

Helpful Tips: Working with Children in the Wedding Party

With so much excitement surrounding a wedding, it can be easy to overlook some important planning for the children in the wedding party. Some very young attendants have never even been to a wedding or formal event and much of what will take place can be daunting. Older children who may have attended a wedding will still benefit from someone taking the time to work with them and ease their concerns by answering questions. Here are a few ideas that will help with that process:

1. If you can sit with your child and watch *Wedding Kids*- Brain Food Productions- A video (available for purchase or rent through most local libraries) about the part your child will play in the wedding. The first part is aimed at explaining their job with the help of an animated mouse called Einstein. The second part is helpful tips for the bride, wedding planner and parent.
2. Review some new vocabulary words i.e. aisle – aisle runner – pews - target person groom – bride - train bearer – ring bearer- rehearsal – photographer - reception.
3. Try to break in new shoes, sandpaper soles of slick shoes to prevent slipping. Practice s-l-o-w walking. Silently counting or saying heel to toe, is helpful to slow the walk down. Slow music to practice with will also help. Know if there will be an aisle runner or different type of flooring.
4. A newly potty trained child will require additional planning and fore thought.
5. A parent's calm demeanor about the wedding will ease the child's performance anxiety.
6. A designated adult can serve as a target person to whom the child will go to and be seated with. Knowing if the child will need some "bait" to get to that person will be important. A small quiet activity might just do the trick. It is helpful if "Target" person is smiling and appears calm ☺
7. Practice with props (pillow, basket or bouquet).
8. Sometimes itchy dresses, formal tuxedos, or tight shoes restrict the child from enjoying the reception, check to see if an appropriate change of clothes and shoes can be worn after the photo session is completed. Plan to have an extra pair of tights, gloves or misc. items in the event of a snag or misplacement.
9. A healthy meal with just the right amount of liquids will keep hunger under wraps. Be aware of sugar intake.
10. RELAX....Just remember little ones are cute no matter their little faux pas. Once you've done your part and rehearsed and re-rehearsed – let them shine and do their part.