

PHOTO DAY TIPS FOR PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY PARENTS

1. School is a great place to photograph kids -- mainly because parents are somewhere else. If you want to be at school on picture day, head to the bathroom when your child comes to the camera. Most of the time, your child will do better without you. (No peeking!)
2. Schedule a hair cut at least 10 days ahead of photo day. The front of hair your child's hair should not be "eyelash-brushing long." Bang cuts should be at least a week old.
3. Neat, shiny hair always looks best. Keep in mind that complicated hair styles do not withstand recess, and school schedules do not allow much time for hairstyling. And no "bed head." We love our little boys, but they can develop some pretty gnarly snarls. Promise them a treat if they let you wet and comb their hair on photo day.
4. The best choice of clothes is the simplest -- dress them in collared shirts that fit, and complement their eyes and hair. A sweater, a dress, a neat t-shirt, or a clean soft polar fleece works.
5. Look for a top that complements your child's face, not one that distracts from it. Superman, Spiderman, Giants, 49'ers, Cinderella, Dora the Explorer, or Hanna Montana will immortalize childhood passions, but that should be your intention -- not an accident -- on picture day.
6. Clothes that are clean and stain free will save retouch costs. You might even send a second shirt in case of snack accidents. (Remind them to tell the teacher they brought one.) Iron those collars!
7. Do not coach your children about specific poses. Let the photographer position them for the best image.
8. Reinforce a positive attitude by sharing with your children how wonderful they are and how much you're looking forward to seeing their portraits. Let them know you trust them to work politely with the photographer to create a portrait they'll be proud to share.
9. Let braces shine! A mouth of metal is a limited addition photo op. Lips can't usually hide them anyway, so kids might as well wear them proudly.
10. A gap-tooth smile is beautiful -- classic!

IF YOUR CHILD WEARS EYEGLASSES

If your child wears glasses that are light sensitive, he or she might need to remove them if photos are taken outdoors because they will read dark in the photo. If your child has a second pair of glasses that do not get dark, please send them to school on picture day.

Non-reflective lenses are best -- no reflections of trees, cameras or playgrounds will show. We use a number of tricks to lessen glare, but sometimes it's impossible.

You might want to ask that your child be photographed both with and without glasses. Please let your child know it's because we don't want glare to get in the way of their beautiful eyes.