schools to have the greatest proportion of students in the all-rounder achievers’ list for the Higher School Certificate in its region. This shows its strong commitment to academic achievement.

Correspondingly, music is strongly valued in the school’s academic, social and extracurricular programs. The music building is equipped with computers, practice studios, a recording studio and a recital hall. It is well-resourced in equipment used for music classes, private instrumental lessons and school performances. The music
department is comprised of multiple full-time teachers as well as externally hired instrumental tutors and ensemble conductors.

All primary school students undertake compulsory instrumental lessons. Mandatory music classes are taught until Year 8 and many students continue with elective classes. Students proficient in their instruments are encouraged to join co-curricular ensembles, such as concert bands, orchestra, woodwind and brass ensembles. Various music camps and musical productions occur throughout the year. The school has won various awards with its choirs and ensembles, both regionally and nationally. There are also informal band opportunities for students interested in popular music. Regular school assemblies form a major component of school life, where music is a means for social interaction and formal ceremony.

Since music is a central aspect of the school community, the students and parents can participate in frequent musical experiences and may have highly positive attitudes to music. The system of practice diaries enables parents to monitor lesson progress. They can also attend regular school concerts and performances to support their son. Hence, parents can feel highly involved in the music of their sons and are more likely to perceive their role as important.

Data Collection

Phase One: Questionnaires

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire design followed that of the Parental Involvement Measure used by Zdzinski (1996). Responses were close-ended to focus on specific parental involvement activities which could be statistically analysed (Cohen et al., 2007). Likert-scale responses were used, where participants reported to statements of parental involvement on a scale of 1 to 7. This method increases the validity and

2 See Appendix C and D
reliability of the results since it is based on the empirical data of the subject’s response using a homogenous, ordinal scale (Fowler, 2009).

The questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section 1 gathered demographic information: child school year, parent gender, language background and parents’ initiation of the child’s musical training. Section 2 measured the frequency of parental involvement activities; responses of their sons towards involvement; and parents’ perception of parental responsibility3. There were 20 items that represented one of the six variables of parental involvement: teaching, guiding, reminding, listening, giving verbal praise and communicating with teachers. These variables were found to be common involvement activities used by parents in previous studies (Creech & Hallam, 2003; McPherson & Renwick, 2001; Zdzinski, 1996). Each item described a behaviour that reflected the variable being represented. The different ways that parents become involved could therefore be measured using multiple items to increase the strength of the data (Floyd, 2009).

Parents’ ratings of their son’s response to involvement were measured using four items. A higher rating of these items indicated a more positive response to parental involvement. Parents’ perceptions of their responsibility in their son’s music practice were measured using two items. A higher rating in these items indicated a high perception of parental responsibility. Parents’ perception of their son’s responsibility was also measured using two items. A higher rating in these items indicated a lower perception of parental responsibility. It was hypothesised that parents’ perceptions of their own responsibility would decrease as their perception of their sons’ responsibility increased. Section 4 gathered the contact information of parents who wished to participate in a follow-up interview.

3 Addressing Research Questions 1, 2 and 3 (p.3 and 4). See Appendix B for questionnaire variables and items.
Questionnaire Participants

Approval for conducting the study was obtained from the University Human Research Ethics Committee⁴. At the beginning of Term 2, questionnaires were distributed to male students who played an instrument in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. These were handed to parents to complete and return to the school office. Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous. Follow-up reminders were given by teachers throughout the term. Questionnaires were collected to be analysed at the end of the term.

Participants were 57 parents (46 female, 11 male), which was a 14% response rate from the 400 questionnaires distributed. There were 11 parents of children in Year 3, 19 in Year 5, 15 in Year 7, and 12 in Year 9. The majority of the participants were from an English speaking background (81%). Parents who reported to have initiated their sons’ musical training accounted for 52% of the total sample.

Phase Two: Interview Case Studies

Interview Participants

The interview method enabled participants to express opinions, interpretations and emotions about their experiences in a spontaneous way where complex issues could be deeply examined (Cohen et al., 2007). Participants were selected according to the quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires. Mothers who expressed interest for interviews with their sons in Year 9 were in the selection process to investigate mother–son relationships in music practice⁵.

The average of each parent’s total ratings in Section 2 of the questionnaire was calculated to measure their mean level of reported parental involvement. These averages were used to select three participants according to their high, medium or low level of reported involvement. Through this purposive sampling, varying degrees

⁴ See Appendix A
⁵ Addressing Research Questions 4 and 5 (p.4)
of parental involvement could be examined. The three parents were contacted by telephone to confirm their interest and elicit informed consent for their son to be interviewed separately. Participant information statements and consent forms\(^6\) were posted to them to introduce the study. The parents were called a week later to appoint a convenient time and location for an interview with them and their sons.

Interviews were conducted separately so that attitudes and opinions could be expressed confidentially. The confidentiality and anonymity of the interview was emphasised to maximise the sincerity and freedom of responses. Participants were also reassured that they could terminate the interview at any time or refuse to answer any of the questions. Interview sessions ranged from twenty minutes to one hour depending on the participant.

**Interview Guide**

Due to the exploratory nature of the topic, the interview guide approach was implemented, where an outline of the content was specified but the sequence and working of the questions were flexible. This increased the comprehensiveness of the data whilst maintaining a degree of openness and informality (Patton, 1980).

The interview used open-ended questions to enable the probing of responses and for important but unanticipated issues to be raised (Silvermann, 2006). The parent and child interview guides\(^7\) consisted of similar questions so that their responses could be compared with each other. The ‘funnel’ method was used, in which a broad question was narrowed to more specific detail (Cohen et al., 2007). There were eight broad questions addressing how and why parental involvement changed, perceptions of parental responsibility, and adolescent responses to parental involvement. Interviews were audio-recorded onto a dictaphone and a back-up cassette-recorder to be transcribed and analysed. Field notes were also taken to record non-verbal cues, such as body language and facial expressions.

\(^6\) See Appendix E, F, G and H
\(^7\) See Appendix I and J
Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

Data from the questionnaires were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Responses were initially analysed using descriptive statistics to summarise the changing levels of parental involvement across the years. Using factor analysis, the ratings of parental involvement were reduced to smaller categories of closely related items. This determined the main ways in which parents are involved in their son’s music practice. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) with post hoc tests was used to investigate longitudinal changes between the variables of parental involvement, child response and perception of parental responsibility. Correlations between these variables were ascertained to measure the interrelationships of the ordinal data (Howell, 2008). Hypothesis testing was verified according to statistical significance.

Interview Analysis

The interview data was analysed using grounded theory, which is a process of generating theories that emerge from the data itself, rather than forcing the data into predetermined ideas (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Since parental involvement describes a reciprocal relationship between the parent and child, the consequences that arise out of action and interaction could be examined naturalistically using grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). This inductive approach was advantageous in light of the scarcity of pre-existing literature on the topic of parental involvement in adolescent music practice. It allowed for the case studies to speak for themselves as theories were progressively modified and reformulated in the course of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

The process of analysis involved data preparation, familiarisation and documentation of initial ideas, coding, and refining themes (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). The data was deconstructed and rearranged through coding. Three types of coding were used: open, axial and selective (Ezzy, 2002). First, open coding identified important units of analysis to be coded and categorised. Axial coding then explored
relationships between codes to integrate them around central categories. Third, selective coding identified a core category, and relationships were made between the core category and other categories to develop a theory. Theoretical completeness occurred when saturation was achieved, where the theory adequately explained all available data (Charmaz, 2006).

Comparisons were made within each case study by first analysing the parent’s responses to questions to produce emerging themes, then comparing them with the child’s responses to the same questions. This enabled similarities and discrepancies in perceptions to be explored. These perceptions were further compared between case studies to generate trends in the data. Although each case study was analysed as a unique example of parental involvement distinctive to its context, connections were made throughout the coding process to generate common themes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Triangulation

The mixed methods approach enabled qualitative data to validate and corroborate quantitative results. The convergence model of triangulation was adopted by collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data separately from the same school context, then comparing and contrasting the results through interpretation (Creswell, 1999). The questionnaire data of the change in parental involvement and its various aspects was compared with parent and adolescent reports of parental involvement from the interviews. The validity of the questionnaire data could hence be confirmed by the interview data. Triangulation within methods was achieved by using the same interview procedure for the parent-child dyads to gain multiple perspectives of the same situation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 1994). These triangulation methods increased the validity of the findings discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter 4: Research Findings

The following research findings contribute to the current body of literature on parental involvement in children, and produce exploratory findings on the topic of adolescent music practice. This chapter is divided into two sections: the statistical analysis of the questionnaires and the qualitative findings from the interview case studies.

Questionnaire Findings

Three Types of Parental Involvement

Through factor analysis, the 20 questionnaire items measuring various types of parental involvement were reduced to three main categories of parental involvement\textsuperscript{8}. The first type of involvement was labelled “instruction”, including the variables of teaching and guiding. The second type of involvement was labelled “verbal encouragement”, one of the hypothesised variables. The third type of involvement was labelled “monitoring”, including the variables of reminding, listening and communicating with the teacher.

Table 1 shows the four questionnaire items which most represented each type of parental involvement. These four items were selected to create three new composite variables: instruction, verbal encouragement and monitoring\textsuperscript{9}. The reliability of these items was investigated and they were found to be very consistent in measuring the composite variables.\textsuperscript{10} These three types of parental involvement were used to represent the ways in which parents changed their involvement in Years 3 to 9.

\textsuperscript{8} Items were reduced by principal components analysis (PCA). Five components exceeded the eigenvalue of 1, and a scree plot indicated clear breaks between the first two components, with a smaller break after the third component. The first three components explained 36.8\%, 15.2\% and 8.9\% of the variance respectively, accounting for 60.9\% of the total variance. The first three components were interpreted by oblimin rotation. (See Appendix K)

\textsuperscript{9} Four items with the highest loading above .5 in the factor analysis were averaged to form the three composite variables.

\textsuperscript{10} Cronbach’s alpha was used to compute the internal consistency of each composite: instruction $\alpha = .91$; verbal encouragement $\alpha = .90$; monitoring $\alpha = .75$. 

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Table 1: Three types of parental involvement and four sample items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement Type</th>
<th>Sample item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>I sit with my child and correct his practising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I sit and comment during my child’s practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I sit with my child and teach him how to practise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I sit with my child and help his practising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal encouragement</td>
<td>I tell my child how good the quality of the practice sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I praise my child when practising sounds good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I praise my child when he plays well during practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I tell my child how much I enjoy hearing his practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>I ask my child whether he has practised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I read the teacher’s notes to check lesson progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I remind my child to practise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I sit with my child and listen during practice without making comments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Decline in Parental Involvement

As shown in Table 2, the reported use of instruction decreased the most; verbal encouragement remained mostly the same; and monitoring decreased from Years 3 to 9. A statistically significant difference\(^\text{11}\) was found in the reported use of instruction between Years 3 and 9. This supports the hypothesis that parents decrease their direct assistance in music practice as they do in homework (Hill & Tyson, 2009). Verbal encouragement was reported to be used most across all school years. Instruction was

\(^{11}\) Statistical difference was measured using post hoc multiple comparisons with the Bonferroni adjustment after finding a significant main effect through ANOVA. Difference between Grades 3 and 9 in the use of instruction was $-2.08$, significant at the .05 level.
reported to be used least often and decreased more than the other two involvement
types from Year 7 onwards.

**Table 2: Average reported level of parental involvement across school years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involvement Type</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>3.7 (1.8)</td>
<td>3.0 (1.6)</td>
<td>2.4 (1.7)</td>
<td>1.6 (1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Encouragement</td>
<td>5.6 (1.7)</td>
<td>5.7 (1.0)</td>
<td>5.5 (1.5)</td>
<td>4.8 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>4.8 (1.1)</td>
<td>4.5 (1.0)</td>
<td>3.7 (1.6)</td>
<td>3.0 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. The average was derived from a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *Never*, 7 = *Always*)

**Child Cooperation and Decline in Involvement**

As shown in Table 3, there was an average reported decline in the son’s positive
response to instruction and monitoring. A statistically significant difference\(^{13}\) was
found on the item “My child always practises when I remind him” between Years 3
and 9. This supports the hypothesis of the decrease in the child’s positive response
to direct assistance as he becomes older. There was a non-significant declining trend
in the ratings of the other child response items.

A positive relationship was found between all the child response items and the three
types of involvements. The highest correlation was found between the item “My
child likes me sitting with him during practice” and the use of instruction.\(^{14}\) This
item was also significantly related to the use of verbal encouragement\(^{15}\). The item
“My child always practises when I remind him” was significantly related to the use
of instruction and monitoring.\(^{16}\) The item “My child likes it when I remind him to
practise” was significantly related to the use of instruction.\(^{17}\) As hypothesised, these

\(^{12}\) Standard deviation in parentheses

\(^{13}\) Statistical difference was measured using post hoc multiple comparisons with the Bonferroni
adjustment after finding a significant main effect through ANOVA. Difference between Years 3 and 9
in child compliance to reminders was –2.19, significant at the .05 level.

\(^{14}\) \(r = .55\), where \(r \geq .5\) is considered large (Cohen, 1988)

\(^{15}\) \(r = .37\), correlation significant at the .01 level

\(^{16}\) \(r = .38\) and \(r = .37\) respectively, correlation significant at the .01 level

\(^{17}\) \(r = .36\), correlation significant at the .01 level
results show that the son’s response and cooperation is a significant factor related to how much the parent is involved in his practice, especially in the use of instruction.

Table 3: Average reports of child response to parental involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child response items</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child always practises when I remind him</td>
<td>6.1 (1.1)</td>
<td>5.2 (1.1)</td>
<td>4.6 (1.7)</td>
<td>3.9 (2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child likes it when I remind him to practise</td>
<td>3.1 (1.4)</td>
<td>2.9 (1.3)</td>
<td>2.4 (1.5)</td>
<td>2.2 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child likes it when I ask how practice is going</td>
<td>4.6 (1.6)</td>
<td>4.1 (1.6)</td>
<td>4.2 (1.6)</td>
<td>3.4 (2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child likes me sitting with him during practice</td>
<td>3.9 (2.1)</td>
<td>3.9 (1.7)</td>
<td>3.2 (1.8)</td>
<td>2.3 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child likes to perform for me</td>
<td>5.2 (1.7)</td>
<td>4.7 (1.6)</td>
<td>4.3 (1.7)</td>
<td>4.9 (1.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The average was derived from a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Never; 7 = Always)

Parental Responsibility and Decline in Involvement

No statistically significant differences were found in the parents’ views about parental responsibility and child responsibility across the years. As shown in Table 4, there was a non-significant declining trend in how importantly parents viewed their responsibility in their son’s practice. As shown in Table 5, there was a non-significant increasing trend in parents’ perception of their son’s responsibility in his own practice in terms of reminders and practice times.
Table 4: Average reports of parental responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental responsibility items</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child’s practice is my responsibility</td>
<td>3.9 (1.4)</td>
<td>3.6 (1.4)</td>
<td>2.7 (1.6)</td>
<td>2.6 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important that I am involved in my child’s practice</td>
<td>4.5 (1.8)</td>
<td>4.3 (1.8)</td>
<td>3.9 (1.8)</td>
<td>3.4 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The average was derived from a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*; 7 = *Strongly agree*).

Table 5: Average reports of child responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child responsibility items</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
<th>Year 7</th>
<th>Year 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My child should not need me to remind him to practise</td>
<td>4.6 (1.4)</td>
<td>4.6 (1.7)</td>
<td>5.0 (1.6)</td>
<td>5.3 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child should decide when he wants to practise</td>
<td>4.2 (1.0)</td>
<td>4.2 (2.0)</td>
<td>4.7 (1.4)</td>
<td>4.9 (1.7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* The average was derived from a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*; 7 = *Strongly agree*).

In support of the hypothesis, parents’ views about their responsibility were highly related to how importantly they viewed their son’s own responsibility to practise\(^\text{18}\). As parents expected more autonomy from their son to manage his own practice, they perceived their involvement to be less important.

How importantly parents viewed their responsibility in their child’s practice was positively associated with all three types of involvement. The strongest relationship was found between the item “It is important that I am involved in my child’s practice” and...\

\(^{18}\) There was a significant negative correlation between the two variables, \(r = -.4, n = 57, p < .01.\)
practice” and the use of instruction, \( r = .72 \). This item was also significantly related to the reported use of verbal encouragement and monitoring\(^{19}\). The item “My child’s practising is my responsibility” was significantly related to the reported use of instruction and monitoring. These results show that parents who have a high perception of their responsibility are likely to be more involved in their child’s practice, especially in their use of instruction.

Negative relationships were found between parents’ perception of child responsibility and some aspects of parental involvement. The item “My child should not need me to remind him to practise” was negatively associated with monitoring and instruction.\(^{20}\) However, no relationships were found between child responsibility and the use of verbal encouragement. This corresponds with the hypothesis that as parents expect the child to take on more responsibility in their own practice they are likely to decrease their direct assistance.

In summary, the son who was reported to respond positively to involvement was more likely to receive higher parental involvement than the son who responded negatively. As the child’s response was reported to grow increasingly negative with age, parents were likely to decrease their involvement. Similarly, as parents viewed their responsibility to be less important and the child’s own responsibility to be more important, they were likely to decrease their involvement. The following interview findings further explore these results within the case study contexts of three parent–adolescent relationships.

\(^{19}\) \( r = .43 \) and \( r = .33 \) respectively, correlation significant at the .01 level.

\(^{20}\) \( r = -.43 \) and \( r = -.31 \) respectively, where \( r = .30 \) to .49 is considered a medium strength correlation (Cohen, 1988)
Interview Findings

The findings of the interview case studies\(^{21}\) are descriptive and exploratory in nature. They explore a deeper insight into the mother–son dynamics in music practice in Year 9 boys. The findings provide a detailed portrait of parental involvement in the three interview dyads.

Three mothers of Year 9 boys were selected according to their high, medium and low level of reported involvement. Mothers accounted for 81% of the total number of questionnaire participants, which confirms the trend that mothers are often more highly involved than the fathers in their child’s music (McPherson, 2009).

Each interview dyad will be discussed separately as intrinsic case studies of parental involvement with relation to the quantitative data. Comparisons between the case studies will be explored and interpreted to generate common themes.

Case study 1: High-level Parental Involvement

Karen and her son Alan were interviewed as a case study of high-level parental involvement. Karen’s average ratings in the use of instruction and monitoring were very high in comparison with the average reported involvement in Year 9 boys.\(^{22}\) Her reported use of verbal encouragement was, however, slightly lower.\(^{23}\)

Family Context

Karen was a primary school teacher with three children, Alan being the eldest. She played the piano in childhood but gave up after her Grade 2 exams. She initiated group keyboard lessons for Alan at the age of four, which later transitioned to private piano lessons at home. In Year 2, she initiated flute lessons for Alan, who enjoyed the social benefits of playing with friends in school bands. Alan stopped learning the

\(^{21}\) Due to the anonymous nature of the study, pseudonyms have been used.

\(^{22}\) 4.3 compared with the average of 1.6 in the use of instruction, 5.0 compared with the average of 3.0 in the use of monitoring

\(^{23}\) 4.0 compared with the average of 4.8 in the use of verbal encouragement
piano in Year 6 because of school and extra-curricular commitments. However, he continued learning the flute through private lessons at school and participated in school ensembles. By Year 9, Alan had been playing the flute for seven years and was preparing for Grade 5 AMEB\textsuperscript{24} exams. Alan’s siblings also played instruments at the encouragement of their mother. Music practice was part of the children’s daily routine. The children often played for relatives when they came to visit. Karen mentioned that she enjoyed nights when she and her husband could listen to their children’s music by the fireplace. Hence, music was highly embedded in the everyday context of the family.

**Changing Approach to Instruction**

In the initial stages of Alan’s keyboard training, Karen recalled sitting with him for every lesson and practice session. After two years, Alan changed to piano and Karen did not need to sit in the lessons as she could hear the lessons being taught at her house. She sat in his practice less, and instead listened and gave instructions such as “No, do that again,” to correct his practice. When Alan changed to the flute, lessons were also at home, which allowed Karen to sit in lessons and communicate with the teacher.

With the birth of her third child and Alan’s sister also learning an instrument, Karen sat with him less often but continued listening to his practice while doing other things, such as cooking in the kitchen. Alan also recalled his mother calling out scales and patterns for him to practise in the earlier years. Even when she was listening from another room, Alan recounted her coming in to give corrections such as, “Hold your flute up,” and “Your posture is all wrong.” As Alan entered high school, she continued listening to most of his practice sessions. When exams drew near, she continued to check his scales by pulling them out of a hat or bag in random order.

\textsuperscript{24} Australian Music Examinations Board
The most important change was how she approached her verbal feedback. She consciously changed her comments to be more positive and used corrections minimally:

> It is just the way you have to approach it. Now you have to do it very positively. Even when he is practising we will be outside, you just have to say, “Well that was good,” or “That was a good piece.”

This emphasis on positive reinforcement was a result of Alan’s increasing sensitivity to criticism, because “when he was young, he would accept criticism more, but he doesn’t so much now”. Instead of commenting on the quality of his practice, Karen commented on the content of his practice, such as “I like that piece,” or “Is that a new piece you have learnt?” In this way, her involvement became less of an evaluation of his skill and more an appreciation of his progress. This enabled her to encourage his practice without hurting his feelings.

Instead of verbal criticism, Karen used body language, such as “an eye or a look”, to communicate a correction. Alan would understand her non-verbal signals and correct his posture:

> I often just stand there or just watch what he is doing and he will lift his flute.

Karen intervened less directly because she acknowledged the need to “back off” and give Alan more responsibility:

> I give him a bit more freedom. I think that at this age and grade he has to work out if he really wants to do it and he needs to take a bit more ownership of it.

Alan similarly perceived his own responsibility increasing as an adolescent:

> I am sort of learning to teach myself. Like, I know what I need to do to improve.

This reflects the strong relationship between parental involvement and perception of responsibility found in the questionnaires. Both mother and son began to see the need
to give Alan more responsibility for his own practice, which changed the ways Karen approached her use of instruction.

**Daily Reminders**

One aspect of Karen’s involvement that did not change was her daily reminders to practice. This aspect of her involvement was distinctive from the general declining trend in the reported use of reminders found in the questionnaire results. Karen described how important it was to structure Alan’s practice so that scales were played before pieces. She reported that Alan adhered to a given duration of practice, such as half an hour, and would time himself to stop as soon as he reached that time. When a practice was missed because of other work, he had to compensate with extra practice during the weekend. Alan always practised in the living room so that Karen could sit on the couch to listen, or listen as she did other things.

Karen’s main reason for allocating specific practice times was personal. She wanted his practice to “fit in” with the family’s activities and her personal routine:

> He tends to want to practise when he wants to and I want him to practise when I want him to, because he has to fit in with everybody...So that at night I can sit down and relax, or watch TV and I don’t have to listen to his playing...I know it is very selfish, but that’s how it works.

Karen described Alan’s lack of self-discipline as another reason for her constant reminders. She believed Alan would not practise without her reminding and that he would most likely have quit the flute if not for her involvement because he “needs encouragement with everything”. On the other hand, Alan did not perceive himself to be lacking in self-discipline. When asked what difference it would make if his mother was never involved, Alan said he would have continued with the flute, but practise less and be less fluent with his scales. He expressed a desire to be reminded less and to manage his own practice:

> There are times when I think that I can remind myself and I would sort of like to take on that responsibility myself.
Although Alan was prepared to take on more responsibility, he was not given the opportunity to do so. This contrast in perceptions reveals that parental involvement may sometimes be motivated by differing assumptions of the child’s needs.

Karen reported that even when Alan did not like being reminded, he would still do as he was told, “No, he doesn’t like it. But he has no choice…not a real one.” Alan revealed that Karen would be insistent when he refused to obey, “If I don’t do something and she really wants me to do it, she yells.” Although Alan procrastinated practicing, he would eventually do as he was told:

No, he doesn’t tend to [disobey]. I keep saying to my husband that I can see the day that he probably will, you know what I mean? And I don’t know what I will do then.

Upon this reflection, Karen’s tone became more tentative and hesitant. This reveals Karen’s sense of wonder in the possibility that Alan might one day disobey her authority, which would impact on how she is involved in his practice. This is an example of a problem often encountered by parents who find difficulty in the readjustment of parental authority in response to increased adolescent autonomy (Smetana, 1995). In line with the questionnaire findings, this shows the bi-directional influences between parental involvement and the child’s cooperation.

Perceptions of Responsibility

Karen’s involvement in her son’s music reflected her philosophy of motherhood and view of parental responsibility. She realised the need to give Alan the freedom to make his own decisions irrespective of her desires:

There is no point in me pushing my ideals on him anymore. Because I wanted to do music it doesn’t necessarily mean that he wants to do it.

She saw that Alan wanted “less help” and to manage his own practice, but still believed it necessary to “force him to make sure that he has done it”. This was a reflection of how she viewed her responsibility as a mother:

I am the organiser. I am the person that keeps everything going…I am the controller. I make sure that everybody is doing the right thing at the right time.
Alan’s response to Karen’s authority was one of compliance:

I basically realise that what she is saying is right and I think, “Well, maybe I should do that.”

He saw that in order to resolve conflicts, he needed to cooperate so as “not to let her have to yell”.

Karen speculated that Alan sometimes thought she was a “pain” and a “nag” because of the constant reminding, listening and commenting. She believed that Alan “ultimately can see it’s for his own good” and appreciated her involvement in helping his musical achievement. She described adolescence as a “hard stage” for parenthood:

It’s not a good age. Year 9 boys have a bit of an attitude, you know, and they take everything personally. He thinks I pick on him all the time…he thinks he knows everything.

On the other hand, Alan did not express any resentment towards her involvement and said he was “happy” with it all. He acknowledged appreciation for her in helping improve his scales and musicianship, which corresponded to Karen’s thoughts. Alan said he would not change anything about her involvement, but when asked how he would treat his future child, he mentioned that he would “let them have a bit more responsibility” and “not remind them constantly about practising”. This contrasted with Karen’s perception of parental involvement, where “parents drive the children to practise” because they “don’t have the experience and understanding” to see the long-term benefits. This reveals a discrepancy between mother and adolescent perceptions in parental responsibility, which is highly typified by the next case study.

**Case Study 2: Medium-level Parental Involvement**

Jane and her son Bill were elected as a case study of medium-level parental involvement. Jane’s reported use of instruction and monitoring reflected the average
Family Context

Like Karen, Jane played the piano in childhood and regretted giving up after her Grade 3 AMEB exams. She used to work as an air hostess and play the saxophone in the Qantas band. After marriage, she stayed at home with her two sons, Bill being the eldest. At the age of five, Bill requested having keyboard lessons. He then took up the saxophone in Year 3 on his own initiative. In Year 5 he also began learning the oboe. In Year 7, he completed Grade 6 on the classical piano then stopped exams due to stress, while still continuing with fortnightly lessons. By Year 9, Ben had completed his Grade 5 exams on the oboe and was training for his Associate of Music exam on the saxophone. Bill was highly involved in the school’s choir, music tutoring and accompaniment for HSC exams. He often performed for various social functions, including one at Darling Harbour earlier in the year. Music was intrinsic to Ben’s identity, “It’s my thing”. Although music was not a core component in his family’s lifestyle, it was of personal importance and played a significant role in his relationship with his mother.

“Back Off!”

Jane sat through every piano lesson and practice session as Karen did during the early years. Upon entry into primary school, she changed to using reminders and listening while doing other things. By Year 3, there was a lot more “quarrelling” and “friction” as Bill increasingly wanted to practise at his own will without reminders:

I wanted to practise when I wanted to practise…Mum still wanted to have control.

As Bill entered high school, Jane described changing her approach to reminders, from one of “insisting” for his practice to “suggesting” that it would be good, such as “It is a shame that I haven’t heard you play your piano in a while and I would like to hear you.” By consciously changing how she phrased reminders, she made them

25 1.0 in the use of instruction, 5.3 in the use of monitoring, 6.0 in the use of verbal encouragement
appear less of a command and more a request, though Jane added that Bill did not like this either. As Bill’s desires for autonomy increased, Jane consciously decreased her involvement against her natural instincts to help:

To be honest, I found it hard to back off because I sort of worry a little bit that if he doesn’t practise for a while, he will struggle to catch up...So it was probably a good thing that I stopped sitting with him.

This change in involvement influenced by her son’s decreasing positive response to involvement corresponds with the questionnaire findings.

Up to Year 6, Jane used constant verbal instructions and corrections. Bill recounted her structuring his practice, telling him to play more scales, and coming in to slow down his practice, which he found “annoying”. Jane recalled that Bill would “stop and storm off in anger” when she gave suggestions to improve his playing. When asked how he would respond if his mother sat with his practice now, Bill responded, “I could never cope with that,” because she would criticise his every mistake.

From Year 7 onwards, Jane described how she consciously reduced her corrections and emphasised positive feedback to account for Ben’s increasing resistance to criticism, such as “Oh that sounds fantastic!” Bill commented that he noticed this change and that he liked it, “Of course it’s a good thing!” Similar to Karen, Jane persisted in her use of positive reinforcement to encourage Bill’s practising. This corresponds with the average questionnaire reports of verbal encouragement, which remained relatively the same across the school years whilst the use of instruction and monitoring decreased.

**Conflict and Resolution**

Conflicts arose frequently when Jane reminded Bill to practise. Jane recalled Bill shouting in response to her reminders:

I know what I am doing! I don’t need you to tell me! I will do it when I am ready. Back off!
Bill reported that Jane would threaten to take away his freedom, such as going out, in order to force him to practice. He described this as “infuriating” because it was unreasonable to take other things away when music “is not a compulsory thing”. This corresponds with Smetana’s (1995) finding of the greatest sources of parental conflicts being in matters of personal jurisdiction.

Bill added that his father often acted as the mediator in these conflicts, “Dad steps in generally when she threatens me with things”. On the other hand, Jane reported that Bill also used music practice as a threat to get what he wanted. For example, when Jane banned him from watching television because of his unfinished homework, he threatened, “Fine! I won’t be doing any practice tonight!” This reveals the complex struggle of adolescent autonomy and parental authority (Smetana & Asquith, 1994). However, as Bill matured, Jane used reasoning with him that giving up his music would disadvantage his own future more than punish her:

I say if you don’t practise your music properly then there is only one person who is going to suffer and that will be you. You are not hurting me.

This transferred the motivation to practise from obedience to personal benefit, reflecting the importance of intrinsic motivation (Austin et al., 2006).

Both Jane and Bill expressed the desire for less conflict. James wanted “peace in the house” and Jane wished for a “good relationship” where they could “get on better together”. Jane described their relationship as a constant battle:

He has always been a very strong-willed kid since he was a little toddler, and him and I have battled right through over the years. He sees me as a nag and we just don’t seem to have gotten it right…but I don’t know how I could change that. I am getting better now.

It appears that Jane accounts for their conflicting relationship with two reasons: Bill’s “stubborn” personality and her own tendency to be “pushy”. Her perception of adolescence is similar to that of Karen’s, and commented that “teenagers are incredibly temperamental”. In the same way, Bill acknowledged their similar personalities and his needs as a teenager to be the source of conflicts:
We are both fairly similar. She has got a pretty determined personality as well. She likes to get her way and she doesn’t like not to get her way…She tries to run your life, which as a teenager is not very good. We don’t like that!

However, Bill also recognised that “she is just trying to help,” and that without her he could not have attained his level of achievement. Like Alan, Bill ultimately appreciated his mother’s involvement, even though he did not always agree with it. When asked how he would treat his future child, he emphasised enjoyment and encouragement:

I would still try and nurture them in music. Instead of nagging them I would try to make it more encouragement. It has got to be their will. They have to enjoy themselves.

Like Alan, Bill wished for greater personal freedom. As for Jane, she wished for greater respect and appreciation:

I have a lot more respect for him than he has for me…I think most mums are taken for granted.

Jane commented that conflicts were slowly improving as Bill was “maturing” and did not “lose it as much”, but also because she did not “hassle him as much”. In line with the questionnaire findings, this reveals the reciprocal relationship between parental involvement and the child’s response to involvement influenced by his developmental process.

**Motivations for Parental Involvement**

Common trends were found in the high and medium level case studies in regard to the motivations behind parental involvement, which explained the continued involvement despite negative responses.

Both Karen and Jane described music as a “good discipline” which they wanted their sons to have. Their personal value of music was intricately linked to why they wanted their sons to excel in their instruments. This intrinsic value of music, where music is valued as an end to itself, was found to be the highest motivating factor for
parental involvement in Dai and Schader’s (2001, 2002) survey reports. Both mothers revealed their love of listening to live music, where listening to their sons’ practice gave them “enjoyment”. They also expressed pride in their son’s talent, especially when they performed for social events, family gatherings and special occasions, such as Christmas and birthdays.

In addition, both parents received piano training during childhood and gave up very early on. Their son’s achievement therefore represented a fulfilment of their personal desires. Jane said that she “regretted” giving up and tried without success to “get back on the piano”. Karen’s involvement was partly driven by her desire for Alan to obtain a skill which she never developed:

> It’s probably what I would have wanted for myself, because I only got up to Grade 2 when I was doing piano and I felt that if I had gotten further I would have found it more enjoyable. I think that that is probably my knowledge I am trying to pass on to the kids. Now that they have got more knowledge than I have, then I think they will then enjoy it.

Both mothers were motivated to be involved because of they saw the benefits of music in their sons’ lives. Music was viewed as a source of financial and occupational security for the future. Karen wanted her son to start teaching privately because “it would be really good money”. Jane encouraged her son to consider music education as a future career or a “talent to fall back on” because she could see him being “happiest” doing that job. Rather than focussing on relative achievement, Jane encouraged her son to reach his “personal best”. Karen also emphasised the personal meaning of music, “I just wanted them to do it for enjoyment for themselves.”

For both parents, although their involvement was not always met with positive response, they persisted because they wanted what was best for their sons. Jane reflected that it is hard to achieve the right balance of parental intervention and adolescent autonomy “unless there was some special class on how to teach parents how not to interfere” because “you naturally want to do the best.” At the root of it, they were driven by their love for their sons and desire for their happiness; as Jane concluded, “Whatever makes him happy…I would support anything he wants to do.”
The final case study presents a contrasting type of parental involvement; one which did not entail the active guidance of the mother.

**Case Study 3: Low-level Parental Involvement**

Martha and her son John were interviewed as a case study of low-level parental involvement. Martha’s reported use of the three types of parental involvement was much lower than the other two case studies, especially in the reported use of instruction and monitoring26.

**Family Context**

Martha worked as a part-time events’ organiser and was studying Primary Education at university. She was a mother of three children, with John as the middle child. Like Karen and Jane, she played the piano as a child but for a much longer duration of eight years. John requested to learn the rock guitar in Year 5 and the drums in Year 7. His interest in the guitar began with watching his father learn the guitar, and he took up the drums because of his peers. John played in a rock band with school friends and enjoyed composing songs. He had recently composed and performed a song for his grandmother’s funeral. At the time of the interview, John was in the process of building up enough songs for a gig for his band. Much of his practice involved jamming with his friends, which was different from the other two boys who were classically trained. Martha was never highly involved in John’s music practice, but the family culture itself provided the springboard for his musical development.

**Music as Lifestyle**

Martha and her husband had a rock ‘n’ roll background and they used to attend pub gigs every night. Her husband worked as a photographer for rock bands and was now a promoter for various rock groups. Because of this, John was always exposed to

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26 1.0 in the use of instruction, 1.3 in the use of monitoring, 3.3 in the use of verbal encouragement
rock music and attended concerts regularly. Musical resources and equipment were easily accessible for him. He was constantly immersed in rock music because of his parents’ interests and livelihood. John described himself as being “saturated in music”. For him, music practice was completely self-motivated because it was never a chore but rather a hobby and lifestyle:

I just get home from school and smash the drums and play the guitar and that consumes my time; it gives me something to do and keeps me occupied.

Unlike Alan and Bill, John received no parental encouragement to practise, so Martha’s involvement remained relatively the same. According to Martha, John’s practice went for “ages and ages, from several hours to all day”. The only change in her involvement was that she stopped organising lesson times for John. Her main involvement consisted of providing transportation, financial support, physical help with moving equipment, and occasionally supplying food for his band rehearsals. Martha thought that John was “a very lucky boy” because of the availability of all the equipment, music and resources that he needed. The most important influence was their musical lifestyle:

We don’t force him to practise or make him play or anything. He is encouraged by the fact that it is all around him all the time.

John was self-disciplined in his music because of the enjoyment and pleasure that he gained from practising, highlighting the importance of intrinsic motivation (Austin et al., 2006).

Supportive Approach

Martha’s involvement reflected her own mother’s parenting approach, where Martha was given the freedom to do what she wanted in regards to practice:

My mum was probably very similar to me. I don’t think I am very good at being very systematic with the kids. I am not very structured, and my mum was probably the same. Music practice was never a “You must do your music practice.”

John’s practice was not formally structured and Martha said that she never heard him play any scales. He took up the cello and saxophone in Year 6 but gave up due to
lack of interest. Martha mentioned her desire for him to learn classical guitar and the cello, but did not force him because “he has to want to do it to do it.” She emphasised support as the most important responsibility for a parent:

I see support important, as in anything the kids would like to do. If John wants to pursue his music, I will support him in that. But I am not overbearing with it. I don’t need it to be the “be all and end all”. I will support him, but I am not going to push him.

Martha’s perception of responsibility as one that supported her son’s freedom contrasts that of Karen and Jane, who felt the need to direct their sons’ practice. John also saw Martha’s responsibility as one of support rather than imposing authority, “I don’t need any pushing”.

Martha’s only method of involvement that she consciously used was verbal praise. Like the other two boys, John appreciated his mother’s verbal encouragement, such as saying he was “playing well” and giving “constructive criticism”. She also showed support by listening to him practise, where “allowing them to play when it is so loud” was support in itself. She reported that the only conflict was when she had to stop his drum practice because it made her “head spin”.

**Relationship Bonding**

Music played an important role in John’s relationship with his parents, particularly with his father. John reflected that his musical achievements brought pride to his father:

I am kind of like his dream that never came true. He tried to play guitar but it didn’t really work out for him…He likes showing me off.

This concept of finding satisfaction through John’s music is similar to the personal fulfilment that Karen and Jane felt about their sons’ musical accomplishments. Martha described that music provided a powerful bond between John and his father:

It is so nice between his father and himself; that is a very strong relationship. They talk about music, they talk about John’s performances, John’s style, of what he looks like when he’s playing, all those things. So there is a very strong bond.
His father sourced all the equipment for John’s band, and they collected guitars together as a hobby. Just as their relationship was influenced by music, their music was equally influenced their relationship. John internalised the same musical taste as his father because he “grew up listening to the music that dad likes.” Whilst music was sometimes a source of parental conflict for the other case studies, it was a source of relationship bonding for John and his father.

Martha’s relationship with John also strengthened through her involvement in his music. She described her role as more “academic” in that John shared his song lyrics with her. His lyrics allowed her to gain a deeper understanding of her son’s thinking:

It certainly makes me wonder about him and makes me wonder at the depths to him…The depths of thought and understanding is hard to see in people sometimes, so his music writing is helpful with that.

By listening to his compositions and discussing song lyrics, Martha established a greater intimacy with her son. Because music was a central core of the family culture, it drew John closer to his parents. Unlike the other case studies, John did not receive involvement in the form of actions and words, but through the internalisation of parental values and the family lifestyle.

**Comparison between Case Studies**

Common themes emerged from the high- and medium-level case studies concerning how and why parental involvement changed in Year 9 boys. As the boys became older, they increasingly exhibited a dislike of being corrected and reminded, which influenced the change in involvement. In response to their son’s growing sense of autonomy, both mothers diminished their use of correction and changed their approach to instruction, reflecting the questionnaire results. They consciously used more verbal encouragement as a result of their son’s increasing sensitivity to criticism.

Karen and Jane shared common self-perceptions. They described themselves to be a “nag” and “pushy” towards their son. Their sons similarly perceived them as being
more controlling than necessary. Both mothers perceived their responsibility as being more important than their sons. However, whilst Alan responded by cooperating, Bill reacted with resistance that resulted in frequent conflicts. Ultimately, both sons recognised the benefits of their mother’s involvement to their musical accomplishment. The reason for parental involvement was ultimately out of love, which was acknowledged and appreciated by their sons.

The third case study produced contrasting findings because of the different nature of parental involvement. Martha’s parental involvement remained relatively the same, since she was never directly involved in her son’s practice. Instead, John was indirectly influenced by his parents’ musical lifestyle. He was self-motivated to practise out of personal choice and enjoyment. Martha’s emphasis on giving her son freedom to do what he wanted contrasted with Karen and Jane, who felt the need to guide their sons to make “good” decisions. Both Martha and John emphasised the importance of positive reinforcement and enjoyment, which was a recurring theme found in all the interviews.

**Influences in Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is unique for every family context. Many factors were found to influence parental involvement. External changes in the parent’s time and energy resources, and the adolescent’s school and extra-curricular commitments impacted the extent to which parents engaged in their son’s practice. The internal context of the family such as lifestyle, musical culture and household routines impacted the ways that parents interacted with their sons. The individual factors of the mother and child, such as personality, perception of parental roles and the adolescent’s developmental needs influenced the nature of their relationship. The next chapter draws conclusions from the research findings and provides implications for education and further research.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study has examined how the change in parental involvement is intrinsically embedded in the complex dynamics of family relationships. These exploratory findings of the bi-directional influences of parental involvement and filial response offer a preliminary basis for constructing positive involvement strategies for adolescents’ music practice.

Towards a Positive Model

In line with previous studies, enjoyment was found to be the most significant source of motivation for pursuing music (Austin et al., 2006). Thus, involvement strategies that promote intrinsic motivation are more effective than those based on extrinsic factors. This means that parents should implement ways to encourage their child’s practice for personal enjoyment. As revealed, enjoyment can be diminished by excessive parental reminders so that music may become a chore rather than a choice. A decrease in instructive methods, such as corrections and reminders, and an increase in positive reinforcement, such as verbal encouragement and listening, can make music an act of enjoyment rather than an act of obedience.

The provision of encouragement was found to become increasingly important for the boys, especially as adolescents grow less confident in their abilities (Barber & Olsen, 2004). Therefore, a shift in the parental role to emphasise emotional support rather than authority may help develop motivation and help teenagers to cope with stress. Furthermore, passing on values of music can develop intrinsic motivation. This indirect type of involvement was found in the third case study, where listening to music at home, attending concerts, collecting musical instruments, and communicating musical interests cultivated the teenager’s love for music.

The continuous negotiation between control and freedom found in the case studies reflects Baumrind’s typology of parenting styles (1966). Extending on previous research, the most common source of conflict were found to arise out of a discrepancy between parents’ and adolescents’ perceptions of authority (Smetana &
Asquith, 1994). This highlights the need for parents to redefine their responsibilities in response to the adolescent’s growing sense of autonomy. An authoritative approach to involvement in music can reaffirm adolescent autonomy within the bounds of parental guidance (Smetana & Campione, 2003). Strategies found in the case studies that reflected this approach included reasoning with the child about the consequences of giving up practice, explaining the benefit of musical training, and discussing future career possibilities.

Since the involvement in music practice reflects parenting styles and philosophies, further exploration of these case study findings can help construct positive approaches to parenting for other areas of adolescence, such as school work.

**Parallels with Homework**

The research findings show significant parallels between parental involvement in the music practice and homework. The three types of parental involvement found in the questionnaires correspond with the ways in which parents are involved with their child’s school work. The use of instruction and monitoring reflect behaviours often found in homework, such as correcting, commenting, reminding and communicating with the teacher (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). The use of verbal encouragement also corresponds with parents’ use of positive reinforcement in homework (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). In addition, the parents’ decreased direct assistance in music practice and increased use of verbal support is another common trend. These changes in strategies allow parents to support their children’s progress without appearing intrusive (Hill & Tyson, 2009).

The motivations of parents to be involved in their child’s instrumental learning also correspond with those identified in school work. Parents were found to be motivated according to their perception of how their sons liked their help, and how they viewed the importance of their responsibility. These correspond with the major motivational factors found in homework (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Such similarities provide
a deeper insight into the close relationship between parental involvement in music training and school academics, which has implications for educational practice.

**Implications for Education**

Identifying parenting behaviours that lead to positive responses can help teachers develop strategies to use for the classroom. In particular, this study of parental involvement in sons helps to address the problem of the greater academic decline found among adolescent boys (Barber & Olsen, 2004).

The changing needs of teenagers call for the need to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies. This is especially important during secondary school when students may experience heightened levels of difficulty and stress (Eccles et al., 1993). Just as parents readjust their involvement according to their child’s changing needs, teachers should modify their teaching practices according to how students respond to create an appropriate fit between student needs and the classroom environment (Eccles et al., 1993). Hence, the process of reflection is essential to a continuous improvement in teaching.

The adolescents’ increasing resistance to instruction was found to be influenced by their desire for greater personal responsibility to manage their own practice. This supports the benefits of a student-centred education, where students’ needs and preferences are taken as primary considerations, and personal autonomy in learning is encouraged (Brandes & Ginnis, 1986). Instead of focusing on the hierarchical structure of the classroom, student responsibility in learning should be promoted. Practical strategies such as giving student choice in learning content, the use of active and inductive learning, and peer collaboration can foster a love and enjoyment for learning (Brown, 2008).

The positive impact of verbal encouragement found in music practice can be applied to education. Adolescents in all three case studies expressed appreciation for their parents’ moral support. Verbal encouragement did not always need to focus on the
practice quality. Acknowledgement of the son’s efforts was found to be enough to give support and motivation. This also reinforces the importance of giving positive feedback in teaching, which has been found to increase academic motivation and resilience (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). This reveals the importance of positive reinforcement in education, where achievement does not have to be a prerequisite to praising students for their efforts.

Overall, parents and teachers can combine efforts to support the student’s musical development. Since students’ attitudes in education are influenced by the home and school context (Wilson & Wilson, 1992), an improvement in parent–teacher communication can enable a clearer understanding of the student’s needs. When teachers and parents share their ideas with each other, it can help with conflict resolution and build better relationships within the school and home environment (Creech & Hallam, 2003).

**Recommendations for Further Research**

The often turbulent period of adolescence calls for a continued need to find ways of reconciling parent–child relationships (Steinberg, 2001). The findings in this study reveal the benefits for further investigation into the positive and negative influences of parental involvement in music practice among teenagers. Responses to various involvement activities can be explored with more studies involving adolescent perceptions of parental involvement. Further research into the emotional and psychological impact of different types of involvement can help identify strategies that lead to positive self-beliefs in music and the development of intrinsic motivation. The struggle between parental authority and adolescent autonomy should be further investigated by more case study research to outline the common sources of conflict and explore effective approaches to resolution.

Since most of the participants in this study were of a similar socio-ethnic background, further investigations with a larger sample size and broader characteristics will allow for a greater breadth of understanding in parental involvement trends. Similar case study investigations within different school
contexts will enable a greater understanding of the influences of the school context in parental involvement. Further investigation into the influences of social status and cultural background will provide a deeper insight into the nature of parental involvement for different social contexts.

Due to the voluntary nature of the questionnaires, the parents who chose to participate were likely to be more involved and interested in their son’s instrumental learning than non-respondents. Also, interview responses may have been influenced by personal, even unconscious motives. For example, the mothers may have been concerned with maintaining their image as a “good” parent, or the adolescents may have felt the need to build a positive profile of themselves and their mothers. Actual observations of parental involvement in music practice, such as those used for homework involvement (Xu & Corno, 1998), will provide a clearer picture of parent–child interactions.

The interview focus on the mother–son dyad did not fully account for the wider spectrum of family influences. Further case study research involving other family members can explore the effects of family dynamics and birth order. An extension of the study can compare mother–daughter relationships in music practice. More in-depth studies exploring the various dimensions of the family context, such as family lifestyle and musical culture will provide a greater understanding of the influences in parental involvement.

**Conclusion**

The first two case studies reveal two paradoxical issues. First, well-meant motives of parents to support their son’s practice may sometimes backfire with negative attitudes that can cause tension in their relationship. Second, even when adolescents may disagree with their parent’s involvement, they nevertheless can appreciate its benefits to their musical accomplishments. These complexities show the importance of building a positive model for parental involvement in youths’ instrumental practice that is based on mutual understanding.
Rather than focusing on how to direct their adolescents to practise, parents can focus on listening to their child’s response to give them the support they need. In this case, parental involvement is as much a process of receiving information as it is the giving of instructions. Since every child is different, finding one optimal method of involvement for all children is a superfluous task. However, in light of the reciprocal influences of filial response to the change in parental involvement, the process of continuously reflecting on one’s own approach to parenting may be the key to building an “ideal” model of parenthood; for music and beyond.
References


Appendix A: Approval Letter from the University of Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee

The University of Sydney

Human Research Ethics Committee
Web: http://www.usyd.edu.au/ethics/human

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16 February 2009

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The University of Sydney
Email: jrenwick@usyd.edu.au

Dear Dr. Renwick

Thank you for your correspondence dated 26 January 2009 addressing comments made to you by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). After considering the additional information, the Executive Committee at its meeting on 6 February 2009 approved your protocol entitled "The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice from primary to secondary school, and the relationship between parent and adolescent perceptions of parental involvement".

Details of the approval are as follows:

Ref No.: 02-2009/11474

Approval Period: February 2009 to February 2010

Authorised Personnel: Dr. James Renwick
Miss Rachel Po-man Lau

The HREC is a fully constituted Ethics Committee in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans-March 2007 under Section 5.1.29

The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed.

Chief investigator / Supervisor's responsibilities to ensure that:

(1) All serious and unexpected adverse events should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.
(2) All unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should be reported to the HREC as soon as possible.

(3) The HREC must be notified as soon as possible of any changes to the protocol. All changes must be approved by the HREC before continuation of the research project. These include:

- If any of the investigators change or leave the University.
- Any changes to the Participant Information Statement and/or Consent Form.

(4) All research participants are to be provided with a Participant Information Statement and Consent Form, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee. The Participant Information Statement and Consent Form are to be on University of Sydney letterhead and include the full title of the research project and telephone contacts for the researchers, unless otherwise agreed by the Committee and the following statement must appear on the bottom of the Participant Information Statement. Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney, on (02) 8627 8175 (Telephone); (02) 8627 8180 (Facsimile) or gtnrody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

(5) Copies of all signed Consent Forms must be retained and made available to the HREC on request.

(6) It is your responsibility to provide a copy of this letter to any internal/external granting agencies if requested.

(7) The HREC approval is valid for four (4) years from the Approval Period stated in this letter. Investigators are requested to submit a progress report annually.

(8) A report and a copy of any published material should be provided at the completion of the Project.

Yours sincerely

Professor D I Cook
Chairman
Human Research Ethics Committee

Copy: Miss Rachel Po-man Lau riau7660@usyd.edu.au

Encl. Approved Letter to Principals
Approved Introductory Letter to Parents
Approved Letter to Participants
Approved Telephone Interview Script
Approved Participant Information Statement – Questionnaire
Approved Parental (or Guardian) Consent Form for Interview
Approved Questionnaire
Approved Participant Information Statement for Telephone Interview
Approved Participant Information Statement for Parent Telephone Interview
Approved Participant Information Statement for Child Interview
Approved Participant Information Statement for Parent Interview
Approved Participant Consent Form for Parent Interview
Approved Interview Schedule
### Parental involvement items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental involvement variable</th>
<th>Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td>I sit with my child and teach him how to practise</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I sit with my child and correct his practising</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I suggest practice strategies for my child</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I sit with my child and help improve his practising</td>
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<td><strong>Guiding</strong></td>
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<td>I sit and comment during my child’s practice</td>
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<td><strong>Reminding</strong></td>
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<td>I give my child specific times to practise during the day</td>
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<td>I ask my child whether he has practised</td>
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<td>I ask my child how practice is going</td>
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<td><strong>Verbal reinforcement</strong></td>
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<td>I tell my child how good the quality of the practice sounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I praise my child when he plays well during practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I praise my child when the practising sounds good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicating with teacher</strong></td>
<td>I ask my child what the teacher said in the lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I read the teacher’s notes to check lesson progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I listen to the teaching in my child’s lesson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I talk with the teacher about my child’s progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* All listed items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1= *Never*; 7= *Always*)
### Child response items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child response</td>
<td>My child always practices when I remind him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My child likes me sitting with him during practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My child likes to perform for me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My child shares with me his practice and lesson progress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* All listed items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1= Never; 7= Always)

### Perception of responsibility items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perception of parental responsibility</td>
<td>My child’s practising is my responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I should know how my child is going with his instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of child responsibility</td>
<td>My child should decide when he wants to practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My child should not need me to remind about practising</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* All listed items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1= Strongly disagree; 7= Strongly agree)
Appendix C: Participant Information Statement for Questionnaire

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT for QUESTIONNAIRE
Research Project

Title: The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice

(1) What is the study about?

The study examines how and why parental involvement in children's instrumental practice changes from primary to secondary school, and the relationship between parental and adolescent perceptions of parental roles.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Rachel Lau and will form the basis for the degree of B. Mus. (Mus. Ed.) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

(3) What does the study involve?

The study involves a questionnaire for parents to complete and return.

(4) How much time will the study take?

Questionnaires will take 10-20 minutes to complete.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and - if you do consent - you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice
Version 2 (15/1/09)
any time prior to submitting your completed questionnaire. Once you have submitted your questionnaire/survey anonymously, your responses cannot be withdrawn.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

This study will help you understand your own attitudes towards parental involvement.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you may.

(9) What if I require further information?

When you have read this information, Rachel Lau will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Rachel Lau (0404 080 013) or Dr James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education (Tel: 9351 1235).

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep

The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice
Version 2 (15/1/09) Page 2 of 2
Appendix D: Questionnaire

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC

Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000 Australia
www.music.usyd.edu.au
ABN 15 211 513 464

Postal Building G41
The University of Sydney
Sydney NSW 2006 Australia
www.usyd.edu.au

Telephone: + 61 2 9351 1235
Facsimile: + 61 2 9351 1237
Email: jrenwick@usyd.edu.au
Web: www.usyd.edu.au

QUESTIONNAIRE

Parental Involvement in Instrumental Practice

Honours Research Project: Rachel Lau

This study examines how and why parental involvement in children’s instrumental practice evolves from primary to secondary school. By indicating your involvement or absence of involvement in this short survey, you will be making a valuable contribution to an important area of research in music education. All responses are voluntary, confidential and anonymous. Please answer in reference to the child who received the questionnaire and in relation to his/her main instrument. Return the completed questionnaire to the Junior School office or Music Centre office.

For any queries, please contact Rachel Lau (rhau107@gmail.com; 0404 080 013) or Dr James Renwick, lecturer in music education (jrenwick@usyd.edu.au; 9351 1235).

Thank you for your time!

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbrind@usyd.edu.au (Email).
Section 1 – General Information

Please tick ONE for each of the following

Parent gender:  □  Male  □  Female

Child gender:  □  Male  □  Female

Child’s school year:  □  3  □  5  □  7  □  9

Years of training your child has received in current instrument:

□ 1 year or less  □  2–3 years  □  4–5 years

□ 6–7 years  □  8 years or more

I am formally trained in an instrument/s:  □  True  □  False

I am from a non-English speaking background:  □  True  □  False

It was my idea to start my child’s musical training:  □  True  □  False
**Section 2 - Parental Involvement**

*Please circle a number to indicate how often the following occurs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I remind my child to practise</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I sit with my child and guide his practice</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I tell my child how much I enjoy hearing his practice</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My child likes it when I remind him to practise</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I listen to my child practise while I do other things</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I give my child specific times to practise during the day</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I ask my child what the teacher said in the lesson</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My child likes it when I ask how his practice is going

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I suggest practice strategies for my child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I sit with my child and teach him how to practise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I ask my child to perform for me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I read the teacher’s notes to check lesson progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I praise my child when he plays well during practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I sit with my child and listen during practice without making comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I praise my child when the practising sounds good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I sit with my child and correct his practising

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always

I ask my child how practice is going

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always

I listen to the teaching in my child’s lesson

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always

My child likes me sitting with him during practice

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always

I sit with my child and help improve his practising

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always

I ask my child whether he has practised

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always

I talk with the teacher about my child’s progress

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always

I tell my child how good the quality of the practice sounds

Never

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Always
My child likes to perform for me

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I sit and comment during my child’s practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My child practises when I remind him

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please circle a number to indicate how strongly you agree to the following*

I should know how my child is going with his instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My child should not need me to remind about practising

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My child should decide when he wants to practise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My child’s practising is my responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important that I am involved in my child’s practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3 - Interview

If you are able to participate in a follow-up interview via telephone or at [redacted] at a time of your convenience, please write contact details below. Interviews at [redacted] will be conducted at the Junior School or Music Centre. Please return the questionnaire with all pages attached to the Junior School office or Music Centre Office.

For any queries please contact Rachel Lau (rlau107@gmail.com; 0404 080 013) or Dr James Renwick (j.renwick@usyd.edu.au; 9351 1235).

Name: ____________________________________________

Contact: __________________________________________

Email: ____________________________________________

Preferred Date/Time: ________________________________

Thank you very much for your participation!
Appendix E: Participant Information Statement for Parent Interview

Dr James Renwick
Lecturer in Music Education

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT for Parent Interview
Research Project

Title: The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice

(1) What is the study about?

The study examines how and why parental involvement in children's instrumental practice changes from primary to secondary school, and the relationship between parental and adolescent perceptions of parental roles.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Rachel Lau and will form the basis for the degree of B. Mus. (Mus. Ed.) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

(3) What does the study involve?

The study involves audio-taping of interviews with you and your child.

(4) How much time will the study take?

Interviews will take approximately 20 minutes each.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice
Version 1 (17/11/08)
Appendix F: Participant Information Statement for Child Interview

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT for Child Interview Research Project

Title: The change in parental involvement in children’s instrumental practice

(1) What is the study about?

The study examines how and why parental involvement in children’s instrumental practice changes from primary to secondary school, and the relationship between parental and adolescent perceptions of parental roles.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Rachel Lau and will form the basis for the degree of B. Mus. (Mus. Ed.) at The University of Sydney under the supervision of Dr James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

(3) What does the study involve?

The study involves audio-taping of interviews with you and your child.

(4) How much time will the study take?

Interviews will take approximately 20 minutes each.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

The change in parental involvement in children’s instrumental practice

Version 1 (17/1/08)
Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with the University of Sydney. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw and to discontinue your participation at any time without affecting your relationship with the University of Sydney.

(6) **Will anyone else know the results?**

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants.

(7) **Will the study benefit me or my child?**

This study may help you and your child understand attitudes and responses towards parental involvement.

(8) **Can I tell other people about the study?**

Yes, you may.

(9) **What if I require further information?**

When you have read this information, Rachel Lau will discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Rachel Lau (0404 080 013) or Dr James Renwick, Lecturer in Music Education (Tel: 9351 1235).

(10) **What if I have a complaint or concerns?**

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Senior Ethics Officer, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney on (02) 9351 4811 (Telephone); (02) 9351 6706 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

*This information sheet is for you to keep*

---

The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice
Version 1 (17/11/08)
Appendix G: Participant Consent Form for Parent Interview

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM for Parent Interview

I, ..........................................................[PRINT NAME], give consent to my participation in the research project

TITLE: The change in parental involvement in children’s instrumental practice

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. The procedures required for the project and the time involved have been explained to me, and any questions I have about the project have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I have read the Participant Information Statement and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher/s.

3. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher(s) or the University of Sydney now or in the future.

4. I understand that my involvement is strictly confidential and no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

5. I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary – I am not under any obligation to consent.

6. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the audio/video recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

The change in parental involvement in children’s instrumental practice
Version 1 (17/11/08)
7. I consent to: –

i) Audio-taping

YES ☐ NO ☐

iii) Receiving Feedback

YES ☐ NO ☐

If you answered YES to the “Receiving Feedback Question (iii)”, please provide your details i.e. mailing address, email address.

Feedback Option

Address: ________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________

Email: ________________________________________________________________

Signed: ................................................................................................................

Name: ................................................................................................................

Date: ..................................................................................................................
Appendix H: Parent/Guardian Consent Form for Child Interview

Dr James Renwick
Lecturer in Music Education

PARENTAL (OR GUARDIAN) CONSENT FORM for Child Interview

I, ........................................................................................................... agree to permit ................................................................., who is
aged ...................... years, to participate in the research project –

TITLE: The change in parental involvement in children's instrumental practice

In giving my consent I acknowledge that:

1. I have read the Information Statement and the time involved for my child’s participation in the project. The researcher/s has given me the opportunity to discuss the information and ask any questions I have about the project and they have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. I give permission for the audio-taping of my child’s interview.

3. I understand that I can withdraw my child from the study at any time without prejudice to my or my child’s relationship with the researchers now or in the future.

4. I agree that research data gathered from the results of the study may be published provided that neither my child nor I can be identified.

5. I understand that if I have any questions relating to my child’s participation in this research I may contact the researcher/s who will be happy to answer them.


Signature of Parent/Guardian

Signature of Child

Please PRINT name

Please PRINT name

Date

The change in parental involvement in children’s instrumental practice
Version 2 (15/1/09)
Appendix I: Parent Interview Guide

1. How are you involved in your son’s instrumental practice?

2. How has your involvement changed through time? What are the reasons for these changes?

3. How important is your role in supporting your son’s instrumental learning?
   (Probe: How much control do you have? Has your role changed through time? If so, how?)

4. What aspects of your son’s instrumental learning should be:
   a) Your responsibility?
   b) Your son’s responsibility?
   c) You and your son’s responsibility?

5. How well does your son manage his own practice?
   (Probe: What are some of his self-management behaviours?)

6. How does your son respond to your involvement in his practice? (Probe: Are there ever conflicts? If so, what?)

7. What things does your son like/dislike about your involvement?

8. If you could, what things would you change in your relationship with your son?
Appendix J: Child Interview Guide

1. How is your parent involved in your instrumental practice?

2. How has your parents’ involvement changed through time? What are the reasons for these changes?

3. How important is your parents’ role in supporting your instrumental learning?
   (Probe: How much control do they have? Has their role changed through time? If so, how?)

4. What aspects of your instrumental learning should be:
   a) Your responsibility?
   b) Your parent’s responsibility?
   c) Both?

5. How well do you manage your own practice?
   (Probe: What self-management strategies do you use?)

6. How do you respond to your parent’s involvement in your practice?
   (Probe: Are there ever conflicts? If so, what?)

7. What things do you like/dislike about your parent’s involvement?

8. If you could, what things would you change in your relationship with your parent?
### Appendix K: Three Types of Parental Involvement

**Pattern Matrix for Factor Analysis of Parental Involvement Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Instruct</th>
<th>Encourage</th>
<th>Monitor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I sit with my child and correct his practising</td>
<td>.922</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sit and comment during my child's practice</td>
<td>.865</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sit with my child and teach him how to practise</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>−.318</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sit with my child and help improve his practising</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td>−.455</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen to the teaching in my child's lesson</td>
<td>.769</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sit with my child and guide his practice</td>
<td>.766</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I give my child specific times to practise during the day</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>−.402</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I suggest practice strategies for my child</td>
<td>.604</td>
<td>.418</td>
<td>−.358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I talk with the teacher about my child's progress</td>
<td>.517</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tell my child how good the quality of the practice sounds</td>
<td></td>
<td>.888</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I praise my child when practising sounds good</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>.829</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I praise my child when he plays well during practice</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.827</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I tell my child how much I enjoy hearing his practice</td>
<td></td>
<td>.702</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask my child how practice is going</td>
<td>.659</td>
<td>−.460</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I listen to my child practise while I do other things</td>
<td></td>
<td>.647</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask my child to perform for me</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.633</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask my child what the teacher said in the lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td>.486</td>
<td>−.458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I ask my child whether he has practised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>−.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I read the teacher's notes to check lesson progress</td>
<td>.393</td>
<td>.554</td>
<td>−.687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I remind my child to practise</td>
<td>.405</td>
<td>.354</td>
<td>−.666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sit with my child and listen during practice without making comments</td>
<td>.398</td>
<td>−.572</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.