

Fewer Children Today are Playing the Piano

The AP [reported](#) back in January that piano sales in the U.S. have dramatically declined.

According to the story, in 1909, more than 364,500 new pianos were sold in the U.S. Now, only between 30,000 and 40,000 are sold annually.

What are the reasons behind the decline? In part, it's because modern piano restoration is so effective. But it's also because there are simply fewer children today who wish to learn to play the piano or any musical instrument for that matter.

Boston piano technician Larry Fine believes the decline in children who play piano is due to a cultural shift:

"Computer technology has just changed everything about what kids are interested in. People are interested in things that don't take much effort, so the idea of sitting and playing an hour a day to learn piano is not what kids want to do."

Music retailer Robin Walenta also pointed out that youth sports have taken the place of music:

"Children these days are being recruited for so many other activities, whether it's soccer, gymnastics, or swimming."

So who are the people still buying pianos? [According to piano tuner Stephen Scharbrough](#), "It's the family that places priority on self-discipline, and has a respect for arts and music."

(Author hangs his head in shame.)

Over the past decade, we've had a couple of pianos brought

into our home with the hopes that our children would learn how to play. (If you are willing to pay to move it, you can often find a piano for free on Craigslist!) But each time, we eventually got rid of them after failed attempts to secure our kids lessons. This last time, I feel like the piano took revenge on us by gouging our hardwood floors on the way out.

I truly admire those who play music. According to classical philosophy, it helps order the parts of the soul. But unlike many other forms of leisure and entertainment today, learning to play music takes willpower and discipline. In regard to learning music, I hope more people will succeed in these virtues where I have failed.