



Milk & Honey | whimsy

Keepin' It Real!

50+ ideas for true smiles, laughter + connection

The Milky Way

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S RESOURCE



Milk & Honey | babies



Milk & Honey | family

hello lovely!

I hope you find this idea guide helpful and inspiring for capturing genuine smiles and moments in your family sessions!

I remember when I first got started, I was worried about being too 'bossy' in my sessions. But I quickly realized that more often than not, my clients feel really awkward in front of the camera, and they actually found it SOOOO much more comfortable when I would give them things to do or silly things to say.

So I encourage you to really embrace your role as the expert for your family sessions and help guide your families.

Of course, all families are different and all kids are different (and us photographers all have very different personalities), so you may find some ideas not a great fit for you or your clients - that's ok!

Take the ideas that resonate with you and leave the rest!



Much love
Lisa



themilkyway.ca



Check the ones you want to try!

SILLY MOVEMENTS

- Pretending you're tripping over items all the time
- Dance, the crazier the better
- Any type of jumping
- Ask the kids if they want to see your silliest face, then do one
- Having a parent/assistant pretend to bother you, like a bonk on the head, or tickling you
- Ask kids what a dinosaur says... When they roar, you scream and run away
- Pretend to do silly, illogical things like eat grass, leaves, etc and or stick them to your forehead
- Ask the kids to give you a high five and then pretend to fall over
- Ask a funny member of the family to stand behind you and do their thing
- Balance a small figure (my little pony, etc) on your head and sneeze it off
- Say 'I need to snack on some toes', while taking big steps towards them



GAMES AND FUN ACTIVITIES

- Tell the family to start a tickle fest
- Tickle kids (make sure they are warmed up to you first!)
- Tell a funny joke
- Ask one of the children to tell a funny joke
- Play games with the littles
- Play peekaboo with babies
- Tell the children to have a staring contest (wait for the moment they fall into giggles)
- Play Simon Says
- Tell the kids that there is a frog/fairy inside your camera and that if they watch closely, it'll wink at them
- Use reverse psychology and tell them not to smile
- Say "Are you laughing at me? You better not be laughing at me!"
- Show how much they love mum and dad
- Encourage a big group hug for the family
- Tell everyone to "pretend to like each other!"
- Ask parents to tell each other the first thing they thought when they met each other
- Joke with older kids about how gross it is to actually have to touch their brother/sister
- Allow the children to come take a photo themselves of their parents
- Have the kids help you think of a funny picture to do (it usually involves making the parents do something silly)
- Tell the children that if they smile, you'll let them end the session by taking a picture of you



SOUNDS AND VOICES

- Any weird noises, like trilling your tongue, kissy noises or blowing raspberries
- Making loud animal noises (monkey, duck, bird, dog, etc.)
- Sing silly songs
- Sing songs but with mixed up silly lyrics
- Sing instructional songs like ABC and get it wrong
- Ask them to give you their best fake laugh and catch the real laugh right after
- Laugh a lot yourself
- Do character voices (Batman, Scooby Doo, Sesame Street, etc)
Have an over the top praise word/phrase, like "yeah haw" or "you go girl"
- Say "bannannahhhhh" like from the Minions
- Ask them to say "monkey". When they do, say "Hey, are you calling me a monkey?"
- For young kids, make whisper sounds. It doesn't spark a smile, but brings out a serious and attentive look.



TOYS AND PROPS

- Squeaky toys (or the inside squeaky part of a dog toy - they're clear so the kids don't see them right away and when you let little kids hold and squeak them that makes more smiles! Because they're clear, they blend in easily and can be cloned out easily too.)
- Musical instruments including bells, whistles, musical metal balls, and a harmonica. Bonus if it is small enough to hide behind your back.
- Animal puppets and squeeze toys that quack, oink, etc.
- A stuffed animal “assistant” that either takes the pictures or plays hide and seek
- A Lens Buddy
- Putting a PEZ dispenser in the flash hotshoe - use kids' favorite character.
- An animal flashlight that roars, moos, etc when you activate it
- Whatever small toys you can find around the house - pull them out one by one while you play “who can spot the Lego man (or whatever) first”
- Bendy or stretchy animal toys, like a rubber spider. Kids love to pull a leg on the spider while you hold it and step backwards, and then act like it really hurts when they let go and it snaps back and hits you.



BODILY NOISES AND ALL THINGS GROSS

- “Did Mom/Dad fart?” or “Who farted?”
- Fart noises
- Fake sneeze
- “Who has the stinkiest feet?”
- “I think I have a booger...”
- Have the family say 'chicken poop' or something equally gross instead of “cheese”
- Ask if daddy wears a diaper
- Have mom or dad whisper something gross in their child's ear

OTHER

- Get to know the children before shooting - get to their level and chat with them for a few minutes and find out their favorite things so you can talk about them during the session
- From a student: “I think my 'trick' is more of a personality trait. I'm just a super chill person who shows up in nerdy t-shirts and converse and puts everyone at ease.”



Looking for even MORE ideas for your family sessions?



Check out the {online} Family Retreat!

Imagine a group of talented teachers coming into your living room to share their secrets and tips on family posing, capturing authentic moments, marketing to get more clients and so much more.

It's like that...but better! (Because you also get to see them in action!)

Plus you get to download ALL the videos, so you have them for LIFE and because **it's 100% online** - NO travel (*or pants*) required! Hurray!

Learn more here: <http://themilkyway.ca/family-retreat>

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