

SECA Photo Guidelines

The Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) publishes a quarterly professional journal, *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, and several books and brochures each year. In nearly all of our publications, we use photos to make teaching ideas come alive - how young children learn, and ways staff work in partnership with families and each other.

SECA encourages teachers, family members, and all photographers to submit their best photos - of young children and the adults who care for them - for publication consideration. Please keep these guidelines in mind when you select photographs to send to SECA for review.

Before you make a photo...

- Seek out diverse groups of young children and caring adults.
- Make sure photo releases are available for everyone (see sample) and ask whether any children should not be photographed (possibly due to custody issues).
- Look for animated children's faces that light up with joy while they interact with others or concentrate on an activity. Candid shots look more natural.
- Make sure the activity is safe, interesting, and suitable for children's ages and abilities. Please do not send photos of children using worksheets, coloring books, flashcards, being harshly disciplined, or that otherwise depict outmoded practices.
- See that the subject and background have sufficient lighting. Choose well-lit indoor areas, or use flash. Take outdoor shots when the light is good. When you use flash, make sure it doesn't hurt children's eyes or frighten them. If children are busily engaged in an activity (rather than looking at the camera) you will not get red-eye in color photos. Spend some time letting children get used to the camera so they won't pose for you.
- Look around to make sure the photo includes only what you want, such as no plants on a windowsill that look like they are growing out of children's heads or cluttered shelves in the background.
- Position your camera on the child's eye level. Crawl or sit on the floor with infants, sit on a child-sized chair for older children.
- Fill the frame - get as close as possible to the action
- Make sure the subject and important surroundings are in sharp focus, steady the camera, and...

THEN make the picture!

Camera and film tips

Camera: Good-quality 35-mm cameras are best. Instant, video, and inexpensive digital technologies do not lend themselves well to publication.

Lens: A clean 28-80 mm zoom lens is almost perfect to catch moving children in small spaces and on the playground!

Flash: Use flash in nearly every situation including outdoors, but always within the range indicated (usually about 10 feet).

Film: Select name-brand film with a speed matched to light conditions. Indoors, you may want 200 or faster film, outdoors 100 or slower is usually fine. If you use 36 exposures, you won't waste as much time changing film. With black and white, you don't have to worry about red eye or color distortions due to florescent lights.

When you select photos to send to SECA

- Choose clean, sharp prints, slides, or digital shots that have good contrast between subject and background. Prints in black and white or color are preferred. You may also submit duplicate transparencies.
- Eliminate photos that don't measure up (red eye, children's eyes closed, blurred movement, awkward angles, cluttered, action not clear, subject too small, shadows).
- Pick the best ones. Professional photographers are happy to get one or two publishable photos per roll.

Sample Photo Release

(print on program or photographer letterhead)

Name of child or adult _____

I hereby give my permission for photographs of the child named above (or myself) to be used in educational publications.

Signature _____ Date _____
(signature of adult or parent/guardian of child)

Submission requirements

1. Photo releases must be available for all recognizable children and adults. See the sample. Many programs require signed releases at enrollment and keep them on file.
2. Mark each photo with the photographer's name, address, and copyright. Use stickers, stamps, or special markers for writing on photographic paper.
3. Please do not write on the photos with pencil or pen as these can damage the image. Do not staple or paper clip the photos.
4. Securely package the photos so they cannot bend or get wet. Use rubber bands, cardboard, and/or plastic envelopes. SECA cannot be responsible for photos damaged in transit. Ship the photos in a box or sturdy container.
5. Please enclose your name, address, and telephone number so that we can contact you. SECA will hold in its files any photos that appear to have publication potential. The others will be returned to you. A self-addressed label and return postage for this purpose are appreciated.
6. Photographers agree to be paid upon publication for one-time use of any photos at SECA's rate: \$45 for inside editorial use; \$90 for cover or promotional use.

Send your best photos to

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