Candid photography: Techniques and tips
Candid photography: definition

A candid photograph is a photograph captured mostly in motion, without creating a posed appearance. This is achieved by avoiding prior preparation of the subject and by either surprising the subject or by not distracting the subject during the process of taking photos.

– wikipedia
Take your camera everywhere

Probably the best way to take spontaneous photographs is to always be ready to do so.
Use a Long Zoom

The further you are away from your subject the less likely they will be to know that you’re photographing them and the more natural and relaxed they’ll act. Using a telephoto lens or long zoom enables you to shoot from outside their personal space but keep the feeling of intimacy in the shot you’re taking.
Kill the Flash

Perhaps the most obvious way that you can signal to another person that you’re photographing them is to use a flash. When in lower light situations increase your ISO setting, use a faster lens, open up your aperture or if your camera has a ‘natural light mode’ turn it on.
Shoot lots
Switch your camera to continuous shooting mode and shoot in bursts of images and you’ll increase your chances of that perfect shot. And you’ll need to have a high shutter speed to capture that image as sharply as possible.
Position Yourself strategically

Thinking ahead and anticipating what is about to happen can greatly increase the chances of getting some great shots. Which way will people be facing? What will they be doing? What will the light be like?
Photograph People Doing things

Images of people doing things tend to be much more interesting than people sitting passively doing nothing. Your subject will be focused upon something which adds energy to a photo (and takes their focus off you) but it also puts them in context and adds an element of story to your image.
Photograph People with People
When you photograph more than one person in an image at a time it introduces relationship into the shot.
Shoot from the Hip

If your subject is aware that you’re there and that you have your camera out they might tense up or act a little unnaturally as they see you raising your camera to the eye. To do this most effectively you want to set your lens to a wider angle to compensate for not being able to aim well.
Mix up your Perspective

The other beauty of shooting from the hip is that it gives you a slightly different perspective to take the shot from (ie shooting from 3 feet height instead of 6). Also try to crouch down, get up high, frame your shots on an angle, zoom in close and then quickly zoom out to a wide angle, break the rules of composition, etc.
Frame Images with Foreground Elements

Purposely include something in the foreground of the shot. You might do this with by shooting over someone’s shoulder, by including a little of a tree branch or the frame of a doorway.
“Saving” candid photos

Many mediocre photos can be turned into good photos with a few post processing techniques. Black and white photos always look better and will add a bit of classiness and nostalgia.
“Saving” candid photos, continued

Another technique for saving mediocre photos is to crop in on a main subject or part of the photo. This changes the context and can tell a totally different story.