



Parent Handbook

Grade 4 Band Program
Grade 3 Strings Program



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CONTENTS

MISSION STATEMENT	4
PROGRAM OVERVIEW.....	4
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	4
SELECTION.....	5
STUDENT INSTRUMENT PREFERENCES	5
COMMITMENTS	5
LESSONS	7
PROGRAM COSTS	8
INSTRUMENT ALLOCATION.....	9
INSTRUMENT HIRE FEE – AFTER THE FIRST YEAR.....	9
ENSEMBLE REHEARSALS	10
ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCES	10
ENQUIRIES	10
MUSIC DIARY	10
PROGRESS REPORTS	10
RESOLVING PROBLEMS	11
CALVARY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE BEHAVIOUR CODE OF CONDUCT.....	11
TIPS FOR PRACTICING.....	12

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Dear Parents/Caregivers

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the Calvary Christian College's Grade 3 Strings Program and Grade 4 Band Program.

The information provided in this booklet will give you an overview of the program's aims, expectations, and the expected outcomes for your child.

These Programs are an extension of the College's Performing and Creative Arts Program. Calvary provides an operating budget for the Grade 4 Band Program and the Grade 3 Strings Program, however, in common with all other Private School Band/Orchestral programs, our program needs to be largely self-funded. This means that you will have a commitment as a parent to provide resources to enable your child to most effectively participate in the program, ranging from the Program Fee to perhaps the provision of an instrument after one year. Your contribution to your child's instrumental experience represents a great investment!

The Grade 4 Band Program and the Grade 3 Strings Program requires a strong commitment from students and families to be successful. I know from my own family experiences that the effort put in is rewarded many times over by the love of music and performance such involvement generates. Research also points to improvements in academic performance as a result of involvement in learning a musical instrument.

Details of performances for next year will be released in time. Please note the dates carefully, as participation by students is mandatory. I hope that as parents you will also mark these dates for performances so that you are able to attend, as they are wonderful opportunities to see your child's learning outcomes displayed publicly. There is a great difference in hearing your child's instrument as part of an ensemble compared with individual home practice only.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with you at any time and share the pride in their progress.

Mrs Robyn Tipping
PACA Office (P-12)

GRADE 3 STRINGS PROGRAM AND GRADE 4 BAND PROGRAM

Mission Statement

The Calvary Christian College Performing and Creative Arts Program seeks to work together with parents to develop each child's God given musical ability and to equip students to use their musical gifts in many settings.

Some of the many benefits of learning a musical instrument

- Increases your child's intelligence.
- Develops important life skills such as patience, perseverance, organisation, leadership and independence.
- Improves behaviour and social skills.
- Provides many years of fun and constructive leisure activities.
- Gives a sense of belonging (to an ensemble) and a member of a team.
- Builds self-discipline, commitment and self-esteem.
- Broadens career opportunities.

Program Overview

Calvary Christian College students may be offered a place in the Band Program or Strings Program. Students are selected by musical aptitude as to their suitability for this program. If selected, and the offer is accepted by parents, students will participate in weekly lessons with the purpose of joining our Beginner Ensembles.

The program provides one year of free instrumental music lessons to selected students in Grades 3 and 4. All Grade 2 and Grade 3 students undergo a series of musical surveys to determine their suitability for the program for the following year.

Grade 3 Strings Program – Tuition is provided on violin, viola or cello.

Grade 4 Band Program – Tuition is provided on brass or woodwind.

Aims and Objectives

- To musically develop students through instrumental instruction on a group basis.
- To provide ensemble experience for students to develop their performance skills as an integral part of their music education.
- To complement the College classroom music programs.
- To provide extension and specialisation in music for students of Calvary Christian College.

Selection

Positions in the Grade 3 Strings Program or Grade 4 Band Program are limited. Students are selected according to the following criteria:

- Selmer Test (60 question multiple choice aural test which assesses students' understanding of pitch, chords, rhythmic and melodic memory). The purpose is not to select who we want in the program, nor is it a pass/fail and the students are not graded for reporting. Rather, it is to identify students with a natural gifting in the area of music.
- Feedback from class teachers and music teachers.
- Physical testing of instruments (instrument suitability).

Selected students will receive a letter of offer in Term 4 which includes an Enrolment Agreement Form that needs to be signed by the parent and student upon acceptance. If this form is not submitted to the College by the due date, the offer will be void and the position will be offered to another student on the waiting list.

Please note: There are a limited number of positions available in the program. Students that do not receive a program offer may wish to pursue instrumental lessons through the Performing and Creative Arts Program at their own expense. Then once at an appropriate standard, they may audition for inclusion in relevant ensembles.

Student Instrument Preferences

Selected students will be asked to provide 3 instrument preferences. Every effort is made to give students one of their preferences, though other factors are considered such as physical suitability and instrument availability. If their chosen instrument is not available or suitable, then they will be offered another instrument. Instruments are allocated under the Tutor's guidance and the decision is final.

Commitments

STUDENTS will

- become an active member of the Primary Band or Ensemble as designated by the Instrumental Tutor.
- attend all lessons, ensemble rehearsals and performances **on time** with all necessary equipment. Missed lessons will not be caught up.
- maintain **regular** practice of at least five, 10-15 minute practices per week.
- care for and maintain their instrument and replace consumable items when needed.
- assist with the setting-up and packing-up of ensemble equipment.
- participate in all required performance opportunities organised by the College.
- participate in ensembles/bands by being actively involved in weekly lessons and rehearsals
- At the conclusion of the year, the students will need to apply for lessons for the following year at their own expense.

PARENTS/CAREGIVERS will

- notify in writing as early as able
 - a child's absence from lessons or rehearsals.
 - if unable to attend any performances (**notice must be in advance**).
 - if late for rehearsal.
- allow their child to attend all performance opportunities such as Concerts or Showcases.
- support their child in all aspects of their instrumental instruction, including:
 - home practice.
 - punctual arrival for lessons, rehearsals and performances.
 - provision of consumable items such as pencils, reeds, strings, valve oil etc.
- meet costs associated with the program including (but not limited to):
 - payment of the Band/Strings Program fee (refer to '*Program Costs*' on page 7).
This single fee covers all operational costs for the year.
 - concert admission and transport charges (if applicable).
- make a minimum one-calendar year commitment to the Band or Strings Program.
- read and respond to communication from the College.
- sign the Band/Strings Program Diary each week.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Lessons

Selected students are offered one school year of free lessons (8 lessons per term). They will receive weekly 30 minute lessons in school time. Lessons are in groups of 2 – 4 students. Parents will find the lesson schedule via MyCalvary and on the MyCalvary app.

Students will be provided with a **hire instrument, music book, diary booklet and lessons for one school year**. The only items that parents are responsible for are a music stand for home practice, some consumable items e.g. reeds, strings, valve oil etc, and a performance uniform (only upon notification from the PACA Office when needed. Uniforms will be required when students progress past the Beginner levels).

Initial enrolment is for a period of one year. Continuing enrolments will require an application into the Performing and Creative Arts Program, where standard fees apply.

Students are to excuse themselves from their normal classrooms, to attend their instrumental lessons and should arrange to make up the class work missed.

In addition to their lessons, students are expected to attend Band/Ensemble rehearsals which are typically run before school and are a vital part of the student's musical development. **Attendance at all rehearsals is a compulsory requirement of the program.** You will receive notification via email when these rehearsals begin.

Please Note:

If your child already participates in the ***Performing and Creative Arts Program*** on a different instrument, and wishes to accept the place in the Grade 3 Strings Program or the Grade 4 Band Program, they may continue the other lessons in addition to participating in the Grade 3 Strings Program or Grade 4 Band Program, however, to minimise time out of the classroom, the additional lesson will be scheduled outside of the school day (before or after school, or morning tea or lunch time, subject to availability).

Program Costs

The cost for the whole year is substantially less than the cost of normal private music lessons outside the college, plus, the Hire Instrument is included in the cost for the school year.

Program Fee:

The total fee for the year is \$200.00.

This must be paid as follows:

1. \$50 non-refundable deposit – Due date on the letter of offer.
2. Balance of \$150 to be included in regular automated payments in the following year.
3. Once the Program starts from Term 1, the total fee is non-refundable.

Please Note: If the deposit is not received by the due date, this offer will be forfeited.

Acceptance into the program includes:

- Group lessons for one school year
- Hire Instrument for one school year
- Music Book to keep
- Administration Costs

Additional Costs:

- Brass/Woodwind - consumable items such as reeds, valve oil
 - Strings – students will require their own tuner (Korg CA-2 Chromatic Tuner available from the Keyboard Shop)
- Other consumable items such as strings.
- Music Stand (essential for home practice)

Music Uniform:

Some of our Band/ensembles require students to wear the following uniform at all major performances.

This is not required for the Beginner level Band/Ensemble, but will be needed as students advance. Advice will be issued by the PACA office when this is required.

For your information only:

The Music Uniform is available at the School Locker Domain. Please go to the College Website to see the Music Uniform guide: www.calvary.qld.edu.au/PACA

- Calvary Ensemble Waist Coat (compulsory purchase at the School Locker)
- White shirt (compulsory purchase at the School Locker)
- Long black dress pants (option to purchase elsewhere)
- Black shoes (current school shoes – clean and polished)
- Black socks (long enough so that legs can't be seen when sitting)
- Bow Tie (provided by the College for performances)

At the Conclusion of the Band Program or Strings Program year:

All students continuing on to their second year will pay the normal **Performing and Creative Arts Program** fees applicable for the following year.

Details of the Performing and Creative Arts Program can be found on the College Website: www.calvary.qld.edu.au/PACA

As the student progresses, they will be responsible for purchasing new music books as recommended by their Tutor.

INSTRUMENTS FOR THE STRINGS/BAND PROGRAM

Instrument Allocation

Calvary Christian College owns a number of strings, brass and woodwind instruments, which are loaned to students for the first year of instruction in the Band/Strings Program (hire fee is included in Band/Strings Program fee). **An Instrument Hire Agreement must be signed and returned with the Enrolment Agreement and deposit.** Instruments will be issued at the beginning of the new year. Instruments will not go home without the Musical Instrument Hire Agreement being signed and returned.

As you can appreciate, in order to have a program that contains a variety of instrumentalists, your child, under your guidance, will be required to indicate in order of preference their instrument choices. **Every effort will be made to accommodate your child's first or second choice, however this may not always be possible,** due to factors, including your child's height or ability to make a sound on a particular instrument, as well as instrument availability. After taking into account your instrument choice, all instruments will be allocated with the Tutor's guidance and the decision will be final.

Instrument Hire Fee – AFTER THE FIRST YEAR

After the first year, students are required to either hire a college instrument or purchase their own instruments. Instruments are hired as part of our normal Performing and Creative Arts Program.

Students using a college instrument **after the first year** in the Band Program or the Strings Program are required to complete an **Instrumental Hire Agreement Form** which is included in the application process through MyCalvary Activity Selection. Hire fees are charged to your school account and added to automated payments.

Current Hire fee amounts are listed on the College Website www.calvary.qld.edu.au/PACA Alternatively, contact the PACA office for more information regarding Hire to Buy or Payment Plan options through recommended companies.

When students in the program get to Secondary College, it is recommended that students purchase their own instrument (some exceptions apply).

If the instrument is damaged

If during the period of the loan the College instrument is damaged, the instrument must first be taken to the College to the appropriate Instrumental Teacher to assess the damage. The Instrumental Teacher will then ascertain if the damage is from general wear-and-tear, accident or malicious damage. General wear-and-tear damage will be repaired and paid for by the

College. If the damage is from an avoidable accident or malicious handling, the instrument's repair or consequent cost will need to be paid for by the parent.

BAND AND ENSEMBLE COMMITMENTS

Band/Ensemble Rehearsals

Band/Ensemble rehearsal times will be advised by email communication from the PACA Office.

Rehearsals typically take place before school in the morning.

All Band/Strings Program students are expected to participate in all rehearsals and performances.

Band/Ensemble Performances

Performance opportunities will take place throughout the year. Performing is an important part of any Instrumental Program and a successful performance relies on **all** the students attending.

COMMUNICATION

Enquiries

For enquiries regarding the program structure, timetables, payments, event dates, or any other issues that arise, please contact the PACA Office on PACA@calvary.qld.edu.au. Please check emails regularly and keep email addresses up to date by notifying the College.

For enquiries regarding anything about the specific lesson content or student progress, please contact the Tutor directly via the Music Diary or email.

Music Diary

A Music Diary Booklet will be given to all students as part of the program. These are intended to provide direct communication between the Tutor and the parent as well as providing a record of the student's practice for the Tutor. Parents are asked to monitor their child's practice and to acknowledge this by signing the Music Diary. The Music Diary must be taken to every lesson.

Progress Reports

Parents and students of the Grade 3 Strings Program and the Grade 4 Band Program will receive a progress report at the end of each semester.

Resolving Problems

Early identification of problems is imperative to avoid any misunderstandings between all parties involved. If a problem becomes apparent, please contact the PACA Office so an appointment with the relevant Tutor can be arranged, and an appropriate course of action can be identified and taken.

Calvary Christian College Behaviour Code of Conduct

Students participating in the program are expected to comply with the College Code of Conduct in all lessons and Creative Arts events. If these expectations are not met, the Tutor will communicate with the PACA Office and the following procedure will take place:

- First occasion - Verbal warning by the Tutor.
- Second occasion – If misconduct continues, the Tutor will notify the PACA Office and a referral will be submitted to the Responsible Thinking Classroom (RTC) and parents are advised.
- On the third occasion of misconduct, the student will be immediately withdrawn from the program.
- Parents will be advised in writing.
- Program fees are non-refundable in this instance and instruments and books must be returned to the College immediately.

TIPS FOR PRACTISING

WHERE TO PRACTISE: A quiet enclosed room - turn off the TV, computer, iPad, radio etc.

HOW OFTEN TO PRACTISE – 21 DAY RULE: Daily, regular, short and focused practice achieves more progress than long, irregular practices. Research has shown that students need to set good practice routines FROM the start. We ask that all students practice EVERYDAY for the first 21 days (3 weeks) and then 5 or 6 days a week; this then becomes their practice habit.

WHEN TO PRACTISE: The best time to practice is early in the morning as well as the afternoon, directly after their lesson. Try to avoid late evening practice when body and mind are tired. ***Setting a weekly schedule is the best idea.***

HOW LONG TO PRACTISE: Students new to their instrument should be aiming for 10-15 minute session. They should do this a minimum of 5 - 6 times per week. All other students should be practicing at least 20 minutes a session over a **minimum** of five days per week.

WHAT TO PRACTISE: Practice should include warm-ups, scales, flexibility exercises, technical work, from Method Book, specific pieces of music (solo or ensemble) and anything else required. Specific homework for each week will be written on their Music Diaries.

Good posture is less tiring than bad posture. Students need to develop the ability to watch their playing in a mirror. Encourage this early. When reading music, it should be on a music stand at the correct height - just below eye level.

Your child will require help, or at least encouragement, during practice sessions. Use practice time as a positive 'together' time with your child, even if you don't play an instrument yourself or even read music. Do the ironing, peel the potatoes! If necessary organise some home incentive scheme for practice: tick off the days completed on a calendar; have a special treat at the end of the week/month; insist on no TV or computer until after practice is done.

Each piece, exercise, scale, should be played through approximately four times each practice session. To begin with, it would be taken at a very steady pace. If the same mistake happens twice, the student should stop and correct that bar or phrase, playing it many times, before proceeding with the whole piece. At the next practice session, time will be saved if this passage is repeated several times before attempting to put it in the context of the whole piece.

If the piece sounds very odd to you, or out of tune, there are several possibilities:

1. the instrument needs tuning
2. the student is learning a harmony part, not the melody
3. the student is not listening to themselves and is playing out of tune or out of time.

Ask: Can you sing it first? Are your fingers in the correct place? Is there a note that you need to check how to play?

WHY YOUR CHILD SHOULD LEARN A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

- with YouTube support videos and sites

1. **TED** video - How playing an instrument benefits your brain - Anita Collins
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0JKCYZ8hng>
2. **Yamaha Music** - video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BWCLymxMIPU>
3. **Effective Practice** – video - Annie Bosler and Don Greene
<https://www.facebook.com/TEDEducation/videos/1489398127740055/>
4. **Ten Reasons Why Everyone Should Learn to Play Musical Instrument**
<https://www.shankarmahadevanacademy.com/blog/Ten-Reasons-Why-Everyone-Should-Learn-To-Play-Musical-Instrument/>

Learning a Musical Instrument – Relieves stress, makes you smarter, improves social lives, builds confidence, teaches patience, fosters creativity, improves memory, develops discipline, gives you a sense of achievement and its fun.

People who have received a music education are generally smarter than their non-musical counterparts. Extensive research done in this area has proved that children who learn to play a musical instrument do better in academics. (Shaw, Rauscher, Levine, Wright, Dennis and Newcomb, in their research paper titled Music Training Causes Long-Term Enhancement of Preschool Children's Spatial-Temporal Reasoning, speak about,) “a research team exploring the link between music and intelligence reported that music training is far superior to computer

instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills, the skills necessary for learning math and science."

<http://www.schooltoz.nsw.edu.au/homework-and-study/other-subjects-and-projects/the-arts/why-your-child-should-study-music>

5. At a Glance

- Children who study music from an early age can do better at a range of subjects.
- Children who play music learn there are rewards from hard work, practice and discipline.
- Playing a musical instrument helps develop children's creative thinking and motor skills.
- Music helps children become more active listeners.
- It can also enhance their health and wellbeing and increase their stamina.

6. Why Everyone Should Learn to Play A Musical Instrument

<https://www.mindbodygreen.com/0-12818/why-everyone-should-learn-to-play-a-musical-instrument.html>

- "Music training improves cognitive and non-cognitive skills more than twice as much as sports, theatre or dance."
- Positive benefits of music training persist for years, even after the musical training stops.
- Studying music greatly increases academic success.
- Older musicians stay mentally sharp.

7. Time Magazine - LIVING SCIENCE - This Is How Music Can Change Your Brain

<http://time.com/3634995/study-kids-engaged-music-class-for-benefits-northwestern>

There's little doubt that learning to play a musical instrument is great for developing brains. Science has shown that when children learn to play music, their brains begin to hear and process sounds that they couldn't otherwise hear. This helps them develop "neurophysiological distinction" between certain sounds that can aid in literacy, which can translate into improved academic results for kids.

The team decided to test whether the level of engagement in music training actually matters. Turns out, it really does. Researchers found that after two years, children who not only regularly attended music classes, but also actively participated in the class, showed larger improvements in how the brain processes speech and reading scores than their less-involved peers.

"I like to give the analogy that you're not going to become physically fit just by watching sports." It's important to engage with the sound in order to reap the benefits and see changes in the central nervous system.

As to how to keep children interested in playing instruments, that's up to the parents. "I think parents should follow their intuitions with respect to keeping their children engaged," said Kraus. "Find the kind of music they love, good teachers, an instrument they'll like. Making music should be something that children enjoy and will want to keep doing for many years!"

8. Additional websites:

Ten Good Reasons To Learn A Musical Instrument (It's Not Too Late!)

<https://wxrt.radio.com/blogs/marty-rosenbaum/10-good-reasons-learn-musical-instrument-its-not-too-late>

The Top 17 Ways Learning a Musical Instrument Gives You The Edge

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/top-17-ways-learning-musical-instrument-gives-edge.html>

Eighteen Benefits of Playing a Musical Instrument

<http://www.effectivemusicteaching.com/articles/directors/18-benefits-of-playing-a-musical-instrument>

Six Benefits of Music Lessons

<https://www.parents.com/kids/development/intellectual/6-benefits-of-music-lessons/>

HOW TO GIVE OWNERSHIP OF PRACTICING A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT TO YOUR CHILD



Practicing a musical instrument regularly is tough for most kids.

When your child is giving you a hard time about practicing it *does not* mean that they hate music and want to quit. They just don't like practicing, and that's okay...for now.

There are many ways to get your child to practice. You can force them, create a sticker chart, or even bribe them (yes, this works - don't feel guilty if you do it). Some days will be easier than others, and sometimes you will have to lose the battle in order to win the war. But eventually, your goal should be to *give your child ownership of their own learning*.

What is "ownership of learning"?

Basically, when a student understands "why", "how", "where" and "when" to practice, they have been given power. They will feel a sense of responsibility, which will then lead to self-motivation and routine. Ideally, we want our children to have ownership over their own learning in every aspect of life, and music education is a wonderful way to teach this!

Why Practice?

Let's use a sports analogy. Basketball players must consistently work out in the weight room, run miles a day, and shoot hundreds of free throws a week in order to be physically and mentally ready for each game. Musicians use small muscles (embouchure, fingers, etc.) that need a constant regular workout as well. Especially at young ages, musicians' muscles are

developing very quickly with regular practice, so improvement is very obvious. Students need to practice so they are ready for the game (performance). The more “performances” (which can include Friday night dinner concerts at home), the more likely your child will understand the need for practice, so keep that in mind!

When to Practice?

Parents need to help children get in the habit of practicing, just like they brush their teeth and do their other homework.

Practice should occur at the same time every day, if possible. Making practice part of the child’s daily routine is key. Getting started is always the toughest part of practicing; I always thought that taking the instrument out of the case was the toughest part - when it came out and I started playing I was set. Purchasing an instrument stand is a great idea. That way the instrument is always out and ready to be played!

How Long Should My Child Practice?

I am a big fan of the “10-minute rule”. 10 minutes of practice a day (for beginners) is better than nothing, and 99% of the time 10 minutes turns into 20 minutes! As long as your teacher gives clear assignments, 10 minutes will certainly extend to a half an hour easily.

Many school music teachers send home practice charts that have to be filled out and returned each week. Awards may be given out for more time on task, or total time practiced each month. Pedagogically speaking, I believe this emphasises quantity over quality, but it does work for many students.

If you are the type of parent who needs concrete numbers, try this:

Beginning students = 10 minutes/day*

Middle School students = 15min to half hour a day*

Senior School students = 30 minutes – 45 min a day*

* If the practice is goal related (the child knows they need to learn X scale, X etude, and X measures of a band piece), the time will take care of itself. Sitting down to practice with specific goals is *crucial* to successful growth.

Where to Practice?

Ideally, parents should carve out a semi-quiet area with a chair and a sturdy music stand. There should be proper lighting and a place to store extra strings, rosin, music, pencils, markers, notebook and a metronome. There should be minimal distractions such as TV, radio, other children, pets or telephone.

How to Practice

The sooner a child learns *how* to practice, the better!

The best tip I can give to parents is this:

Muscle memory and tempo are mutually exclusive. That means everything must be practiced VERY SLOWLY in order for the skill to be successfully “programmed” into the body.

This is very difficult for young children, especially when they are learning to play a song that they recognise.

If mistakes are happening, it is more than likely that the piece is being practiced at too fast a tempo for their level.

Students shouldn't always start at the beginning of a piece each time they sit down to practice it. Work should be done on small "snippets" that give them trouble; practicing them slowly then speeding them up. Hard sections should be broken down into small bits, perhaps even to the point where they are playing single notes. These sections should be repeated many times until the music becomes easy to play. Then the student should put the piece back together and gradually bring it up to tempo.

Sometimes practice happens without making sounds. Students should take time to figure out the fingering of passages note by note. Any time a mistake occurs, your child should feel free to make a note in the music with pencil.

Practice with a metronome is *huge* and leads to tons of improvement! Students should set it at a slow count at first, then gradually increase the pulse until they arrive at the final tempo.

Students should make good use of pencil and markers to indicate places where they keep making the same mistake.

Practice sessions should end by playing beautifully a piece that the student knows well, or anything they want, really.

Practice Games

Making any "chore" a game makes it more desirable.

A lot of fun can be had with just 3 coins!

First, the student puts three coins on the left side of the music stand. While practicing a troublesome measure, for every time they play it correctly, they move one coin to the right side of the stand. If they play it again and get it right, they put the next coin on the right side of the stand. If they play it and miss a note or rhythm, then all the coins go back to the left side. The student must play the measure correctly three times in a row in order to keep the coins. The next step is to connect the troublesome measure to the measure before it and continue playing.

By Years 5 and 6, your child should begin taking ownership over their learning. They need to understand that what you put in is what you get out. It is the parent's job to get their child to that point by ensuring that practice happens daily. Kids won't always understand this at a young age, but parents are doing them such a huge favor by not allowing them to quit. At the very least, children will grow up knowing what it takes to truly achieve something, and how to motivate themselves to do things that they might not always want to do.

That is the gift of ownership.



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