

SESSION FLOW

FULL OR MINI

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THE FLOW

The key to any session is to be flexible. This is especially true when working with children because many different things can come up. For example, a fussy child, a wardrobe malfunction, or siblings not getting along. This means we must always be ready to change things up. This is a guide on how a full or mini session flow could go, but it does not have to be in this order.

ALL TOGETHER

SMILE AT THE CAMERA

Start with the whole family standing together for some posed portraits. This is the most awkward time during a session and most of the time this is exactly what they want to do anyways, so just allow them a couple photos all together smiling at the camera and then move on to the unposed portion.

UNPOSED

After you work to get a few posed portraits, move into the unposed portion. You can direct them to love on the person nearest to them

and try to make them smile as this usually helps them loosen up and they begin to interact with one another in a more authentic way. This is also a good time to have them look back at the camera afterwards for one more smiling portrait that seems more genuine.

WALKING

Straight from unposed standing, I then move into the walking portion where I direct them to move to another location. I will direct them to hold someone's hand or help one another get to the next spot. This helps me get more walking interaction (ex: siblings holding sibling's hands or mama helping a baby toddle around).

SITTING

After we get to the next spot, I will direct the family to cuddle up on a blanket. I try not to position them and allow them to just position themselves in a comfortable way. I will direct them to "cuddle up on the blanket next to someone you're ready to love on," then they tend to look and act more natural. I direct the girls to sit like a mermaid with their feet out to the side and the guys I just have them sit in a way where I don't see the bottom of their shoes. Take a few images of them smiling at the camera then direct them to love on the person closest to them.

SIBLING

I continue to follow the same flow with the sibling only (standing, walking, sitting, posed and unposed). I will tell them to cuddle up and smile at the camera. Next, I will tell them to just love on each other. Give kisses, brush the others hair back, count each other's fingers, pick flowers and hand to one another, smell the flower, or twirl together or dance in some way. This will get them to interact in more natural ways. Also, being aware of your tone and speaking quietly helps them stay calm and trust you more. Then you can ask

them questions like age, grade, or school to help them think about something else other than getting their picture taken.

PARENTS ONLY

SEATED

I now like to give the parents a moment to be alone together. This will give the kids a good break after their time in front of the camera. I will start with them seated looking at the camera. Then I will direct them to “look at one another and be in the moment” as this helps them drown out the noise and be together. You will see them naturally go nose to nose, then just direct them from there to brush some hair back or give smooches or other small movements to capture more moments.

STANDING

For standing I try to find them something to lean against like a tree so the mom can lean into the dad. She can lean in to give him some love or lay her head on his chest. If there isn't anything to lean on, then just tell them to come together and hold one another in a natural way. From there you can have them make slight changes like rubbing an arm, holding hands, or bringing a hand up against a cheek depending on what shot you want to capture.

CHILDREN INDIVIDUALLY

This is when I take the time to capture just a couple pictures of the kids by themselves doing things they like to do naturally. If a boy likes to throw rocks, I will snap a few pictures of him holding a rock or throwing it. If a girl likes to dance, I will have her do some twirls or dance moves. That's why it's so important to get to know your clients and don't be afraid to ask questions during the session.

ALL OTHER COMBINATIONS

The family is at their most relaxed during this time, so I try to capture moments of mom with kids, dad with kids, or any other combinations. If you have issues getting them to interact just follow the same prompts as before which are loving on one another while standing, sitting, or walking.

ONE MORE ALL TOGETHER

Lastly, have them all come together for one more family photo. This should include more genuine smiles and pure joy!

PRO TIPS:

1. Change up this flow based on moods. If the kids are wild just let them play at first and let mom and dad have their photos taken. This gives mom and dad a break and a moment to just be together.
2. Always have a blanket for seated poses.
3. If there is one child causing problems, then separate them and do their individual shots first. Take more time with this child so you can gain their trust. It will be worth it to gain their trust and compliance. Also, take note to see if they are acting out to get a parent's attention. If so, allow them some individual time with that parent to be loved on. The parent may not even realize the issue is there and you just solved the problem for them!



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