



KIDS

PICTURE PERFECT

Open your children's eyes to a whole new world by teaching them basic photography techniques.

Given the chance and the right equipment, school-aged children can summon the Ansel Adams or Annie Leibovitz within. Photography is not only a great way to let kids express themselves, but it also helps children learn to look at life in new ways.

According to Mark Sincevich, the executive director of the Digital Photography Institute in Bethesda, Maryland, inexpensive plastic cameras are a good way to introduce the world of photography to your little ones.

Of course, a little instruction is necessary, especially for the pre-school crowd. It's important to start with what might seem like obvious basics; make sure to explain where the viewfinder is and that what your child sees through that tiny peephole is what their creation will end up looking like.

For older children, talk about more sophisticated aspects of photography, like lighting and how it affects the subject of the photo, says Valerie Dibble, associate professor of art at Kennesaw State University in Georgia, who teaches courses in digital photography and printmaking.



Kodak (www.kodak.com).

Dibble also recommends spending time together as a family looking at the pictures and talking about them in order to develop an appreciation for composition and technique. But, she warns, it's important that parental advice be constructive when discussing a child's snapshots. "Encourage them to play and experiment," Dibble says.

Scrapbooking is a good follow-up activity after photos are developed and printed. Photos can also adorn mugs, mouse pads and T-shirts, among other things, by either going to a photo store or using an online photography site like

However you look at it, photography provides a chance to view the world in a whole new way. —Joanne Cronrath Bamberger

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