

500 POSES *for* Photographing Children

A VISUAL
SOURCEBOOK FOR
DIGITAL PORTRAIT
PHOTOGRAPHERS



Michelle Perkins

Amherst Media®
PUBLISHER OF PHOTOGRAPHY BOOKS

My deepest thanks to the photographers whose work appears in this book. Their powerful images are truly inspiring—as is their commitment to educating other professionals. If you have a chance to learn from them, whether at a workshop or through their writing, take it; you won't be disappointed.

Thanks also to my husband, Ron, and to the good friends who allowed their children's images to be included.

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About This Book

Designing outstanding portraits of children—images that go far beyond a mere snapshot—requires you to be part artist, part cheerleader, and part psychologist. It also requires patience and an ability to think on your feet.

If you've set the stage well—established a trusting relationship with the child and engaged their interest in the session—a great pose can be the icing on the cake. If the child is scared, bored, or just not feeling well, posing can be almost impossible. In any case, posing children will almost always be a process that is ongoing throughout the shoot, as the child reacts to everything around him or her. While the traditional “rules” of posing are an important starting point, it's important to remember that most kids aren't great at holding any given pose. Fortunately, children do tend to fall into body positions that feel natural and reflect their personalities—which is, after all, what you're trying to capture. Therefore, even a pose that isn't exactly what you planned may turn out to be the right pose for that child—or may be something you can refine to create the look you want.

This collection is designed as a springboard for facing the many challenges of posing kids. Filled with images by accomplished professionals, it provides a resource for photographers seeking inspiration for their own work. Stuck on what to do with a particular child or unsure how to use a given location? Flip through the sample portraits, pick

something you like, then adapt it as needed to suit your tastes. Looking to freshen up your work with some new poses? Find a sample that appeals to you and look for ways to implement it (or some element of it) with your subject.

For ease of use, the portraits are grouped according to how much of the subject is shown in the frame. Thus, the book begins with head-and-shoulders portraits, followed by portraits that introduce one or both hands into the head-and-shoulders look. Next are waist-up portraits, featuring images that include the head and shoulders, arms and hands, and at least some of the subject's torso. Moving on to three-quarter-length portraits, the examples feature kids shown from the head down to mid-thigh or mid-calf. Next are full-length images, which include the entire body. (*Note:* Both the three-quarter- and full-length portraits are subdivided into poses designed for standing subjects and ones for seated or reclining subjects.) The last portion of the book provides ideas for posing small groups of children—taking the posing challenge to the next level!

It can be difficult to remain creative day after day, year after year, but sometimes all you need to break through a slump is a little spark. In this book, you'll find a plethora of images designed to provide just that.

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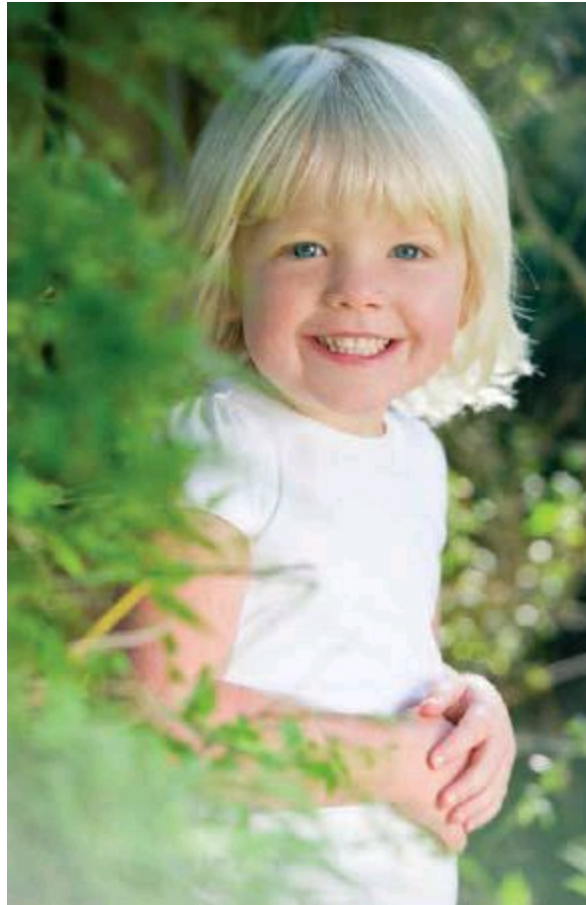


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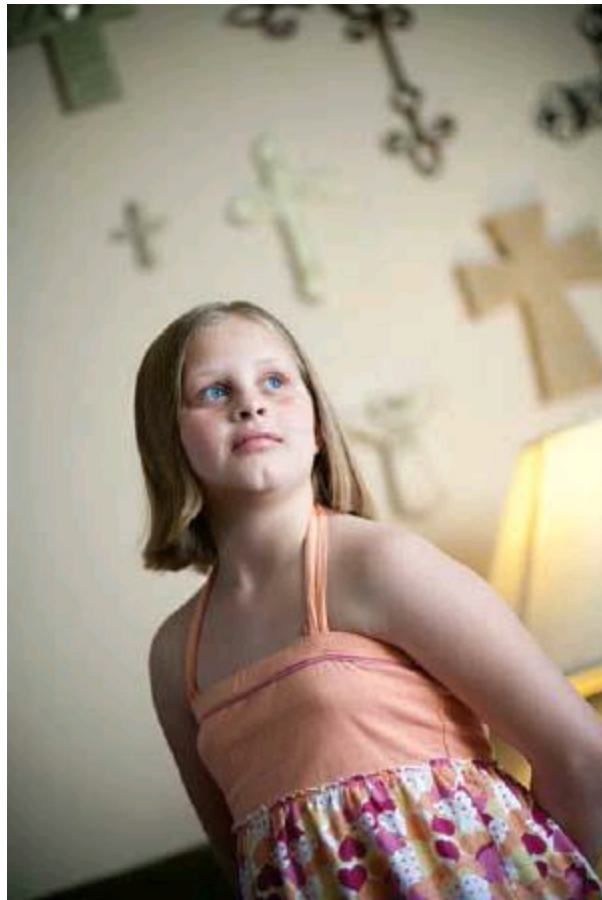


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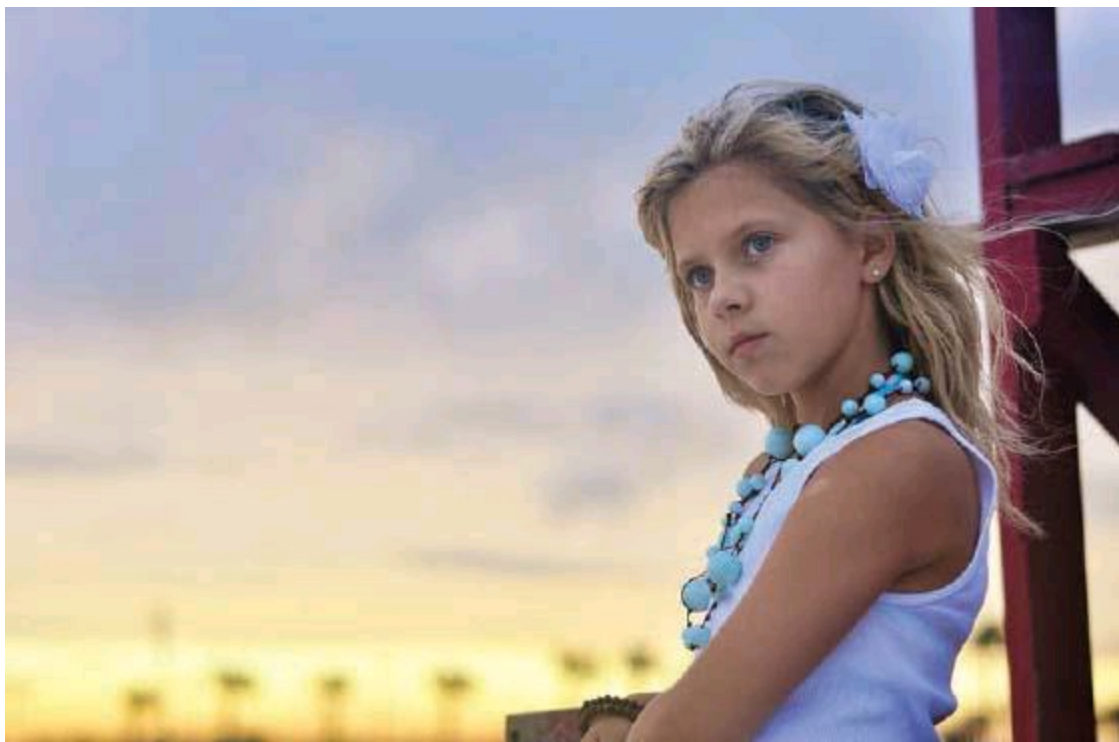


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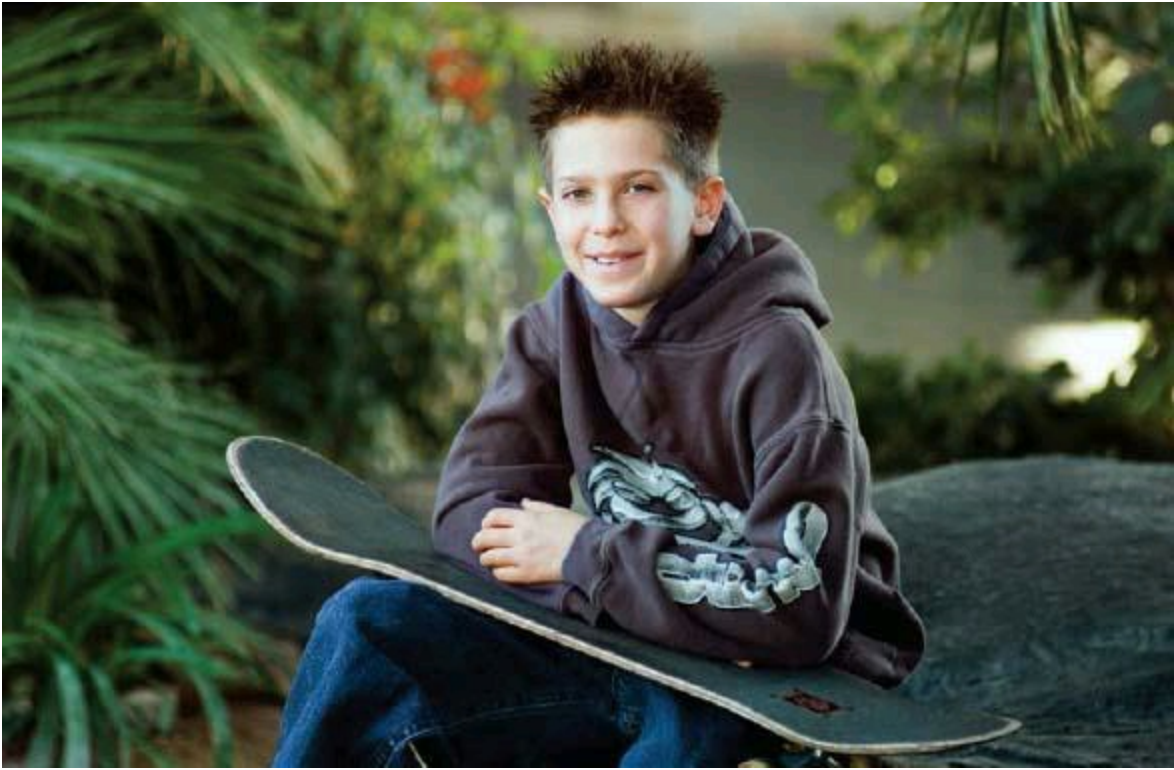


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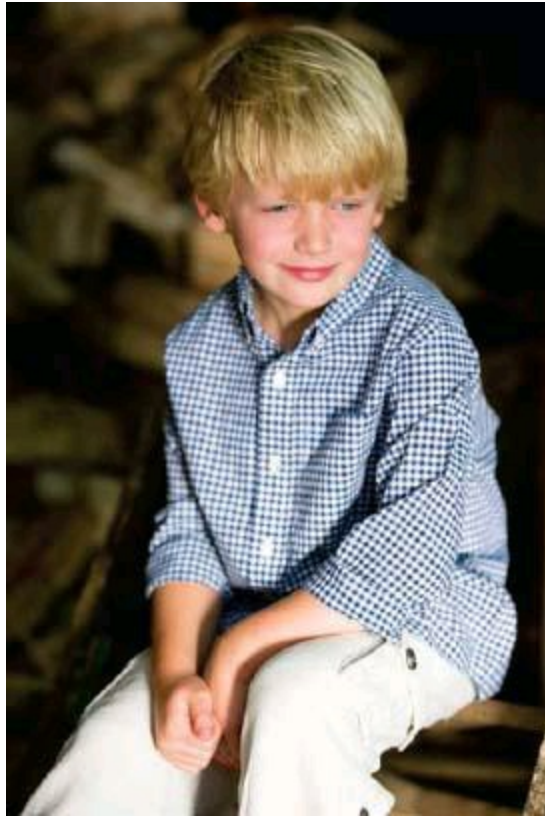


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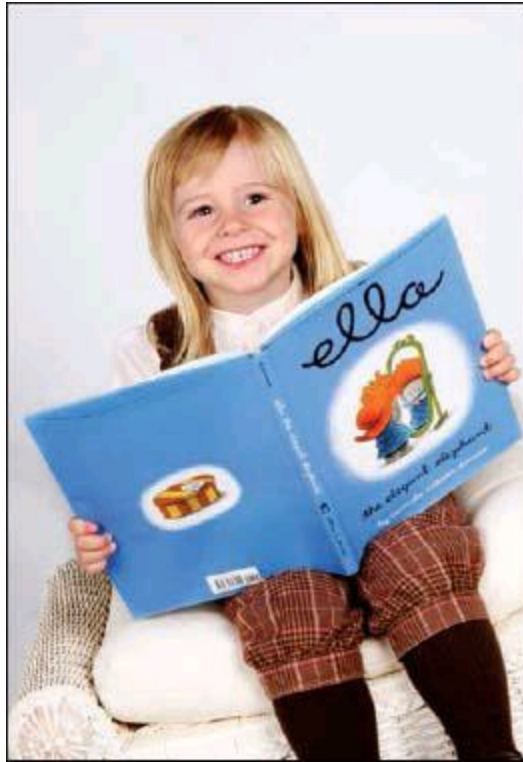


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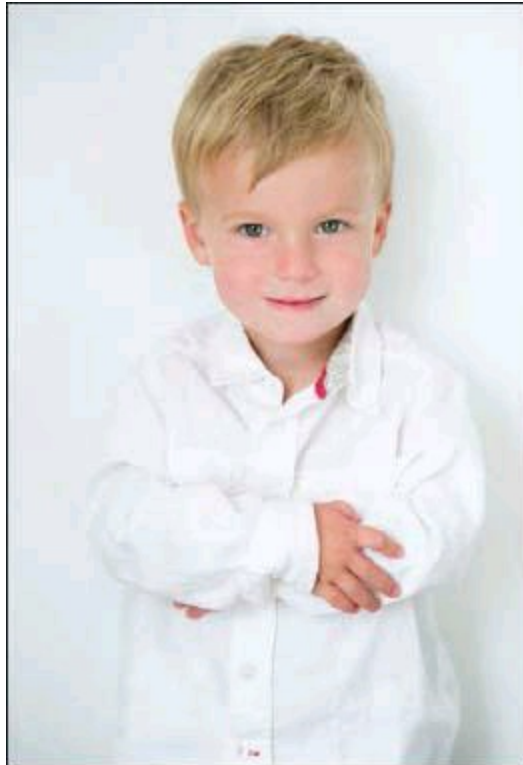


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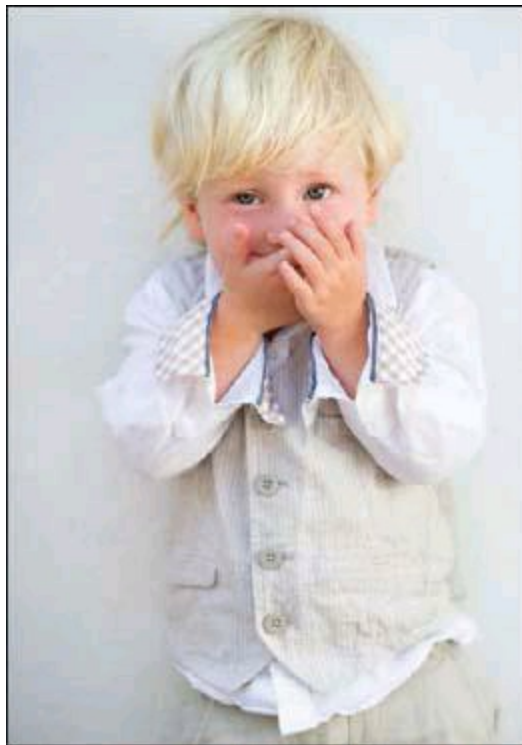


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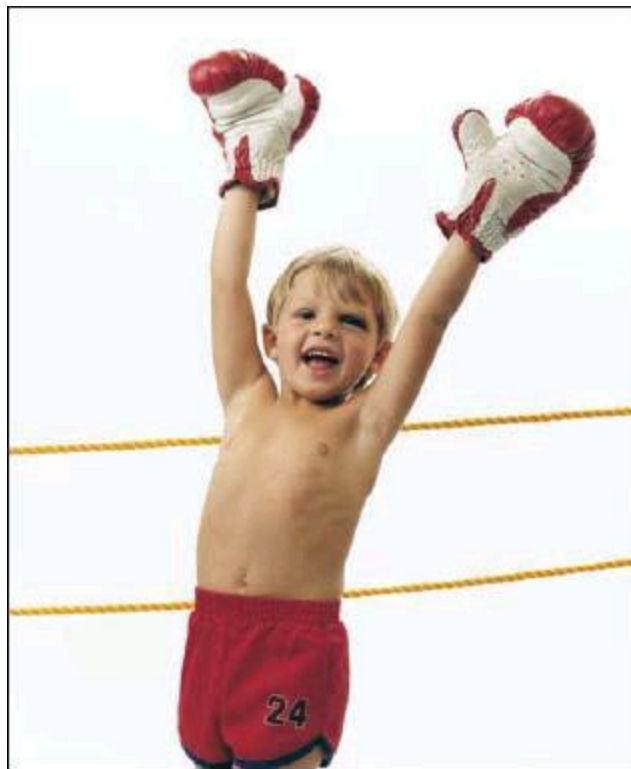


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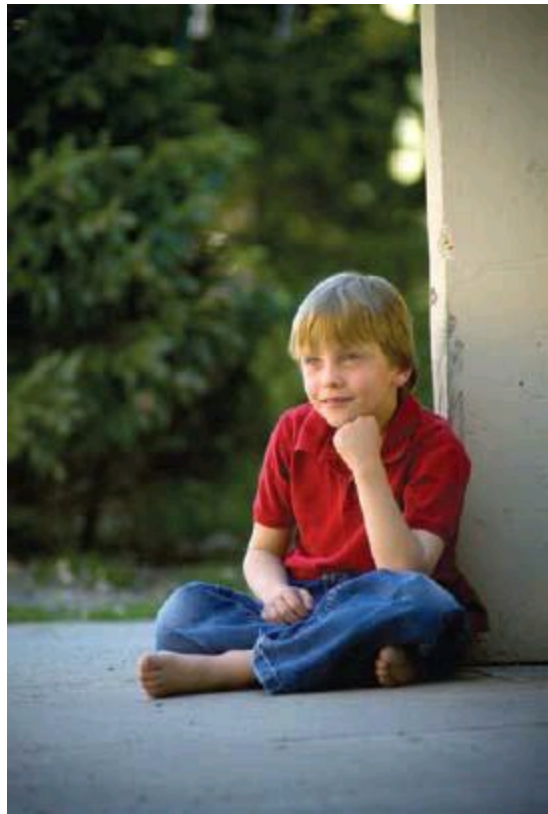


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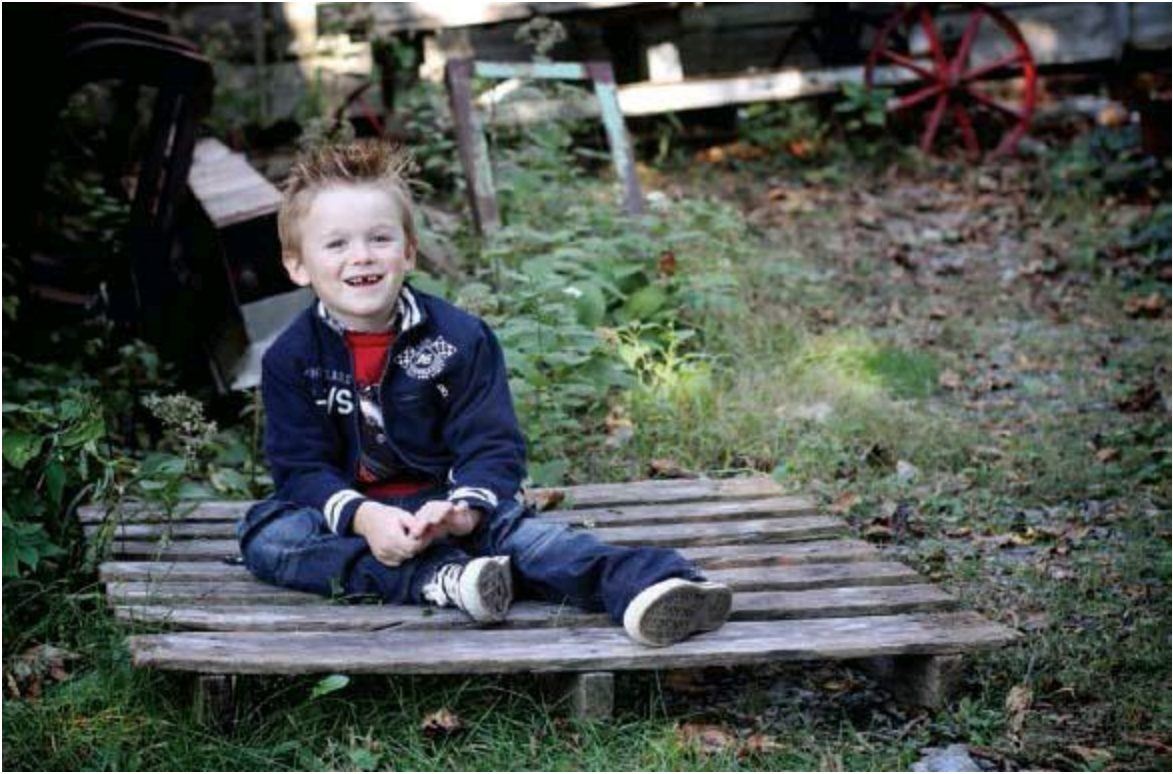


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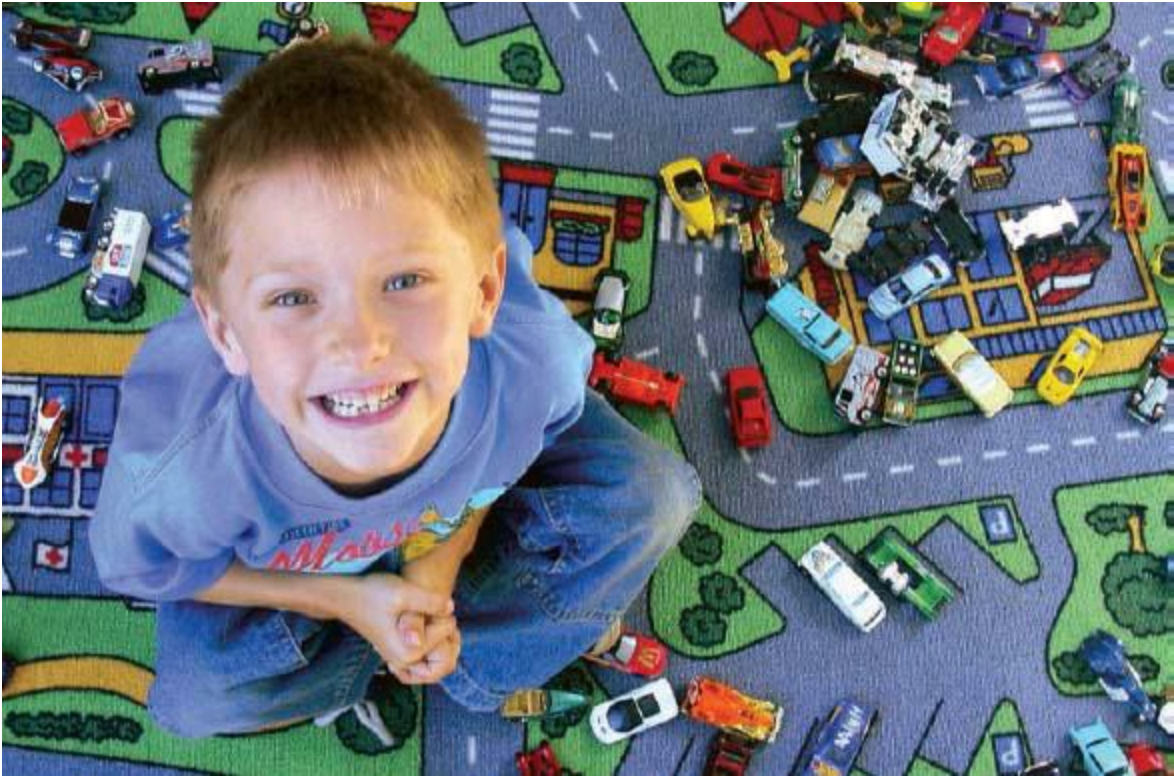


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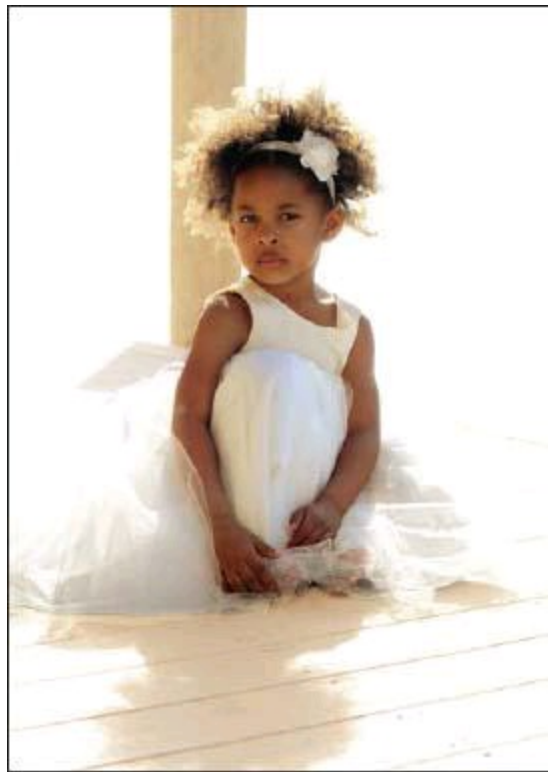


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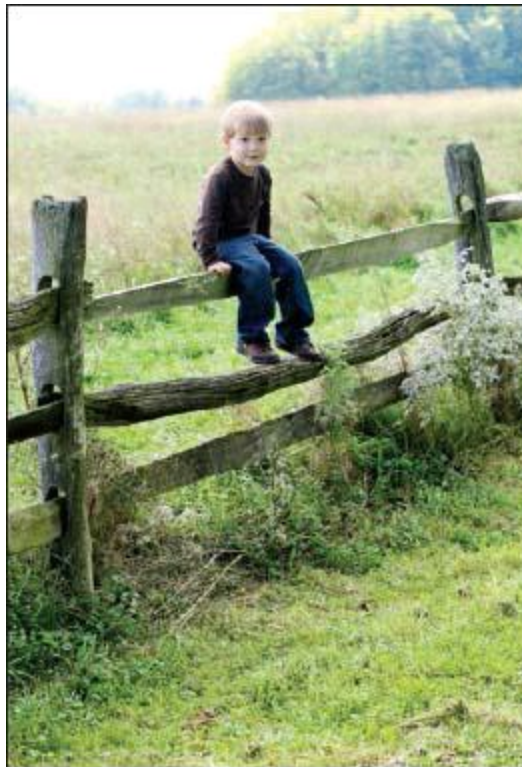


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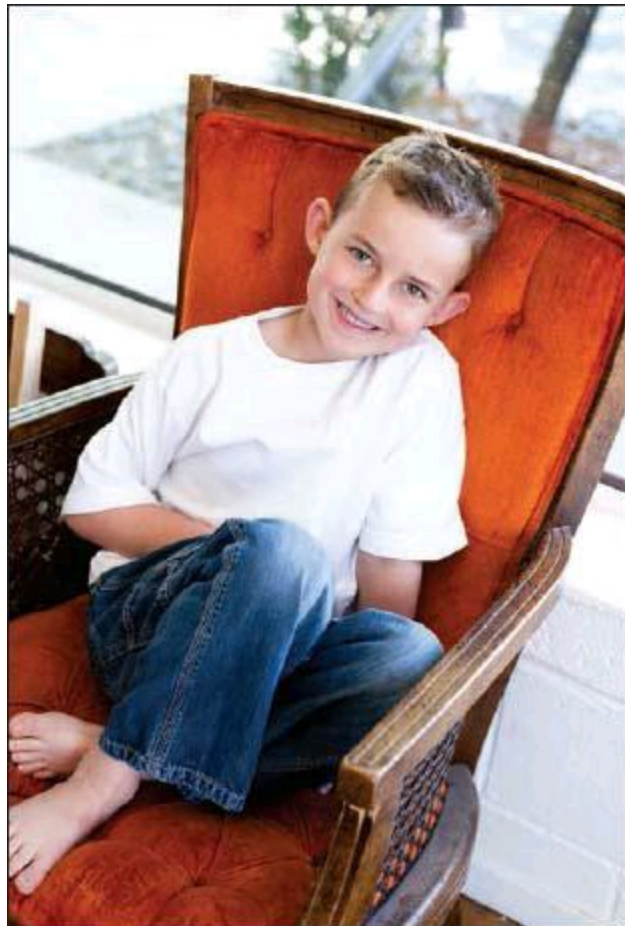


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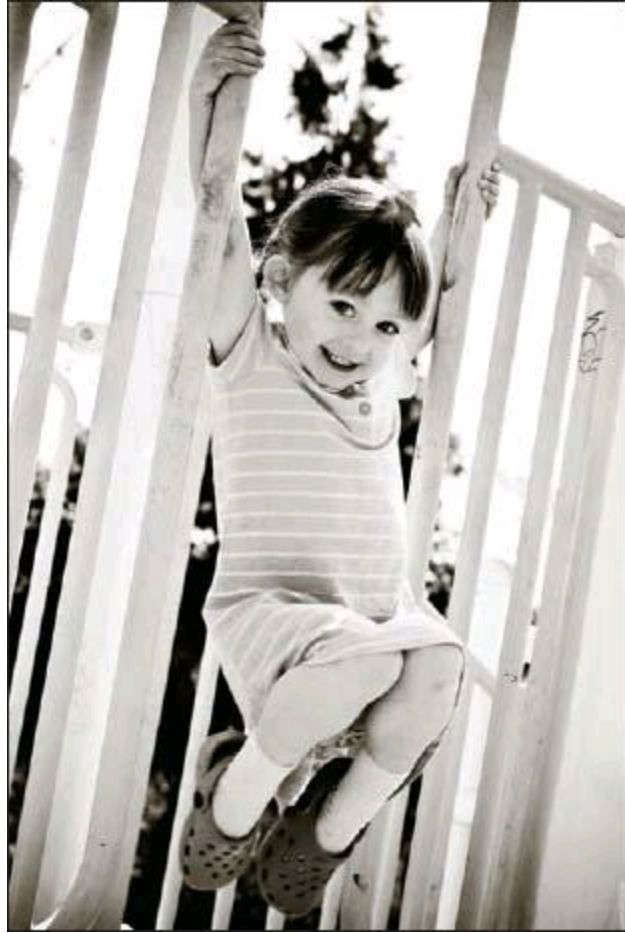


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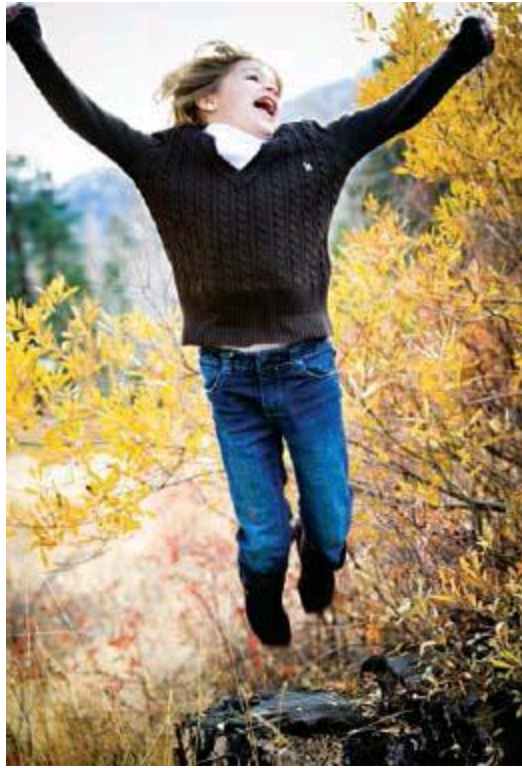


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PLATE 437. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 438. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 439. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 440. Photograph by Brett Florens



PLATE 441. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 442. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 443. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 444. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 445. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 446. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 447. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 448. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 449. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 450. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 451. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 452. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.

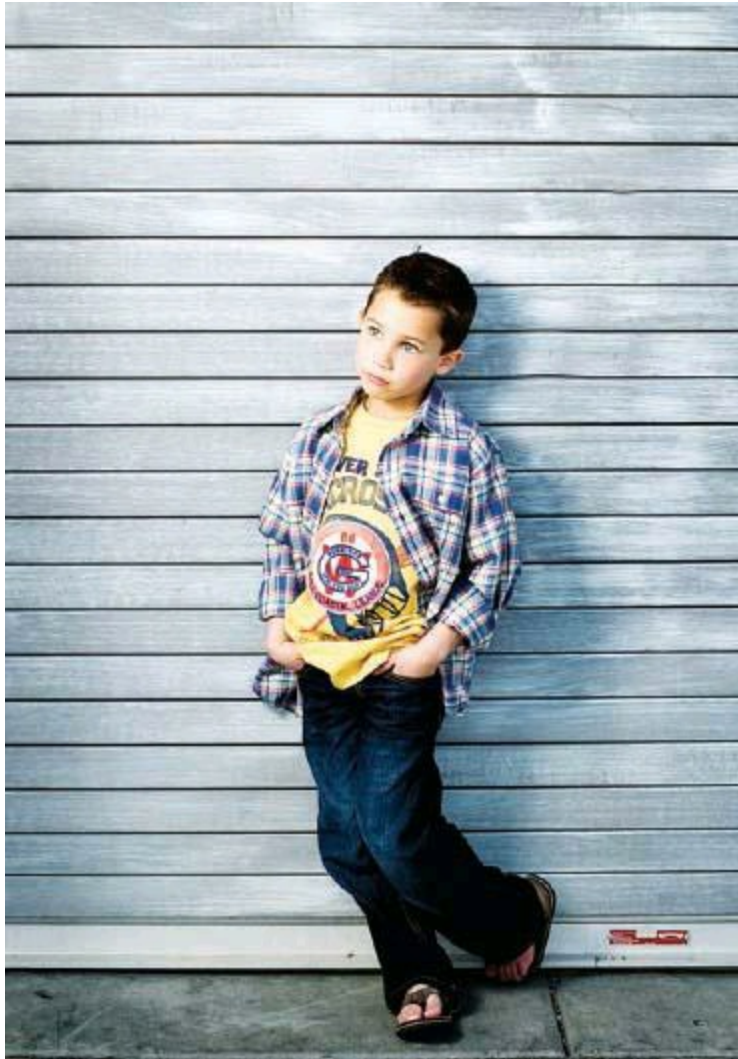


PLATE 453. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 454. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 455. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 456. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 457. Photograph by Doug Box.

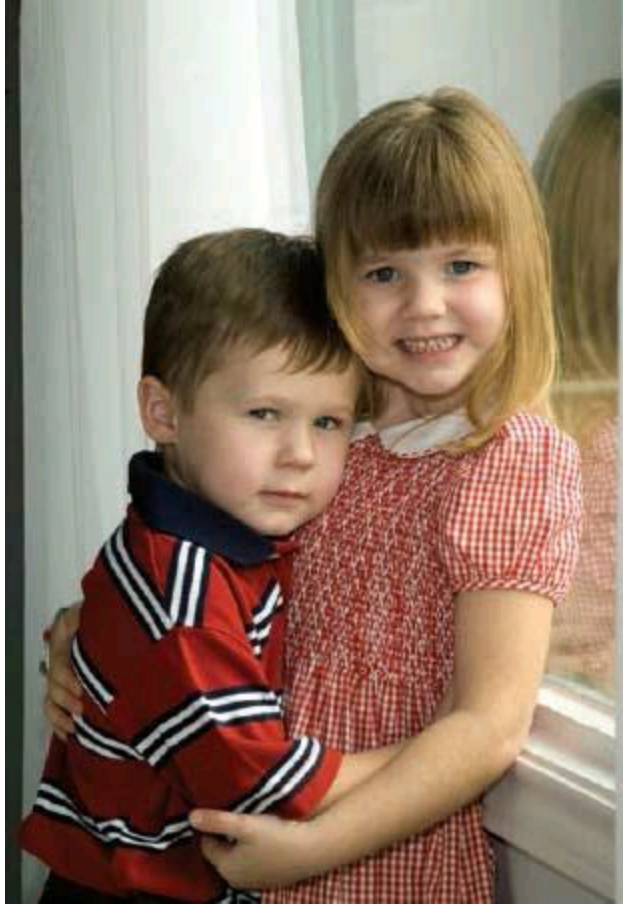


PLATE 458. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 459. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 460. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 461. Photo by Tracy Dorr.



PLATE 462. Photo by Tracy Dorr.



PLATE 463. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 464. Photograph by Mimika Cooney.



PLATE 465. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 466. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 467. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 468. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 469. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 470. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 471. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.

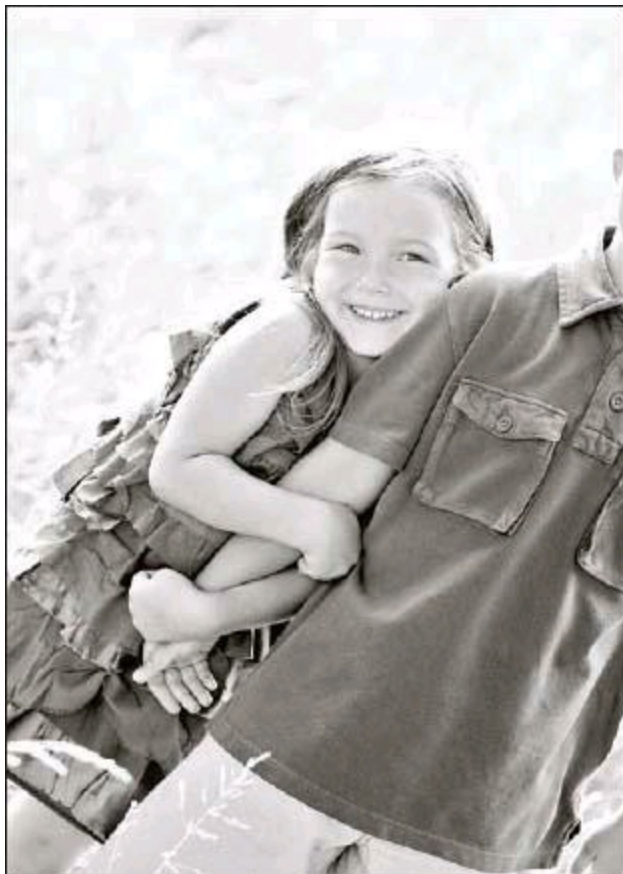


PLATE 472. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 473. Photograph by Mimika Cooney.



PLATE 474. Photograph by Krista Smith.



PLATE 475. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 476. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 477. Photograph by Krista Smith.



PLATE 478. Photograph by Mimika Cooney.



PLATE 479. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 480. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 481. Photograph by Krista Smith.

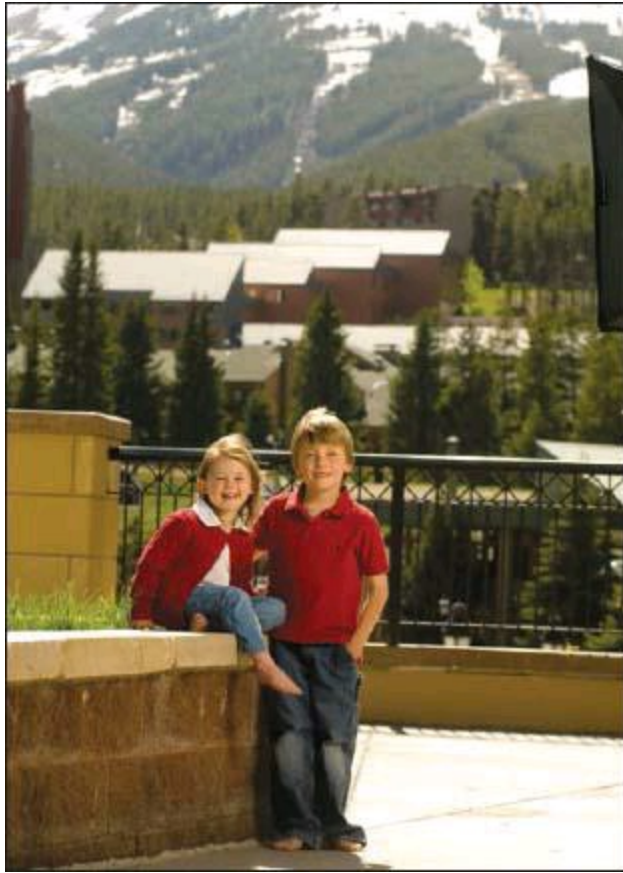


PLATE 482. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 483. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 484. Photo by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 485. Photo by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 486. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 487. Photo by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 488. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 489. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 490. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 491. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 492. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 493. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 494. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 495. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 496. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi



PLATE 497. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 498. Photograph by Krista Smith.



PLATE 499. Photo by Heather Magliarditi



PLATE 500. Photo by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 501. Photo by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 502. Photograph by Tracy Dorr.



PLATE 503. Photograph by Tracy Dorr.



PLATE 504. Photograph by Tracy Dorr.



PLATE 505. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 506. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 507. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 508. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 509. Photograph by Krista Smith.



PLATE 510. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 511. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 512. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 513. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 514. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 515. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 516. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 517. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 518. Photograph by Heather Magliarditi.



PLATE 519. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 520. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 521. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 522. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 523. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 524. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 525. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 526. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 527. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 528. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 529. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 530. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 531. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 532. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 533. Photograph by Krista Smith.



PLATE 534. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 535. Photograph by Doug Box.



PLATE 536. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 537. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 538. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 539. Photograph by Krista Smith.



PLATE 540. Photograph by Brett Florens.



PLATE 541. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 542. Photograph by Jenean Mohr.



PLATE 543. Photograph by Christie Mumm.

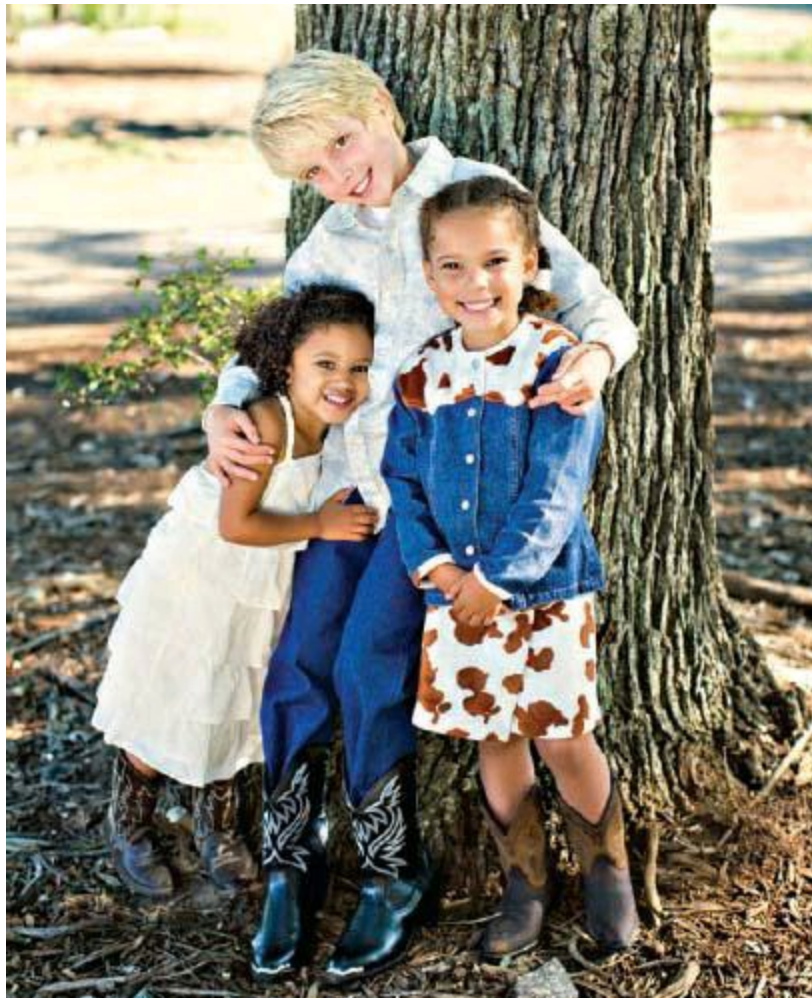


PLATE 544. Photograph by Mimika Cooney.



PLATE 545. Photograph by Christie Mumm.



PLATE 546. Photograph by Christie Mumm.

APPENDIX

Posing Fundamentals

This section covers the fundamental rules of traditional posing—techniques that are illustrated in many of the images that appear in this book. While these rules are often intentionally broken by contemporary photographers, most are cornerstones for presenting the human form in a flattering way.

TYPES

The three basic types of poses are defined by how much of the subject's body is included in the image. When including less than the full body in the frame, cropping at a joint (such as at the knee or elbow) creates an amputated look and should be avoided. Instead, crop between the joints.

Head-and-Shoulders Portraits (or Headshots). Head-and-shoulders portraits show, as the term implies, the subject's head and shoulders. If the hands are lifted to a position near the face, these may also be included.

Waist-Up Portraits. These portraits include the subject's head and shoulders along with at least some of the torso.

Three-Quarter-Length Portraits. Three-quarter-length portraits show the subject from the head down to the mid-thigh or mid-calf. In some cases, one foot may be visible.

Full-Length Portraits. Full-length portraits show the subject from the head down to the feet (or at least to the ankles). In some cases, only one foot may be visible.

FACIAL VIEWS

Full-Face View. In a full-face view, the subject's nose is pointed directly at the camera for a very symmetrical look.

Seven-Eighths View. For this type of portrait, the subject's face is turned slightly away from the camera, but both ears are still visible.

Three-Quarters or Two-Thirds View. In these portraits, the subject's face is angled enough that the far ear is hidden from the camera's view. In this pose, the far eye may appear slightly smaller because it is farther away from the camera than the other eye. The head should not be turned so far that the tip of the nose extends past the line of the cheek or that the bridge of the nose obscures the far eye.



A full-face view (left) and a three-quarter view (right). *Details of portraits by Brett Florens.*

Profile View. To create a profile, the subject's head is turned 90 degrees to the camera so that only one eye is

visible.

THE SHOULDERS

Traditionally, the subject's shoulders are best posed at an angle to the camera. This is because having the shoulders face the camera directly makes the person look wider than he or she really is and can yield a static composition. In children's portraiture, this is less of a concern—but the rule is still generally observed in more formal portraits of children.



The shoulders are traditionally turned at an angle. *Detail of a portrait by Doug Box.*



Giving the child something to hold will help pose the hands. *Detail of a portrait by Krista Smith.*

For a natural-looking pose, have the child shift their weight onto one leg. This causes one shoulder to drop slightly, introducing a sense of ease and an appealing diagonal line into the composition.

THE HEAD

Tilting the Head. Tilting the head slightly produces diagonal lines that can help a pose feel more dynamic. Unless a child is very responsive to posing instructions, however, adding a head tilt that looks natural may be challenging; children will tend to adopt an exaggerated pose if you directly ask them to tilt their head.

Chin Height. A medium chin height is desirable. If the chin is too high, the subject may look conceited and the neck may appear elongated. If the subject's chin is too low, the subject may look timid and appear to have a double chin or no neck. In young children's portraits, most people won't consider either look to be terribly objectionable; for tweens and teens, however, this guideline is important.

Eyes. In almost all portraits, the eyes are the most important part of the face. Typically, eyes look best when the eyelids border the iris. Turning the face slightly away from the camera and directing the subject's eyes back toward the camera reveals more of the white of the eye, making the eyes look larger.

ARMS

The subject's arms should be separated at least slightly from

the waist. This creates a space that slims the appearance of the upper body. It also creates a triangular base for the composition, leading the viewer's eye up to the subject's face.

The subject's arms should be articulated and not allowed to simply hang at his sides. Simply bending the elbows creates appealing diagonal lines in your composition—and placing these lines carefully can help direct the viewer to the subject's face. Having the child put his hands in his pockets or rest them on his hips produces the same effect.

HANDS

Children's hands are often easiest to pose when they have something to do—either a prop to hold or something to rest upon. Placing the hands in the pockets is a simple solution—and one that will feel comfortable to most kids. Either hook the thumbs into the pockets or place the entire hand into the pocket.

LEGS

Whether the subject is standing or seated, the legs look best when they are posed independently rather than identically. With kids, having them shift their weight onto one foot or cross one foot over the other (resting it on the floor with the toe pointed down) are good starting points. They can also cross their legs when seated in a chair, sit cross-legged on the floor, or pull both knees up for a place to rest their arms and face.

FEET

Kids' feet are cute, so barefoot portraits are a good option for less formal sessions (when the location permits). If the child is to wear shoes, avoid poses that show the bottom of the shoe.



Legs look best when differentiated. *Details of portraits by Krista Smith (left) and Heather Magliarditi (right).*

The photographers

Doug Box

www.dougbox.com

Doug has been a portrait and wedding photographer since 1974, and is only the third person in the history of PPA to earn over a thousand PPA Merits. He is also a member of the prestigious Camera Craftsmen of America group. Doug is the author of several books, including *Doug Box's Guide to Posing for Portrait Photographers* and *Doug Box's Flash Photography*, both published by Amherst Media. Doug is the owner of Texas Photographic Workshops, an internationally recognized educational facility where, along with his wife LaVelda, he hosts photographers from around the country, teaching all levels of photography. For more information on Doug, go to www.texasphotographicworkshops.com. From there, you can sign up for his free e-newsletter and browse through lots of free information. You can also e-mail Doug at dougbox@aol.com.

Mimika Cooney

www.photolyrical.com

Mimika Cooney is an international award-winning photographer who owns a home-based maternity and baby portrait studio based in Charlotte, NC. Born in South Africa, Mimika received her photographic training in England and is an accredited licentiate by the British Institute of

Professional Photographers and the Society of Wedding and Portrait Photographers. Along with her husband, Mimika has owned four businesses in three countries—South Africa, England, and the United States. With six years' experience in web-site design, public relations, and business administration in South Africa and England, Mimika studied photography part-time and now enjoys focusing her artistic talents on offering a boutique portrait service to her American clientele. Mimika is the author of *Boutique Baby Photography: The Digital Photographer's Guide to Success in Maternity and Baby Portraiture* from Amherst Media.

Tracy Dorr

www.tracydorrphotography.com

Tracy Dorr is the author of two books: *Advanced Wedding Photojournalism: Professional Techniques for Digital Photographers* and *Engagement Portraiture: Master Techniques for Digital Photographers* (both from Amherst Media). She holds a BA in English/Photography from the State University of New York at Buffalo and has been shooting professionally since 2003. Tracy won three Awards of Excellence from WPPI (Wedding and Portrait Photographers International) and is a MasterClass teacher at the WPPI convention in Las Vegas. Her work has been published in numerous local wedding publications. Tracy has also been a contributor to three additional books in the *500 Poses* series by Michelle Perkins (Amherst Media).

Brett Florens

www.brettflorens.com

Brett Florens launched his career in 1992 while fulfilling his national service obligations. Within the police riot unit, a photographic unit was formed to document political changes, crimes, and township violence during a volatile time in South Africa. Brett jumped at the chance to join. With no photographic experience prior to that, Brett thrived on the opportunity, quickly mastering the technical requirements. He soon found himself in the thick of newsworthy events, creating images that found a ready market in newspapers and other media. Since then, Brett's devotion to photography has taken him from photojournalism to a highly successful career in wedding, commercial, and fashion photography. He has received numerous accolades along the way, the most recent of which was Nikon recognizing him as one of the world's most influential photographers. Brett frequently travels from South Africa to Europe, Australia, and the United States to photograph the weddings of his discerning, high-end clients. He is the author of *Brett Florens' Guide to Photographing Weddings* from Amherst Media.

Heather Magliarditi

www.heathermagliarditiphotography.com

Heather Magliarditi, owner of Heather Magliarditi Photography, is based in Las Vegas but also offers summer sessions in New York. Her style is simple, fun, and pure—

centering on natural moments and playful expressions from the children she photographs. Working exclusively with natural light, she also makes use of a wide variety of off-beat locations, working where the light is most flattering. As a mother of two, Heather knows the importance of children's portraiture. "Children grow so fast, and we forget so easily how tiny they were—their cute little toes, the way they giggled with their two little teeth, the blankey they held, and so many more little things we want to remember forever," she says. "I am here to freeze time, so parents can remember all of those things."

Jenean Mohr

www.jeneanmohrphotography.com

Jenean Mohr, owner of Jenean Mohr Photography, began photographing professionally in 2000. She specializes in newborns, children, and families but also photographs weddings and loves engagement sessions. Her uniquely personal approach engages the customer and makes each session memorable. She shoots at unique and fun locations in her local area and rarely works indoors. Jenean enjoys photographing kids as they play, laugh, and have fun—and shooting outside allows for this. She also likes to incorporate props to engage children. Jenean lives in North Tonawanda, NY, with her husband and two children.

Christie Mumm

www.jlmcreative.com

Christie Mumm is the owner of JLM Creative Photography in Reno, NV. Christie maintains a business philosophy that is focused on her clients and their families, and she truly loves the wonderful people she is blessed to work with. In the summer of 2009, Christie realized a long-time dream when she was able to open a small boutique studio in downtown Reno. Christie firmly believes in running her business debt-free and feels that this has allowed her to continue to experience growth even during national economic downturns. She has been married to her best friend for over ten years and is the mother of one precocious and creative young daughter. Christie is the author of *Family Photography: The Digital Photographer's Guide to Building a Business on Relationships*, from Amherst Media.

Hernan Rodriguez

www.hernanphotography.com

The recipient of over twenty international photography awards in the past three years alone, Hernan Rodriguez operates a successful studio in the heart of Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. There, he juggles a steady roster of commercial, product, and celebrity photography, along with portraiture for families, children, and graduates. He has art directed and photographed advertising campaigns for Guess Clothing, Tanline CA, Comfort Zone, and Corona to name just a few. He has also been featured in *Rangefinder*, *Studio Photography*, and *Photoshop User* magazines. Hernan is the author of *75 Portraits by Hernan Rodriguez*, also from

Amherst Media.

Krista smith

www.saltykissesphotography.com

Krista Smith is a portrait photographer from Asheville, NC, who specializes in beach portraits and families. After vacationing to the Emerald Coast every chance they had, Krista and her family decided to make the move to call the beach home and have loved every minute of it! The beautiful white sands and gorgeous sunsets make northwest Florida a perfect spot for beautiful portraits, whether it is for maternity, engagements, children, or families big or small! Krista has three small children and knows exactly how to approach kids of all temperaments, from shy darlings to rambunctious balls of energy. She takes the time to get to know each family and what they want so that their portraits are never stiff, boring photos of people who look uncomfortable. Her passion for fun, unscripted portraits comes from the frustration of seeing her own family portraits lack the energy and fun she felt they needed, so she is truly dedicated to getting the perfect portrait for all her clients.



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Filled with images by some of the world's most accomplished portrait and editorial shooters, this book is a resource for all photographers seeking inspiration. Stuck on what to do with a particular subject or unsure how to use a given prop? Flip through the sample portraits, pick something you like, then adapt it as needed to suit your tastes. Looking to

freshen up your photography with some new poses? Find a sample that appeals to you and look for ways to implement it (or some element of it) with one of your subjects. It can be difficult to remain creative day after day, year after year, but sometimes all you need to break through a slump is a little spark. In this book, you'll find a plethora of images designed to provide just that.

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