



PREPARING FOR YOUR SESSION
WITH KIRSTEN LAUFER PHOTOGRAPHY

HELLO!

Thanks so much for allowing me the honor of creating beautiful photos for your family. It is my hope that together we craft not only awesome memories, but gorgeous, timeless images as well.

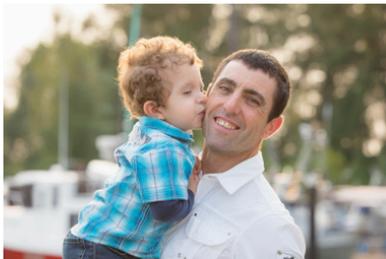
My style is both photo journalistic and portraiture. I love capturing families playing, snuggling, being goofy, and just loving each other. I will always include some shots of everyone posed and smiling for the camera, and will combine that with playing games, encouraging tickle contests, asking dads to show off their kid-flipping skills, having little ones give moms their BEST hugs EVER, and fun stuff like that. My aim is to capture families with children as the children naturally are at this point in time - curious, fun and full of energy.

Sessions are shot at a variety of times of day depending on weather and lighting. The optimal time frame for photos does vary depending upon the season and sun. We will discuss this more in detail if we haven't already.

Please take some time to read through the following information as you prepare yourself and your family!

Looking forward to meeting with you!





Kids

Preparing your kids for our session as much as possible often takes the timidness out of the evening. Please make sure kids know that this is FUN! No threats, as they usually bring about tears and added stress. Don't even bother telling them to be sure to smile or "be good." My goal isn't to get a picture of your child "being good" or just "smiling" but having fun and interacting. Some kids who are coached to smile for the photographer get so nervous that they are fighting laughing and relaxing because they are so worried about having their picture taken or making their parents happy!



Instead, I'm a huge fan of bribery - (ice cream after!) is always a great idea for the little ones who need a little extra encouragement. However, please don't bring sweets for bribing during the photo. They tend to end up being a distraction.

Dads

Moms, I'm speaking to you. Is your husband feeling less than thrilled about your upcoming photo shoot? A little bribery seems to work well here (though maybe something *better* than ice cream!) as well!

But seriously, let your husband know that the shoot will be relatively painless and to try to focus on having an hour to play with the kids, hold your hand and just savour the moment!

STYLING

What to Wear

Ah, the age old question always associated with photo shoots. Styling is one thing I try not to have *too* much of a hand in, since I want you guys to still be *you*, not Kirsten Laufer's idea of fashion. But here is my 2 cents:

Think layers. Probably the biggest difference between sessions that look great and sessions that look wow: little boys in a t-shirt, with a button up over it, along with a blazer. Throw on a fun hat (bowler, fedora, stylish ball cap) and you're set! Little girls: same thing, leggings, fun skirt, tank with a sweater and a tasteful (not too big and overwhelming!) headband.

**Side note: Stay away from gaudy gerber daisy flowers in neon colors and mesh hats with rhinestones, they look dated and tend to take away from your little one's gorgeous features.*



Coordinate. As you think about your color palette, imagine your family being one complete piece of artwork. Each person/outfit will bring together a feeling of formality and coordination. Instead of everyone wearing the same shade of blue - think about what accent colors might look nice with said blue. Perhaps blue plaid shorts for your son with a t-shirt, vest and hat. Pull some of the colors of his plaid shorts to find a great skirt or dress for your little girl. Dad can wear some jeans and a shirt that coordinates with the plaid shorts and skirt on your daughter, and finish it off with an awesome jacket and fedora. Mom will round the entire family out with some great boots, leggings and darling dress that (again) coordinates with the family color story.

STYLING CONTINUED

Head to toe. Remember to dress down to you and your family's feet! No scuffed Reeboks for boys, but fun shoes like Converse, "boat" shoes or boots. Same for girls: no Dora crocs, but more traditional Mary Janes or boots work best!



What NOT to wear. Remember the Olan Mills look of everyone in khakis + whit button-down shirts? It's not necessary to coordinate quite so much - unless you'd like to. (My own family still photos this way!) Remember to think about coordinating without needing to match perfectly. Dads, look for fun colours, stripes, plaids. Texture photographs amazingly.

My pinterest boards at <https://www.pinterest.ca/8d87894b1ccea9a78cded096f194e8/> may be helpful. Get creative!

Helpful tip! Head into your local GAP (or the like) and mention you're styling for family photos. They are happy to direct you - and free of charge! No need to pay a stylist when you have knowledgeable fashion advice right there in the store.

THE DAY OF YOUR SESSION

Kids

Just a few thoughts on your kids + the big day!

I mentioned bribery. Love it! Keep in mind that most bribery snacks make messes and have dye in them to change your kids' mouths. Usually this backfires and all they want to do is eat instead of paying attention to me. I suggest keeping the googies in your bag or car until after we've finished.

Please make sure your children go to the bathroom before leaving, as well as limiting their liquid intake beforehand. This allows us uninterrupted shooting time!

Full-length family sessions typically last approximately one hour. If your session is near sunset and your little one isn't accustomed to staying up so late, please adjust their naps as best you can, and rest assured that one night of staying up past their bedtime will be just fine as we will actually be having fun (I promise!).

With older children, we want to make the session as natural as possible. Please don't reprimand the kids or say "that's not your REAL smile!" I know what a real smile looks like, so even if I'm not snapping away, I'm just trying to loosen up your son/daughter! I promise I won't be giving (too many!) cheesy smiles for your finished order.

As with any age, I take my time and do my best to allow your kids to feel comfortable around me - and know we are going to have a blast!



THE DAY OF YOUR SESSION

Mom & Dad

Child Solo Shots

During the shoot, if you are not in the picture, please let me just interact with your child - unless I ask for help! Many parents will stand behind me trying to get their little ones' attention, and all it does is distract baby from me!

I like to give the little ones a chance to just play with me, so it's okay if they aren't giving big smiles right off the bat. Trust me and trust the process. For me, it's very much about exploring at their world and on their terms.

Family Shots

Mom and dad, as you focus on your children, don't forget about yourself! Keep your posture good as well as ensuring your chin doesn't pull in. These allow for the most flattering images.

Something else to keep in mind is to be watchful of your own expression as you're trying to get baby to smile. Remember that you are in the photos as well!

Rest assured I'll be watching all of you and will definitely let you know if I see something out of places or looking off!



THE DAY OF YOUR SESSION

Weather

A quick but important note: if the weather turns out warmer/cooler than you anticipated when putting together outfits, please adjust what everyone is wearing. Doing a session when it's sweltering and kids are overdressed is never fun. Likewise, if a cold front comes through unexpectedly, please put sweaters on your children, as I can't photoshop out goose bumps and blue lips. I will most likely cut sessions short if I think kids are too cold/overheated.

In case of rain, I will be watching the radar all day. If it doesn't rain but is overcast, we will go ahead with the schedule as planned - it is the Pacific Northwest, after all! If substantial rain is imminent, I will contact you to reschedule or use an alternate rain location. Rest assured that I want all of you to be as comfortable as you can be during our session - and rain doesn't always lend itself well to that!

Illness

Just as important as the weather is that everyone being photographed be feeling 100%. There isn't anything worse than an unhappy and sick feeling child - they especially do not want to be in front of a camera.

At the first sign your kids aren't well, please give me a call. I'm a mom. I get it.





A FEW ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

If your little one brings along a "lovie" (stuffed animal, blanket, etc.) or has other special toys they love dearly, I'd be happy to use some time at the end to capture some memories with that special piece of their childhood! If your family loves playing ball at night, please bring along a ball. We'll see how we can add it in to our session. One of my favourite sessions was an extended family that brought along a neon rainbow ball...that joined us for some amazing playtime. Talk about creating a fun and joyful time.

It is my pleasure to be able to photograph your family and I look forward to the fun we will have! Thanks for taking the time to best prepare for your session - it will be amazing.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to send along an email at kirsten@kirstenlauferphotography.com or call me at 604-781-6477.



Kirsten Laufer Photography

Ladner, BC

www.kirstenlauferphotography.com

kirsten@kirstenlauferphotography.com | 604.781.6477