

Music teacher-student boundaries #1

Tuesday, 03 March 2009

Music teaching can be quite tricky when it comes to boundaries.

There is a strong chance that a music teacher will be only slightly older, or same age as the student.

In this case, the natural hierarchy of the student-teacher dynamics is at risk.

Music teaching can be quite tricky when it comes to boundaries.

There is a strong chance that a music teacher will be only slightly older, or same age as the student.

In this case, the natural hierarchy of the student-teacher dynamics is at risk.

It is alright, and even a desired result for a music teacher to have a friendly relationship with the students, but the more the boundaries are stretched, the more uncomfortable basic aspects of music teaching like: Charging money, upping lesson prices and ending a class could end up being.

The first boundary you'd like to protect while teaching a music lesson is the time limit.

If your student is 15 minutes late, it is their time and their responsibility and you are not required to give them back this time of the lesson back or they might get used to being late and the hierarchy is broken.

Giving back time could be ok in two cases:

1) If this student is usually punctual and it is a one time incident.

2) If you are only prolonging the music lesson by five minutes or so and not giving back the entire time.

As a music teacher, there is a tendency to prolong classes because you did not finish your lesson plan or you like the student and want to treat them.

This could also be a problematic practice. If a student is used to you giving them more time, when you do not do so, you come off as taking something away from them instead of them thinking of all the times you gave them with extra lesson time.

For this reason, music lesson time boundaries should be carefully kept, and extra time should be given as a one time treat every once in a while, so it will be a special occasion and not the norm.