

## FROM THE PARENT

Long before I was anything else, I was a drummer. In fact, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that for most of my adolescent life, drums meant everything to me. Following the path of many eager musicians, I took up the instrument in the seventh grade and quickly became the prototypical band kid, playing in the choir band, marching band, stage band, symphonic band, and percussion ensemble.

A product of public school music education, I practiced hard and was designated the co-captain of my high school drum line. I was selected to participate in the Pitt University High School Senior Ensemble and the Mellon Jazz Festival Student Orchestra. I played at the national level in marching band and drum line competitions in Nashville and was fortunate to study with some great percussionists. I also jammed with anybody and everybody who would have me.

As a father of four, I was very excited to see my son Jackson (pictured above) beginning to show an interest in the drums. Unfortunately, I was also very disappointed in the lack of instructional aids available for children under the age of ten. Out of frustration, I decided to contact Rich Redmond, who is one of the most respected drummers in the music business. Rich's reputation as a top clinician and teacher precedes him, and my goal was to ask for his guidance and share the successes I had experienced, using simple counting and playing exercises at home.

Somehow I managed to catch Rich's attention long enough to pitch the need for instructional drum lessons geared toward children. Knowing that I was a writer who played the drums, Rich suggested that we tackle this dilemma together. A few weeks later, we found ourselves sitting together backstage at a Jason Aldean show, drafting an outline that evolved into the system we refer to as *FUNDamentals*. Today, we are great friends, and we are developing an entire drum education program together.

As a parent, I can tell you that this program will provide enjoyment for kids of all ages and stages of development. Rich and I simply want to see kids experiencing the joys of drumming, no matter what goals they attain or what skill levels they achieve. Visit me online at [pinstripepress.net](http://pinstripepress.net). Play on!

**Michael Aubrecht**

