



Working with Kids

Your goal is to make kids feel safe and like they are the coolest kid on the planet. If your goal is accomplished, every time that child thinks of your city, they will remember those feelings. And every time their parent sees those pictures, they will remember as well. What a gift you have given them!

- **Every mom loves someone who loves their children.** Crouch down, make eye contact, match their energy, and shower them with compliments. "Great outfit! I love your sunglasses! I'm so glad you are here today, we are going to have SO much fun!"
- **Give tons and tons of compliments!** Especially in the first five minutes. "You're so strong! What good balance you have! I bet you can't jump over that crack! Wow, you're such a good jumper!"
- **Give them all the game plan.** In your first location, set up the big smile shot, then play a game. Then explain that's how your time will go, first a posed beautiful smile photo, and then something fun and laughing and connection. Mom & Dad will relax knowing there is a plan and kids know they need to smile sweet first in order to get to the game.
- **Don't let Mom or Dad see you stressed.** Tantrums are a great time to get individuals of other kids while mom or dad calms the poor kid.
- **If you've got some busy little legs, stick to the plan of pose first, then a game** - and make the game fast.
- **Show older kids you are interested in them.** Ask about school, sports, hobbies and be genuinely engaged with their answers. It's still all about the compliments.
- **Don't ever force a young one out of Mom or Dad's arms.** You are a scary stranger and until they're ready to play with you, you will not get them to smile anyway. It can be hard to direct children, and sometimes you need to just direct yourself - move around to get your shots.
- **Ask parents to respectfully to step back if they get involved in directing their children.** Tell them that they don't need to worry about what their kids are doing or what they look like - you are there to direct when necessary and let the shoot unfold naturally so you can capture each child's unique personality.
- **Let kids be kids, and ask the parents to join in.** If the children are running around, have parents run with them. If they want to roll down the hill, have parents roll too.
- **Classic family shots** that get rave reviews: kiss sandwich, double-decker kiss, kids holding hands, squeeze hug...
- **Plan to do the couple shots at the end** after the kids are worn out.