

# Plan Ahead

What's meant to be a fun, memorable event can quickly become a stressful, panic-inducing nightmare. All too often people spend the day before their photo session running around with last minute preparations. We understand how important this experience is to you, so we want to help you plan in advance to avoid any unnecessary stress. Below are a few tips to help you prepare for your session.

## Talk to Your Kids Beforehand

Kids are smart and they love feeling grown-up and informed. Get your children interested and involved by explaining the plans for the day. Show them the outfits you have picked out or let them be involved in the clothing selection process. Tell them a "professional photographer" is coming over and that's it's going to be a lot of fun. Convey positivity to minimize the stress of new people and new things that can overwhelm small children.

## Decide on a Reward

Sometimes a little bribery is necessary to make sure things go smoothly during your session. If you would like to try an extra incentive to keep your kids calm, pick a reward beforehand that you would be comfortable following-through with after the session is over. If your kids like frozen yogurt for example, we can talk about using frozen yogurt as a bargaining tool with the kids when they need to smile more, sit still, or pay attention.

## Ensure Everyone is Well Fed and Rested

Make sure to get as much sleep as possible and don't forget your breakfast and lunch depending on the time of the photo session. We love to provide snacks, but pack some extra goodies for the kids in case they get hungry or restless. Preserve your energy for the session so that everyone is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed with smiling faces.

## Trust Us

We know how stressful it can be to get a family portrait done, but it doesn't have to be that way! We've been doing this a long time. We love it when kids get giggly, smile wide, or show off a little attitude, because we get to capture their true personalities. Trust us and follow our lead. We are here to guide you through the process and make sure it is a memorable experience for all.

# What to Wear

The goal of good photography portrait is to direct the viewer's eye to the subject's face. All other elements should be secondary. Not sure what to wear during your family portrait session? It's a lot to consider – after all, these portraits will hang on the walls of your home forever. Here are a few tips to help you and your family look your best!

## Be Timeless

Clothing can easily date your portrait. For that reason, we often suggest simple clothing with a timeless cut and style. Long-sleeves work best for most portraits, taking attention away from the arms and keeping it on the faces and expressions. Jeans can be timeless and casual. Darker clothing recedes in the image and can appear slimming.

## Color & Style

Instead of looking for top-to-bottom looks for everyone in your family, decide on a color scheme that works for all. Different hues of the same color family, or complimentary colors work great together. Ideally, keep your clothing selection within the same style (dressy, casual, sporty, etc.) For a soft, timeless look, choose neutral colors in classic styles. Want to showcase the fun and spunky side of your family? Incorporate bold accents. Busy patterns can detract from a portrait but if that depicts your style, consider pairing them with solids.

## Accessorize

Scarves, hats, bows, bow ties...they can all add a little 'fun' to your timeless style. Accessories are also a great way to coordinate looks, and props can help express your family's unique personality.

## Layering

Layers will not only provide more visual interest in your photos but they will also allow a lot more variety in your shots and poses. Layering also lets you easily and quickly vary your look: simply add a sweater, jacket or hat and you have an entirely different look.

## Comfort Counts

Our goal is to capture the members of your family as they are today. Choose clothing they love to wear and that accentuates their individual personalities. Consider that you might be sitting or leaning in different poses. You want to wear something that you feel very comfortable in and that will cover any areas you do not want to show in the images.

## Try This

Lay out everyone's clothing together in the room where your portrait will live. Replace outfits and add accessories until you achieve a fresh and exciting look for that room.