

# CATCH THEM IN COLOR

"Anybody who knows the front of a camera from the back can make priceless color shots of the world's most lovable subjects — babies!"

by **Fulton Williams**

**T**HE other night at the New York World's Fair I stood among several hundred spectators who were watching the "Cavalcade of Color" in the Eastman Kodak Company's exhibit — when suddenly a gust of "Oh's" and "Ah's" almost blew my hat off.

What happened? Well, a flock of baby pictures in natural colors were flashed on the screen and the gasps of delight actually drowned out the commentator's voice.

Was all this due to the fact that these baby pictures were twenty-two feet high? No, all the other projections had been of the same size and quality. It was merely because they were pictures of babies in natural, life-like colors. Just to show you that the size had little to do with it, three of them are reproduced here, one on the cover of this issue.

Remember, these shots were made on 35 mm. film with amateur equipment, and although the originals are little more than an inch square, they pack a wallop because they have human interest, or "heart appeal."

All of which leads up to the point that you can make color shots of your kids that will pack that same heart-warming wallop. Color film is so perfected nowadays that you don't need an expensive camera, or any other equipment than you'd need for black-and-white snaps under the same conditions. An inexpensive miniature camera with a lens no faster than f5.6 will take care of practically any shot.

We're not interested in technicalities here — you can get all the data you need in free literature at the photographic shops. Suffice it to say that snapshotting in color has been simplified to the point where anybody who knows the front from the back of a camera can make acceptable pictures.

### Pick Your Method

**H**ow do you get such charming poses? Well, you either lay in wait for them or stage them, as you prefer. But no matter which method you choose, first get pencil and paper and make a list of possible poses such as:

Washing and Bathing: Baby in the bath; being powdered; being dried; etc. Older children: brushing teeth; drying in big towel; combing hair; washing behind ears, etc.

Eating and Drinking: Baby being fed; older children feeding themselves. You can't beat that old classic of the child in the high chair, a dish of gruel before him, parting his hair with the spoon!

Dressing, Undressing, Sleeping. Since time began, the picture of a yawning baby has never missed fire.

Playing: In the high chair; on the floor; in the play pen; with the dog or cat; with Daddy's watch; with Mama's powder puff.

To which can be added, for older children: Doing homework; practicing at the piano; drying the dishes; sprinkling the lawn; playing dolls; supervising the toy railroad; navigating boats in the bathtub.

The main thing is to know what poses you want, and then either be prepared for them when they happen or else stage the situation. If you just wait for the striking poses to occur and then rush for your camera, the big moment will have passed before you're ready.

With young babies it is simple to set up your camera and your lights just before bathing or feeding time and await developments. If you're alert you may get a dozen shots.

Or you can select a likely spot, focus on it, set up the lights and then place the baby there with something to amuse him — and let nature take its course. That is precisely what was done with the child at the bureau drawer in the accompanying illustration, and with the youngster in the chair with the hamper of yarn. Such pictures are rarely accidental. They are planned, in the sense that the snapshotter prearranged his equipment, the subject and the pose, and was ready to shoot when the right pose suddenly appeared.

That's all there is to it, yet few parents plan ahead for this type of shot. I used to make a living doing home portraits of children and I've heard parent after parent rave about a cute pose that I had to ingratiate — but which had occurred right in front of their eyes fifty times before. And if they ever did think of their camera, it was too late simply because they weren't ready beforehand.

That, in a nutshell, is the secret of good baby pictures, and it is far more important than those other factors that most amateurs worry about: technical skill and quality of equipment.

### Background Hints

**I**N THE early stages of your color work, of course, it is advisable to have all of the light come from in front of the subject. It also simplifies matters to keep the background and the surroundings as light as possible — as, for example, in the accompanying shot of the baby at the bureau. Nevertheless, the other photograph on this page and the one on the cover indicate that, if you are extremely careful about estimating the correct exposure, dark backgrounds can serve the purpose of throwing the main subject into striking contrast.

Photoelectric-cell exposure meters are, of course, ideal for color work, but you needn't despair if you don't own one. Both film and photo-bulb manufacturers publish free tables of exposure data for all light conditions, natural and artificial, and if you follow them carefully you need have no trouble. A point worth mentioning here is that for color snaps indoors at night you should use either photo-flood or photoflash bulbs: ordinary light bulbs are too yellow for accurate color rendition.

Be sure to use Type A film, which is expressly adapted for making color shots by flood or flash bulbs. If you do not use Type A, you must use a filter, and this cuts down the film's speed, compelling you to make longer exposures.

One respect in which color snapshotting differs from black and white is in the matter of backgrounds under artificial light. That is to say, with color film the subject should be quite close to the background so the lights will flood both equally. If the background must be several feet or more away, it ought to be lighted separately or else its colors will be falsified by underexposure.

However, the one all-important thing is that if you have a baby and a camera, there's no excuse in the world for not taking some color snaps of the child during this, charming period that is so rapidly slipping away, never to return.

### Human-Interest Pictures

**J**UST think what those shots will be worth twenty years hence! And then get busy with your pencil and paper, itemizing the situations and circumstances that are so full of possibilities for living, breathing, human-interest pictures.

As an old hand at camera work, I can't help but marvel at the photographic advances that make beautiful baby pictures so easy to get today. But as an old hand with babies, I can still see that these improvements haven't altered the fact that the baby pictures that make you gasp with delight are those made by snapshotters who were ready when the right moment came.

"Lights — Camera — Action!"

Take that familiar Hollywood phrase into your home and try it on your baby. And if you're all prepared to shoot when he wrinkles that cute little nose — or sparkles those big, blue eyes — or flashes those ravishing dimples, you'll have some pictures you won't part with for love or money. Especially if you catch them in color!

The End



Give the baby something to play with—and he'll give you a grand picture. In color shots, dark backgrounds need careful exposure