

# MAKING FAMILY LIFE MORE FUN

## Instant Photography: Bringing Families Closer Together

(NASPA)—With today's families being busier than ever—between parents' work schedules and kids' extracurricular activities—it's easy to see why such a premium is placed on time spent together. While parents understand the importance of interacting with their children, and how critical these interactions are to early childhood development, they often don't know how best to put this time to good use.

One effective method is through the use of instant photography. For more than 50 years, parents have used instant photography to capture and document family activities and milestones. These parents have found that instant photos can be an invaluable tool for building bonds with children, as well as offering a great playtime, craft aid and self-esteem builder. In addition to their inherent quality for making any occasion more fun, the taking of instant photos can help to transcend any age gap, while enhancing family life and promoting togetherness.

Educators have long advocated the use of instant photography as an engaging, interactive way for parents and children to spend time together and explore the world around them. And, these activities can provide a fertile environment for learning. Because a significant percentage of all learning during the first 12 years of a child's life comes from visual stimulation, parents can use activities involving instant photography to support a child's natural propensity to "learn by seeing."

For children, imagery can be a powerful tool that allows them to develop fundamental skills, such as organizing thoughts, communicating ideas and expanding insights. Through instant photography, parents can encourage children to expand their learning experience, opening their eyes and minds to new perceptions, new relationships and new solutions.

Examples of family activities that employ instant photos as a focal point can range from behavior



**Instant photography is a fun and delightful activity that not only promotes family bonding but also helps children learn.**

reinforcement, encouraging activity and self-esteem building, to family bonding. One such activity helps children feel good about themselves through their contributions to the day-to-day work of family life:

- Snap instant photos of a child pushing a vacuum cleaner, carefully peeling a cucumber or making a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich all by him/herself.
- Post the photos, impressing upon the child how proud he/she has made you.

Other activities can help children gain self-esteem and learn basic skills. Parents can use instant photos to focus on the fact that they value the process of learning and the importance of trying:

- Give toddlers instant snapshots of themselves perched on the potty to encourage their new success.
- Photograph preschoolers learning to tie their shoes, zip their coats or get dressed by themselves for the first time.
- Photograph objects around the house that begin with various letters to create a photo alphabet.

Through the use of Polaroid instant photography, parents can develop closer bonds with their children while creating a lively and engaging learning environment at home. For more information on activities and ideas, parents can visit the Polaroid Web site at [www.polaroid.com/parents](http://www.polaroid.com/parents) or call 1-800-662-8337 ext. R018.