

TEN PHOTOS

to capture childhood

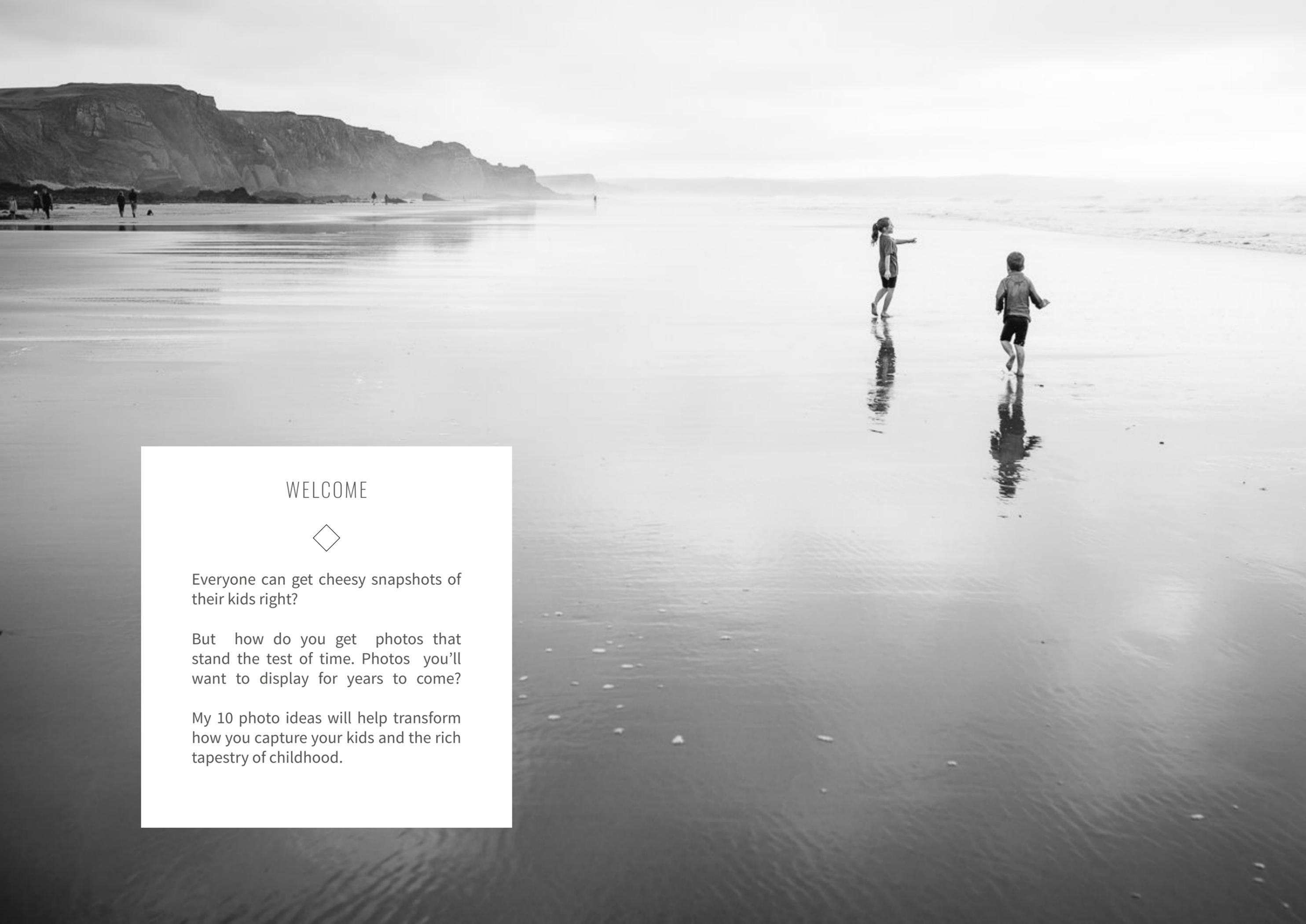
TIPS FOR GETTING
authentic smiles

BEST WAY TO USE
children's artworks

WHY YOU NEED
to photograph play



dandelion
PHOTOGRAPHY



WELCOME



Everyone can get cheesy snapshots of their kids right?

But how do you get photos that stand the test of time. Photos you'll want to display for years to come?

My 10 photo ideas will help transform how you capture your kids and the rich tapestry of childhood.

PLAY

nothing is more important



Play is important to children's brain development, and it is how they learn about the world. Naturally play can be a fascinating subject for photography.

But the bonus is children are often completely absorbed, so you can easily photograph an authentic view of them.

Get that photo of them sticking out their tongue as they concentrate, or them putting all their cars and trucks in a perfect line. These things are parts of their personality.

You can also record their current obsessions, so that long after that beloved fire engine has been gone you can still go straight back to the memory with the photograph.





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PLAY IS THE WORK
OF CHILDREN. IT'S
VERY SERIOUS STUFF.

Bob Keeshan



TANTRUMS

part of the story



Contrary to how it might appear on Instagram, not every day of family life is full of daisy-chains, beautiful hair and glorious laughter.

I don't need to tell you that there are plenty of tantrums, fights and sulking. There might also be some messy incidents, scraped knees and broken toys. Don't forget all this. Record this. You want to remember the whole story, warts and all, not just some fairytale that doesn't seem real.



*There is no music so
sweet as children's clear
and ringing laughter*



P.T. BARNUM



REAL LAUGHTER

only you know that look

When you see your child laugh naturally and heartily, there's nothing like it. It's a feeling of utter joy.

Only you really know what their authentic smile looks like. Because that grimace they do when they pose for a photo - that's not it.

What you are looking for is a nugget of gold. It's precious and quite hard to find.

To give yourself the best chance, get ready with your camera but just before you click the button start a conversation and distract them so they aren't thinking about the camera.

It takes some effort to find what is the best thing to say or do for a great reaction. And it will be different for every child. Maybe you dance like a chimpanzee or tell a funny story. But it's all worth it when you see the smile!

ARTWORKS

what to do with it

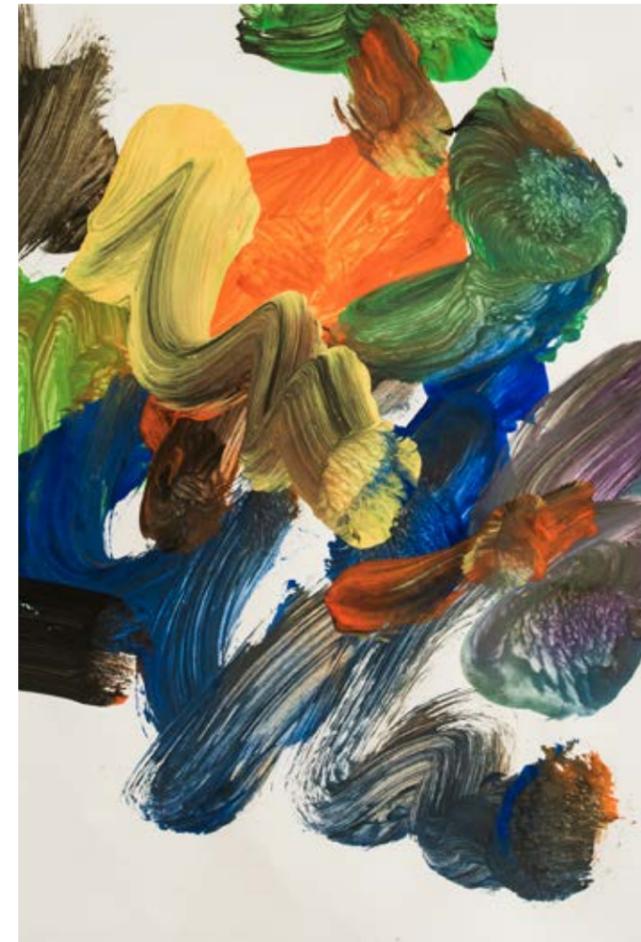


What do you do with all the artwork your kids create? Every piece is lovingly made. Some pieces are amazing. Some not so much. But can you bear to put it all in the bin? On the other hand, who has the storage space to keep every scribble?

Here's your solution. Photograph them.

Then, at the end of the year, create a family yearbook. Use these artwork photos alongside all your regular family photos, to create one big photobook - far easier to store.

It's up to you if you keep any of the actual art. I throw away most, keeping only the most meaningful. But I have digital copies of it all - so my parental guilt is gone!





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 PEOPLE WHO SAY THEY SLEPT
 LIKE A BABY HAVE PROBABLY
 NEVER HAD ONE



SLEEP

what's not to like?

What's great about sleep is.. Well I don't think you need to be told that right?

But the great thing about sleep *for photography* is that your child is still and quiet - and hopefully will be for some time.

Now you have a great chance to capture those baby faces with their gorgeous eyelashes and zonked-out expressions.

Kids also have a fantastic ability to fall asleep in very strange places. Don't miss these - I'm sure you will enjoy digging out those photos at their 18th birthday!

DETAILS

things you might miss



This might seem a little loopy at first. You might feel foolish taking photos of your child's feet, their toys or the back of their head. But shots like these are to be banked for the future.

Remember your first days as a parent. How would you feel about photos of your child's tiny feet, chubby rolls of fat, and the delicate baby curls?

Details are the parts of life that seem mundane now, but very soon become nostalgia.



Look for anything which make your heart skip - I adore sandy toes and busy hands.

Capture details showing your child's personality, such as the messy curls of my daughter, or the neatly arranged vehicles of my son.





PUDDLES

simple fun



Every child loves jumping in puddles! It also makes a great photo, and to make it easy for you they'll kindly jump in that puddle over and over again.

Action like this needs a fast shutter speed though. So if you have a mirrorless or DSLR camera switch to **sports mode** or **shutter-priority mode** for best results.

To learn more about how to use your camera and improve your photography, take a look at my [one-day photography course, Rock Your Camera.](#)



THE FACELESS PORTRAIT

the backstory

Don't make the mistake of thinking that photos should have faces in them. Embrace the faceless portrait and you will find you can capture so much more of your children's lives.

If children aren't running off, they're probably ignoring us or distracted by something peculiar.

If we wait for them to be in the perfect place for a photo we'll miss hundreds of moments. So forget that they have their back to you - take the photo anyway!

Imagine yourself as a paparazzi photographer on a secret assignment. You might be surprised how much you love the results.



08. FACELESS



*Get further
inspiration by visiting
[Project Faceless](#)
on [Instagram](#)*

BATHTIME

because they can't run away!

When you have a wild toddler you might struggle to get any photos of them at all. Bathtime may be your answer - most children love it and the bath keeps them contained within a small area!

Snap photos whilst they play or portraits from above (pictured) but watch your camera! Always keep your camera strap securely around your neck and watch out for those cheeky monkeys spraying you with water...



YOU

perfect or imperfect

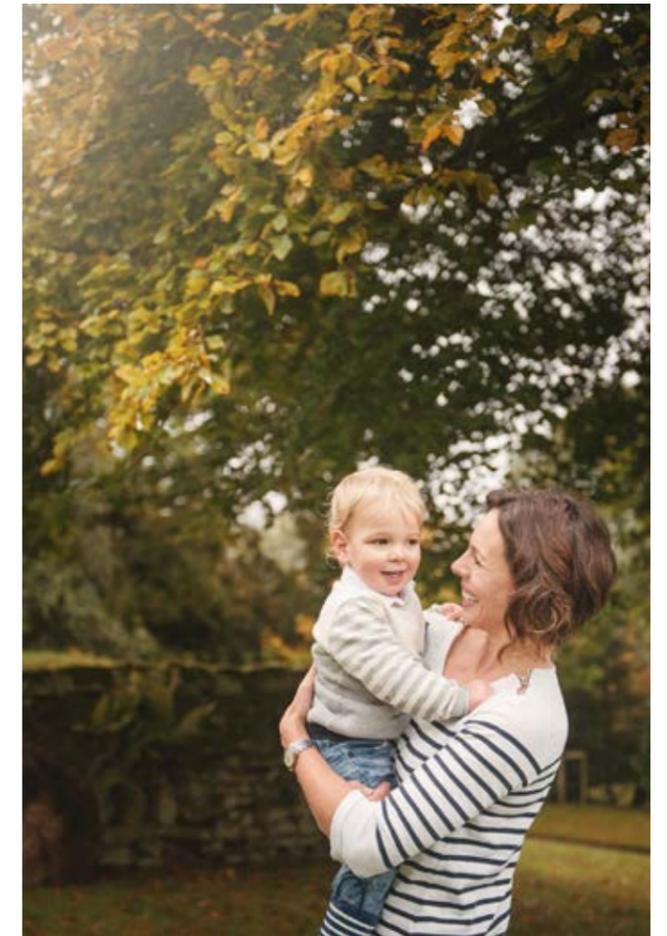
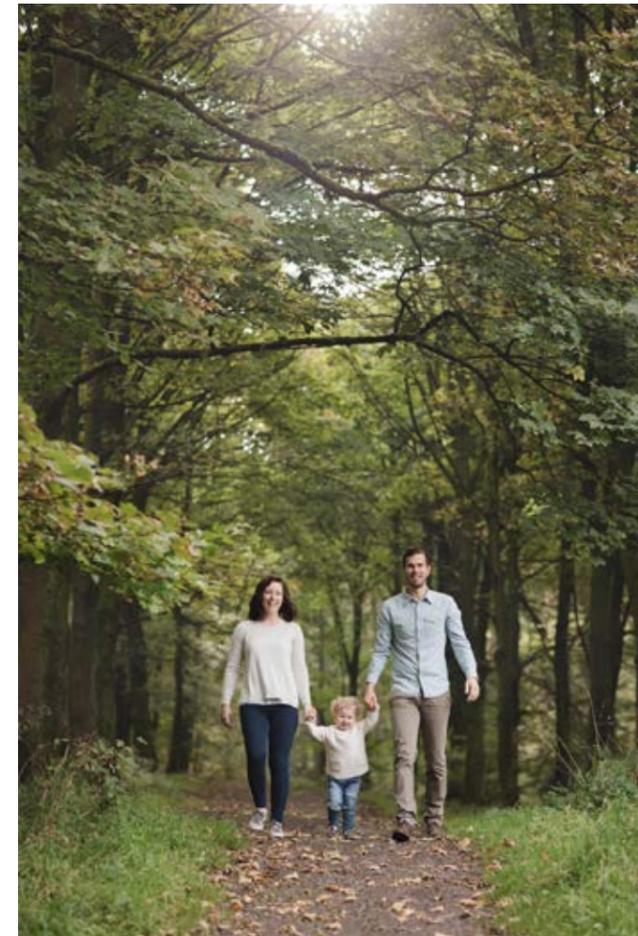


Behold - a rare photo of me! When I look at this image of me taken just after my son was born I remember the elation I felt back then. That's the power of photos. And that's why you need to be in them.

Avoiding the camera is one of my biggest regrets. Like many mums, I was self conscious of my post-baby body. That seems so unimportant now - my kids don't care about that, they just see their mum.

I'm gonna tell you the harsh truth. **You probably look better now than you will in 20 years.** So what have you got to lose?

You can try on a dress and not buy it. You can take a photo and not hang it on the wall. If you find it particularly hard to be photographed, do it but just don't look at the photos. In a few years, you can look through them and even delete them if you like - but you can't go back in time to take all the photos you missed.





EASY WAYS TO GET IN THE PHOTO

Cuddling selfies are perfect for new mums during those long hours of breastfeeding, burping and rocking. Take some looking at the camera, some more candid.

Mirrors are your friend! **Mirror selfies** can be posed with children, or the kids might just be running amok in the background. Just snap away.

If you feel very awkward in front of the camera, get a partner/friend to take some **faceless photos** of you doing your normal routine. For some people it's so much easier as soon as they don't have to pose.

Lastly, you can [book a professional photo shoot](#). Yes, I'm a photographer so I would say that, right? But there's one amazing thing with a professional shoot - you set a date. It can't be put off because you are committing to getting those photos for your children. **That's a big thing for busy parents!**



PERFECT AND IMPERFECT

Get photos to show the complete picture of you as a mum.

Posing with perfect make-up is great - but doing what you do best is important too.



join my
ROCK YOUR CAMERA
photography workshop

If you've enjoyed this guide why not sign up for my one-day beginners photography course?

Rock Your Camera is especially for parents with a DSLR or mirrorless camera who want to go beyond auto-mode and start getting fantastic photos of their children.

The course takes place at the country manor *Stanneylands Hotel* near Wilmslow, Cheshire, and includes a lovely two-course lunch - because I believe any parent of young children deserves a special treat once in awhile!



[LEARN MORE](#)

kind words about
ROCK YOUR CAMERA

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I wanted to say how much I enjoyed your course. I previously did a term's course at a local college but I can honestly say I learned ten times more at your workshop. Thank you!

CEDRIC FULLWOOD

”

Fantastic course to help you understand your camera - I had absolutely no idea mine could do half what it does! I would recommend Rock Your Camera to anyone with even the slightest interest in photography.

EMILY BURRIDGE





THANK YOU

I hope you can now start to capture those amazing moments of childhood, so both you and your children can treasure them forever.

Ellie Cotton

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