



Pediatric Photography Program

Photographer Tip Sheet

Dear Photographer,

Here are a few things to consider as you prepare to meet the child and family.

Children on hospice and palliative care may not always be feeling well, they may tire easily or have difficulty moving. You will need to be flexible and try to use your time efficiently to obtain quality photos. It is also important to be mindful that you may experience some difficult moments and emotions as you work with these children and families.

For most sessions you will be in the home setting and there can be multiple distractions. Patients and parents may be cranky from lack of sleep due to the child's condition, treatments and providing care. Siblings or other family members in attendance at your session may create disruptions. Sessions may range from photos of a bed-ridden child only, to an entire family with *active* siblings, etc. Settings may range from outside in the grass in full sun, to a small bedroom with dark wall paneling. Have a plan but be flexible.

The child may be shy about meeting a stranger and some may feel reluctant to have their photograph taken. If a child seems shy, use a soft voice, and get down to their eye level to explain about your visit. Some children may not seem engaged or show their appreciation at the time but will talk about this experience for days afterwards.

Ask general questions about the child's interests. DO NOT ask questions about the child's illness or how long they have been sick. If they do share personal information, it is important to keep that confidential. (If you have questions or concerns, after your visit please contact HPCF Associate Director to discuss.)

Always remember to maintain boundaries with the patient and their family members. Do not assume you can touch a patient, family member, or any personal possessions – always ask permission.

Be patient as you provide recommendations for the photos. You are the expert regarding photography, however, do not place pressure on the patient or family members to engage in activities that make them uncomfortable. Keep the focus on the child's experience and this opportunity for memory making.

Help provide closure to your visit by saying "I enjoyed our visit today" or "It was very nice to meet you." Avoid statements like "Get better soon." If you are in the hospital setting avoid asking "When are you going home?" These statements can be misleading or confusing to a child.

Under HIPAA standards, if you become aware of any patient information, you are not permitted to share that with others. *For more information on the HIPAA Act, please visit www.dhhs.gov/ocr/hippa*

Finally, thank you for collaborating with the foundation to provide an amazing service to these families, allowing them opportunity for memory making that will last a lifetime. For some families this is the only professional photographs they will own.