

## Make Money Photographing Kids

A skilled, enterprising digital photographer can turn their hobby into cash in many ways. Here is Article 2 in our Making Money Series: Photographing Children.

Visit a children's toy store, book store or clothing store, or the children's department in a department store. Negotiate a deal with the manager to be on hand taking photographs at specific times, possibly Friday evenings or Saturdays.

The store promotes your digital photography service when they advertise their regular specials. They benefit because you help them attract more customers. You benefit because you start taking orders. The parents and kids benefit because they get some good photographs for their albums. It's win-win-win.

You will need a few items.

First, you need a "set" to use as a background. You can build a set yourself, creating a form draped with sheets or fabric. In many cases, the store will have a suitable form on hand from other displays. Solid colors for the set work best. A black or neutral shade compliments any color clothing the child might be wearing. You don't want a "busy" background that detracts from your subjects.

You might need special lights. Be sure to test the lighting ahead of time so you don't get unpleasant surprises on the first day. If the store doesn't provide adequate lighting, you can purchase photography lights at various photo stores.

You will also need an eye catching poster promoting your service and your prices. You can create this yourself using your computer and a desktop publishing program such as MS Publisher. Since most home printers won't handle a poster of this size, take it to a service and have them print it out for you. If you don't know a local service that does this, run a Google search for "poster printing services." You will get plenty of hits.

You will also need an order book or notebook for taking orders. On one side of the order page, print your business name, contact information and the type of photography you are offering. On the other side, include lines for the customer's name, contact information and notes about the photographs. You will need two copies of these order pages - one for the customer, and one for your own records.

You also need a record book to keep track of the photographs so you don't confuse the Smith family photos with the Jones family photos.

Collect either a down payment or payment in full at the time you take the photographs. If taking a down payment, be sure it is sufficient to cover your printing expenses if the customer doesn't follow through.

When negotiating with customers, remember to discuss delivery methods. One suggestion is to leave the prints in the store where the customer can pick them up. Remind the store manager that this brings the customer back into the store where they are likely to shop once again.

When delivering the photos, include a coupon for a discount on the next order, or perhaps a coupon they can pass along to their friends. You might also offer a free photo session to any customer who refers three new customers to you.

Another delivery option is to upload the photographs to a web site and allow your customers to download and print them as they choose.

The latter saves you the cost and work of printing and delivering photographs. You will need considerable web storage space, however, since you will upload several high resolution photographs.

Try promoting these photo shoots with kid-friendly occasions, such as Christmas, Easter, Halloween or the start of the school year.

This money making digital photography tip is a sure winner. You will never run out of proud parents wanting professional images of their children.