5 TIPS for Taking Memorable Photos of Your Children

Miss Z Photography
Introduction

Childhood is such a fleeting time - it goes so fast.

We think that we will remember every little detail about our kids growing up, but the sad truth is, we won't. Hectic work schedules, daycare, housework, cooking dinner, going over homework, soccer practice - there are so many things in the day-to-day that can clutter our memories and make them fade away.

Photos are the best way to capture little moments in time that might otherwise get lost forever. It can be helpful to learn how to approach family photos from this point of view, rather than just snapping off a bunch of images at milestone events. This ebook features a collection of some of my favorite tips, as a professional photographer, to help you collect and keep those memories safe.
In some situations, it is better to get the "big picture" than to go in for the details, but far too many parents are missing out on the opportunity to take close-up photos of their children. Get in close to catch expressions that might be otherwise missed in a shot from a wider angle.

Zoom in to catch that mischievous gleam in your daughter's eye as she snuck a bite of frosting from her birthday cake. Get in closer so you can capture the mud that splashed all over your son's face at the soccer game where he finally got put in as goalie. While it is important to get wide shots to give context to what was going on or to capture the action of the event that is taking place, don't overlook the chance to get these personal shots that bring you into the heart of the moment.
They say that it is the details that count and when it comes to remembering these special moments of childhood, it is the details that often start to get fuzzy first. Whether you are using a DSLR camera or taking pictures with your smartphone, it's a good idea to experiment with the zoom to take your photos to the next level.

**Smartphone Tips** - Make sure that you have the Zoom feature turned on in your smartphone before you start taking photos. This allows you to use it when you want to without having to go through a bunch of steps to turn the feature back on. Also set the image quality to "high" so you will be able to get the best images possible with your camera.

**DSLR Tips** - One term that the professionals use is to "fill the frame", so make sure you only fill the frame of your camera with the things that you want to capture, not all the background that you don't want. Move in closer, use the zoom and capture memories that feature your child's face up close. These are the pictures that we print and frame - and look back on for the rest of our lives.
Chapter 2

Natural Light

It is important to aim for natural light whenever possible. The light that is gained by the use of a flash is very harsh. It is what causes the "red eyes" effect that we see, particularly in children that have lighter colored eyes. Children can also react negatively to the use of flash and might no longer want to cooperate with photos after the first shot. If you must use flash, consider using this photographer's trick and tape a piece of tissue or white tissue paper over the flash to diffuse it slightly.

Learn to be aware of natural light and use it to your advantage. We all know about the amazing effects that you can get when you take photos at sunrise or sunset, but there are other great opportunities available all day long. Paying more attention to the lighting can help to really elevate the quality of your personal photos.
Different types of natural lighting can change the look of your subject, depending on the time of day, the direction that the camera is facing and, of course, the weather. You will get remarkably different photo effects from clear skies than you will from a cloudy or even semi-cloudy day.

**Smartphone Tips** - Keep in mind where the natural light is coming from and avoid using back lighting when taking photos of people, unless you want to create a silhouette effect. The LED flash on your smartphone is too harsh for photos of your children and the results are rarely helpful anyway. It is best to adjust your position to capture natural light from a window or increase your camera's exposure and ISO levels instead.

**DSLR Tips** - Try experimenting with a high-speed sync setting on your digital camera. If you are shooting either indoors or outdoors and your exposures require a higher shutter speed, using high-speed sync will help you to be able to shoot at pretty much any shutter speed up to 1/8000 seconds. Adjust depending upon the quality of the light.
Another great trick that professional photographers use to get that great shot is to take photos from different angles. Don't always take your photos from the same standing or sitting position. Instead look at unique opportunities to take photos from different perspectives, either getting down on the ground to their level, getting high above them or even shooting from below their level.

Some of the advantages of shooting from the child's level is that it can prevent common issues, such as the distortion of heads and feet that you will often see in pictures taken from adult height. You will also see more of the child's face and less of the top of the child's head when you take it from their level. Think of it as getting down to take your pictures from the child's point of view.
Don't just sit on the floor, consider actually lying down on the floor. You will truly get to see the world from your child's perspective. You can get a lot of great baby pictures from floor level that you would miss out on otherwise. Gain extra perspective by capturing memories of them with their favorite toys and other items that have become a part of their childhood.

**Smartphone Tips** - Spend some time getting to know your smartphone camera. Learn how it works from different angles, from higher viewpoints and even from lying on the ground. Do all this before you set out to take specific photos of your kids. Play with the settings, the shooting mode and other functions to get the most out of your experience.

**DSLR Tips** - Consider using a long lens that will allow you to put some distance between your child and the camera. For low to the ground shots, keep the aperture as wide as you can to blur some of the floor, toys, blankets and other items in the foreground of these shots to help isolate and put the focus on the child even more.
Chapter 4

**Personalize**

Some of a child’s most important memories have to do with a favorite toy. Make sure to include some of their favorite toys in your photos. While they won't always be sleeping with "Fluffy" the stuffed mouse, or want to take that big yellow dump truck with them wherever they go, you can capture that moment in time forever.

Clothing is another thing that you will want to record and remember. Pictures of your child wearing a pair of favorite sneakers, a special hat or even an outfit that was purchased or made for a special occasion, can really help bring that memory home. Favorite fluffy blankets and items that are part of an important "first", such as a Christening gown, an outfit worn to a wedding or even just the first time playing dress up, can enhance your subject matter considerably.

Taking photos over the child's shoulder is another great way to personalize the image and include something that is important to them.
Get shots of your child playing with toys, using a tablet, watching a video, watching a favorite puppy play or even having a snack. Seeing their world from their point of view and focusing in on what catches their attention can create great shots.

**Smartphone Tips** - You don't always need to have your child centered in the middle of the frame. A photographer's trick known as "the rule of thirds" teaches the idea of breaking the frame into three equal sections, horizontally and vertically. Check your smartphone to see if that setting is available to help you place the subject within unique lines to include toys and other items.

**DSLR Tips** - Experiment with your camera and try using the widest focal length so you can gain a wide and sweeping scope of your child in his environment.

*If your child is busy playing, use a fast 50mm lens and open the aperture so you can use a fast shutter speed indoors without triggering the flash.*
Chapter 5

Location

It is often said in the business world that location is the key to success. This is true in photography as well. Take pictures of your children in places where you normally wouldn't even think about bringing your camera along. Everyone takes photos of their kids at the playground, the park, the zoo or at home. Trying bringing your camera with you when you run errands to the grocery store, the post office, the dry cleaners and the car wash.

While it can be stressful taking kids out to do errands and you might not think you will have the time, opportunity or inclination to stop and take photos, getting shots of kids doing every day things, such as riding in the shopping cart, grabbing a box of cereal from the shelf or just being goofy, are the exact moments you will want to remember years from now in the future.

Try snapping photos of your children setting the table, folding laundry or cleaning up toys in their room. Tying shoes, buttoning a coat or even
eating an apple - these are the seemingly common and banal tasks that will one day look like so much fun as you view these memories in the years to come. Remembering how much you did together and how they looked as they focused on those tasks are some of the simplest joys of parenting - and of childhood.

**Smartphone Tips** - Refrain from filtering your photos with the same filters that everyone else is using. Instead, try editing your images to make adjustments to color temperature, contrast and sharpness. Use image editing apps like Photoshop Express or iPhoto - or consider dumping your images into Lightroom and to it on your computer to make the most of each shot.

**DSLR Tips** - Purchase at least one extra battery and have several fast memory cards at your disposal when out running errands with your child and camera. You don't want to miss an important moment because the battery died or the card was full. Keep them handy and in your pocket, not in a case.
What’s next?

If you are interested in creating a special family memory, consider booking a session with Miss Z Photography in the Greater New Bedford area.

From families and couples to babies and children, maternity to newborns, and high school to head shots, the Miss Z experience goes "the extra mile" to ensure the comfort, ease, and satisfaction of each client on an individual basis.

Photo sessions are done at the Miss Z Photography downtown New Bedford studio or on location within the Greater New Bedford area,
including your home, beaches, parks, landmarks, etc. Miss Z Photography can help you create timeless treasures that you and your family will appreciate for generations to come.

Give us a call at 508-663-6544 to schedule an appointment or to learn more about our photography services and personalized products.
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