

Pumping up

KARISHMA KHANNA
meets whizkid deejay
Avi Singh, all of 12.



It started as an infatuation with his father's Bose system. Then he used it with his iPod to play music at family functions. Today he's much sought-after, quite the hit at parties, and the youngest deejay in town. Avi Singh is no ordinary 12-year-old.



the JAM



People's initial surprise at his young age turned into admiration when they saw him in action and soon he started getting requests to play at parties. Bit by bit his parents helped him build up his equipment with microphones, speakers, strobe lights and even a fogger! Today he is at a stage where he has done more than 20 parties since 2007 and from Diwali to New Year's the requests were so overwhelming that he now has to turn down many.

Mom provides the oldies

Exploring all possible sources for getting music, he has managed to build an extensive music collection of a couple of thousand songs. Although the main emphasis is on Bollywood music, he plays Spanish, Gujarati, Beatles, old classics and any other requests. I was curious to know how he handled music that was way before his time – this is where Mom comes to the rescue. Recently he had a request for Shammi Kapoor songs – and he had not even heard of him, so she provided the playlist.

You get a sense of his business acumen when he explains that the packages he offers vary with the season, venue and age group. At times he also organises quizzes and games for children and has recently got offers to tie up with other entertainers. How does he manage all this activity along with his studies? Time management is, it seems, another of his traits. He ensures that there are no parties around exam time and besides music, he makes time for other interests like badminton, soccer and swimming.

It's hard work

For those of you who think that deejaying is a piece of cake, Avi is quick to correct you. On an average, conducting each party can take up to five hours – 10 if you include the preparation that goes beforehand. He puts together customised playlists and standing on your feet and juggling all the equipment in the dim lights can be quite strenuous and exhausting. Besides, even when he is not playing he has to keep

himself updated with the latest music and trends.

So what does he do with all his earnings, which amount to quite a substantial sum for a 12-year-old? Well he has access to his own bank account and has managed to save most of it. One splurging instance he remembers is taking his extended family out to Haagen Dazs after a successful party! And he can't wait to get his hands on the iPod Touch. He also plans to upgrade from his studio mixer to a DJ mixer which will allow him to do even better mixing and effects. Operating like a true entrepreneur, he is very open to exploring the option of starting his own entertainment business when he grows up.

Family matters

All said and done he is also quick to give credit to his family's contribution. His parents take him to the venue with all the equipment, sister sometimes helps at the parties and even the maid who minds the equipment which is dumped after a hard night's work.

Being a DJ of course also has its advantages in being popular with the girls, even at the expense of giving out free CDs. There is a playful gleam in his eye when he admits that he just might have a girlfriend already!

Avi is currently studying at the Overseas Family School in grade 7. His parents moved to Singapore from New Delhi when he was just three months old. His mother, Bindu Singh does strategy planning for Hewlett Packard and his father Narinderjit Singh is a Director at Utopia Inc. He also has an elder sister who is studying at UWC.

If you're planning a party, DJ Avi can be found at www.avidj.com. **IS**