



Family Films

Kristen Johnson
— PHOTOGRAPHY —

Hi, I'm
Kristen

I'm so happy you're here.



I believe that preserving our memories is important. The relationships with our family and friends, and the moments we share together, are really what life is all about.

WHAT IS A FAMILY FILM?

A family film is the ultimate way to capture your life together as a family as it is right now.

Think about how many video clips you have on your phone that you haven't done anything with. Probably more than you can count right?

When you book a family film with me, you are making sure that your memories aren't lost forever on an old phone that you can't turn on anymore. Or deep in the cloud with the hundreds of thousands of photos, videos, and screenshots you captured over the years.

Your film becomes the thing that you treasure most.

The video that you rewatch over and over together as a family. Preserving not just your children's expressions and laughter, but your interactions and connections with them as a parent as well.

It's the most priceless gift you'll ever give your kids.

..... WHY DO I NEED A FILM?

But why hire me when you could capture your family with your own phone?

Because you deserve to be in the frame too.

It's hard to be in the frame when you're holding the camera.

And also, I'm giving you so much more than a film session. I'm giving you space to connect as a family. Permission to unplug and reset. To slow down and love on each other. And when this happens, a special kind of magic is created from the collaboration of your vulnerability and my ability to meet you in that place.

Because I'll show you the moments that you didn't even know you needed to save.





"Kristen's video of our family is something we will cherish for years to come and fondly look back on often. She has an eye for where and how to capture the perfect shots. We'll treasure these memories as our family grows and are so happy that Kristen was able to capture this time in our lives so well."

-Katy



MY APPROACH ●●●●●●●●

My approach to capturing family films is very relaxed and observational as opposed to traditional and directed.

It's not about getting the perfect shots or everything being just right. It's not about everyone looking happy all the time, or wearing matching outfits.

My work consists of real moments. Real life. Real stories. It celebrates both the joys and the struggles of parenthood.

When you do a session with me, the focus of your session will be about having fun and spending quality time with your kids. The magic happens when you forget that I'm there and you focus on playing with, loving on, and connecting with each other.

You can think of me like a friend or family member coming to hang out, who happened to bring her camera along. There will be times when I give you guidance... I might ask you to hang out in an area because it has the best light, or I might suggest we move on from an activity once I know I've captured plenty of footage from it. But the flow of the session is very relaxed, and child led at all times.

BEFORE THE SESSION

First off, if you've never had a family film or portrait session before - It's going to be waaaaay easier and more fun than you probably expect!

The first step is for me to get to know you and your family.

My job as an artist is to create work that is meaningful to you, and my best chance of doing that is if you open up to me about the things that matter the most to you.

By getting to know you better, I'll be able to create work that feels like stepping into a memory of your family's story as you are right now. A time capsule for you to treasure forever.

Once your session deposit is paid and your date is locked in, I'll send you a questionnaire which will help me get to know a bit about your family's story. The answers to your questionnaire will play a key role in developing the plans for your session. I always encourage my clients to view this as a collaborative process between your vision and mine.

In the answers to your questionnaire, I want to hear the stories that brought your family to this point in your lives, any struggles you've been through that you feel like sharing, and what your greatest joys and memories together are. The more you share with me, the better.

Everything you share is strictly confidential, and will help guide me as I edit your film or gallery. The better I know what's meaningful to you, the more meaningful your film will be to you and your family.



CHOOSING A LOCATION

When you're deciding on a location, start off by asking yourself what memories you want captured, and then ask yourself where you think you'll feel most comfortable to be fully present with your children.

Is your family happiest hanging at home and playing in the backyard? Or are you more likely to be spending time at a park, exploring and adventuring?

Do you love the thought of documenting the place where your family spends the most time? Or does the idea of filming in your house stress you out?

There's no right answer, every family is different, and I'm here to help you think through the options and make a decision you'll feel happy with.





LOCATION OPTION: AT HOME

I absolutely love shooting in a family's home. This is where so many of your children's memories are made.

Maybe it's where you brought your babies home for the first time. Maybe it's the first home you bought together. Maybe it's a home that's been in your family forever. Maybe it's a home you designed and built together.

Whatever the story may be, it's where your children are growing up right now, and it will probably be the place they'll think back to the most when they are grown up.

As you're deciding whether to do your session at home or not, keep in mind that if we do, we will most likely spend at least the second half of your session in the backyard because the house will start to get too dark inside as the sun sets.

If your backyard isn't suitable, or you don't have a backyard please let me know and we'll either change the start time for your session to an earlier time to make sure we get enough light inside the house, or we'll think of a second outdoor location nearby that we can go to for the last part of the session.

LOCATION OPTION: OUTDOORS

Maybe you're renting or you just don't want to do the shoot at home. That is totally fine! If you're wanting an outdoor shoot, there are lots of locations that we can choose from!

We can play, throw rocks, wade in the water, and look at all the wildlife. It can get busy in the summer months, so weekdays are usually best on really hot days.

For a film, plan on starting about 2 hours before sunset, and staying about 10 min after the sun goes down.

If you decide to do your session outdoors, plan on getting a bit dirty and / or wet. Bring a change of clothes in the car, wear shoes that are easy to take on and off, and bring a bucket to fill with water for making washing off at the car easier.

Make sure to also bring towels, snacks, and lots of water or other drinks.





LOCATION OPTION: AIRBNB

Sometimes it's nice to make a vacation out of your session. Our focus is on relaxing, and reconnecting, so what better way to do this than choose a beautiful home that you don't have to clean before your session?!

Booking an airbnb for your family can take a lot of the stress away from doing a shoot at home, and it can create a really beautiful, meaningful, and unique experience for your family.

When you're looking for places, choose a house that gets lots of natural light, and has lots of character. A backyard is ideal but not essential if it's in a location near water.

Locations more than 60 miles from New Braunfels will incur an additional travel fee, so keep this in mind when choosing a location.

If you'd like help choosing an airbnb, I'm more than happy to help - send me your budget and I can send you a list of options.

..... CHOOSING YOUR CLOTHES

The clothes you wear should be comfortable enough for you to move freely in, and they should make you feel good when you wear them. Maybe choose something slightly elevated from what you'd normally wear at home everyday, but don't go super dressy or constricting.

Natural fibers like linen, cotton, and wool tend to photograph the best.

Neutral, earthy, warm tones won't show dirt or stains as easily, meaning you can relax more about your children making messes during the session. And accessories can help add interest to the images.

I am more than happy to help you decide on clothing choices, so feel free to text me a couple of options that you're choosing between. And I can help you choose the right colors / tones of clothing for the rest of the family, based on an outfit you've chosen for yourself.



Film sessions will look very different for every family. Before your session, we'll come up with a list of 3-5 activities that you plan to do while I'm there. Make sure these activities are truly what you love doing together and have special meaning to you. (So, if you don't actually enjoy doing arts and crafts with your children, don't put that on your list of ideas!)

These activities could be anything... eating breakfast together, going fishing, blowing bubbles, cuddling in your bed with your children, running through the sprinkler, working in the garden, baking cookies, making s'mores, having tickle fights, going for a bike ride, painting together, bath time, etc. Sometimes the simplest of things make for the most beautiful shots.

The most important thing is choosing activities that allow for real moments of connection between your family.





WHAT TO EXPECT

For films sessions, we'll start off by spending a few minutes together just hanging out. This gives your kids a chance to get used to me and let off a little bit of energy in the process.

Once we've gotten acquainted and we've walked through the location and come up with a general plan for the session, I'll grab my camera and start shooting.

(Film sessions are focused almost entirely of capturing video. I take a few candid pictures along the way, and you'll get a gallery of 20-30 pictures. If you would like one good traditional portrait of your family while I'm there, we'll try to capture that at the very beginning. Otherwise the entire session is all about film.)

Once we start, I'll capture the funny things your child says, the laughs you share together, and everything in between. The goal of the session is to have fun and connect as a family.

The only thing I ask is that you try to avoid looking at the camera unless I ask you to (so pretend I'm not there!), and do not ask your children to look at or smile for the camera either.



WHAT TO EXPECT

This is the ultimate, relaxed session where the focus is on real life and not perfect set ups. It's the way you'll want to remember your family in years to come.

As much as possible, I want the time to unfold naturally, so I'll let you guide your children in the activities like you normally would if I wasn't there. I might give you some direction on the best place to stand/sit for lighting, or I might suggest a few things here or there. But for the most part, as much as possible, I want you to forget that I'm even there.

Don't feel like you need to rush from one activity to the next. The real magic happens when we can slow down and really sink into each moment. If we don't get to everything we planned, or if the session takes us in a completely different direction, that's ok!

..... A NOTE ABOUT FILM SESSIONS

Because I'll also be capturing audio of you and your family talking / laughing / etc... I will try my best to be pretty silent throughout the shoot. (Because you don't want my voice in your video!)

So, just know that this will be very different from most photo sessions you've done. You're not going to hear me directing you on poses, or making silly noises to get the kids to laugh, or anything like that.

My silence means I'm loving what's happening in front of the camera.

You'll also probably notice me filming things other than your family throughout the session. This is called B-ROLL and I will be gathering small clips of your home and the surroundings to sprinkle into your film to give it even more magic!



Ways to keep the session flowing...

Throughout the session, talk to your children and ask them questions to get them to talk to you. Tell them stories about the day they were born, or what they were like as a baby, or what you love about them. Ask them what their favorite thing to do is, or what they love about your family, or which color of paint is their favorite. Just keep the conversation going naturally and really connect with them.

Show them the love...

Most importantly, the thing your children are going to want to see when they grow up is just how much they were loved. So don't be shy... wrap them up in big hugs and love on them, rub their backs and play with their hair, scoop them up and fly them around like an airplane. Whatever sorts of physical affection you give them when I'm not there... do those things!

Involve your partner...

Finally, make sure that your husband knows what to expect as well. Most guys hear "photo session" and assume there will be lots of painful smiling at the camera, etc. Let them know that they can just be themselves. They can BBQ and drink lemonade during the session, they can rough house with the kids, they can jump on the trampoline... they can just relax!



When You'll Get Your Film Back

1-2 months (sometimes sooner!)

Family Films can take many hours to create. The process of going through the video clips to find the best ones, weaving them together into a story, editing the audio, and adding color correction to a film can take a lot of creative work. On top of this are hours spent searching for just the right music. For this reason, films require much more time to create than a gallery of photos. But I promise it'll be worth the wait!

Archiving Your Film

Download the film via the link I send you, along with any photos, right away. As soon as you get them, it should be the very first thing you do. Once this is done, I recommend copying them to at least THREE ADDITIONAL locations, with one of those locations being a cloud server or somewhere you'll have access to that isn't your home in case of fire or flood.

I make every effort to keep copies of all client work, but external hard drive failures do happen, so once I've delivered them to you, please be sure to store them safely!

..... HOW TO BOOK

Thanks so much again for
your interest in booking a
session with me!

I would absolutely love to work
with your family.

When you're ready to book,
please email me with the month
or date you have in mind.

You'll need to pay a \$200 deposit
to hold your date, and then the
remainder will be due the day of
your session. I do have payment
plans available too if you'd like to
split up your payment over
several months.

You can reach me at
kristen@kristenjohnsonphotos.com
or 210-317-3670.

