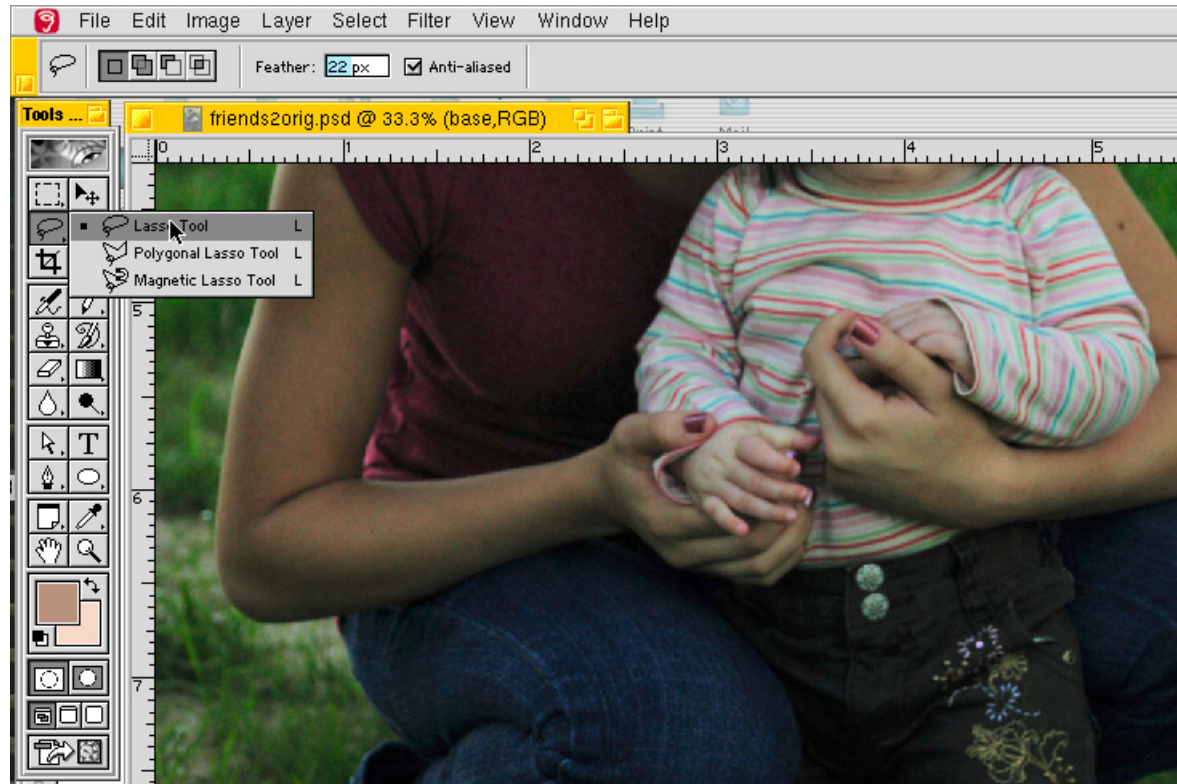


Often times, especially when shooting outdoors, it can be difficult to allow for proper exposure to all of your elements. The sun may be bright, the shadows harsh. In this example we will work on bringing out more details of the subjects. The photographer, {laturn} Laura Turner, has done a wonderful job composing the image, and getting her subjects to look very natural, and posed quite nicely.

The background with the trees is just approaching over exposure, where as the foreground subjects are a bit under exposed. This can be adjusted quite easily. We will be using the Lasso Tool for most of this lesson, so if you haven't already, brief through all of the sections of **Lesson 2**, as well as **Lesson 6A**.

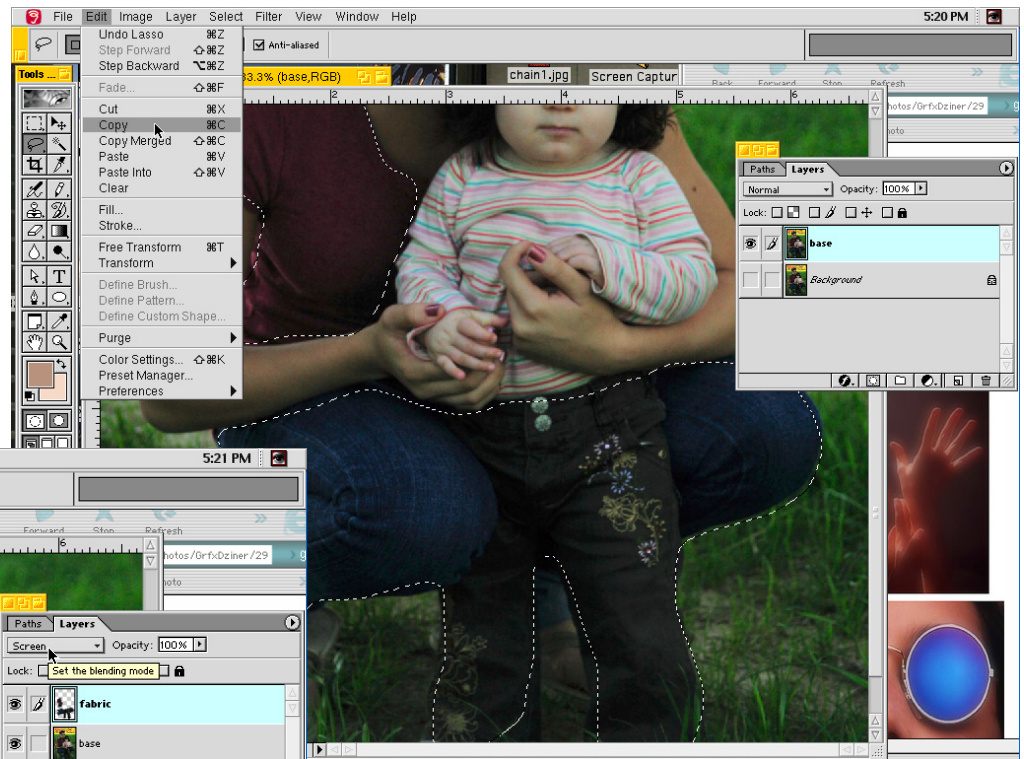
Okay, start by choosing the *Lasso Tool* and set your feather to 22 pixels (screen 1). Make fairly quick selections for the subjects clothing (screen 2), staying inside of the edges some too. Add and subtract from the selection to make any adjustments (further explained in **Lesson 2B**). For this lesson, a little over is okay, as we will be putting the selected portion on an additional layer, but getting the feel of the *Lasso Tool* is a good thing. *Paste* the selection (screen 3).



▲ Screen 1

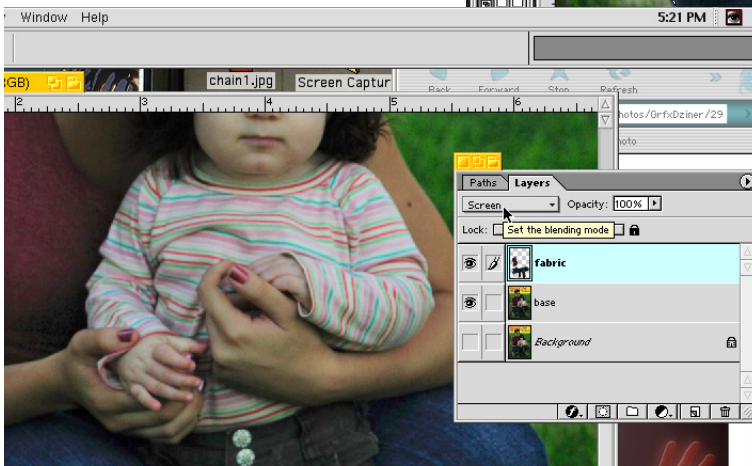
**HINT:**

Remember to just make smooth, fairly quick selections. The strong feather amount that is applied will help this too, and allow for soft edges and blends.



▲ Screen 2

◀ Screen 3





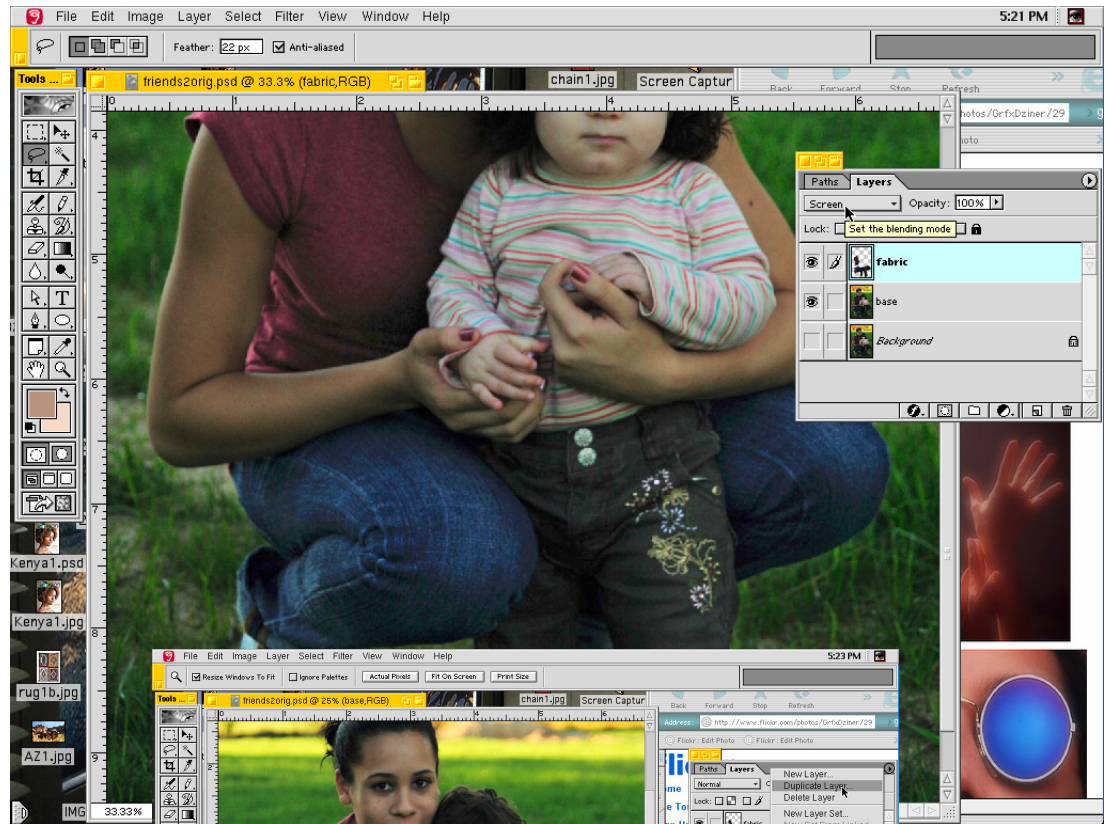
Now that we have the fabric on its own separate layer, adjust the blending mode to screen (*screen 3*). Notice how it brightens it up and helps with all the details... Perfect! Sometimes you may find you need a bit more.

On this image, I think a little bit more is needed, but overall instead of just the fabric. However, we don't want to add any brightness to the trees though.

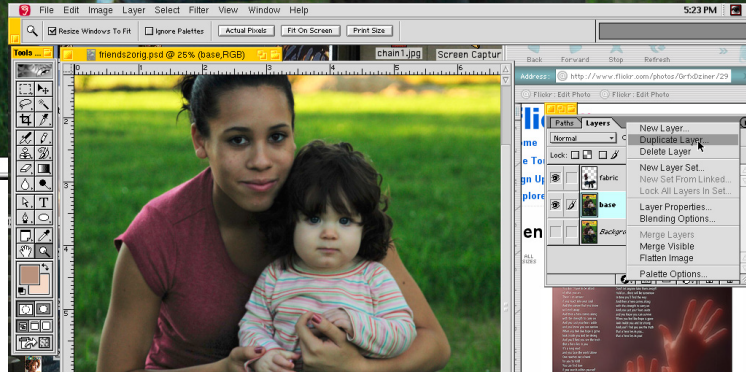
Okay, let's select the Base layer, and duplicate it (*screen 4*). Now add some brightness to this new layer. You will see as we feared, the trees have become too bright. Simply choose your *Lasso Tool* again with the feather at 22 pixels, and make a quick selection through the subjects' hair as well as through the grass are (*screen 5*).

Now, one thing you need to realize with feathering selections, is that it feathers the edge of the file. We want our selection to go all the way out to the edge. So, simply hold down the shift key and add quickly past the edge of the file...the marching ants dotted line will then be gone on the left, top, and right of our selection. Just as a comment, if your feather is really strong, you may need to do this a couple times to extend the selected portion past the edges of the frame.

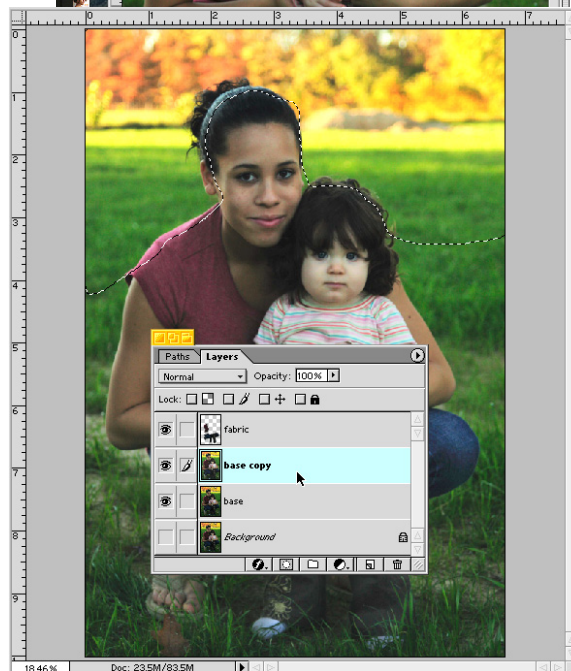
Once you have your selection all set, simply press delete, and that portion will be gone, revealing the good trees from our layer below (*screen 6*). Our soft feathering that was applied allows for no visible edges, and the two portions blend very well. Maybe we can darken the trees just a touch. What do you think? Just a little bit? Select the **Fabric** layer, and choose to add New Layer from the top right flyout arrow of the *Layers Pallet* (*screen 6*).



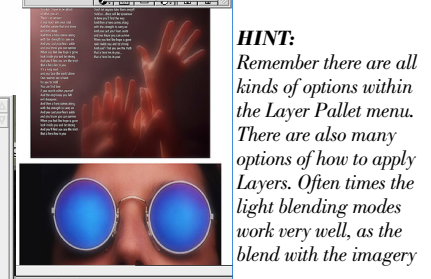
▲ Screen 3



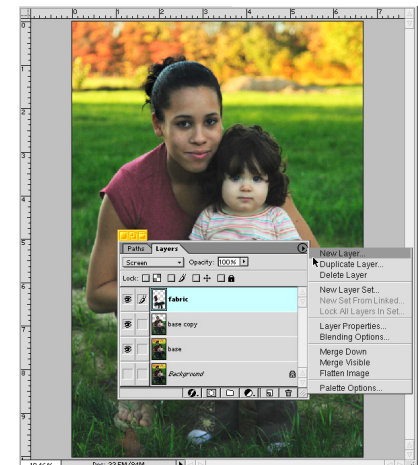
◀ Screen 4



▲ Screen 5



▼ Screen 6



**HINT:**  
Remember there are all kinds of options within the Layer Pallet menu. There are also many options of how to apply Layers. Often times the light blending modes work very well, as the blend with the imagery



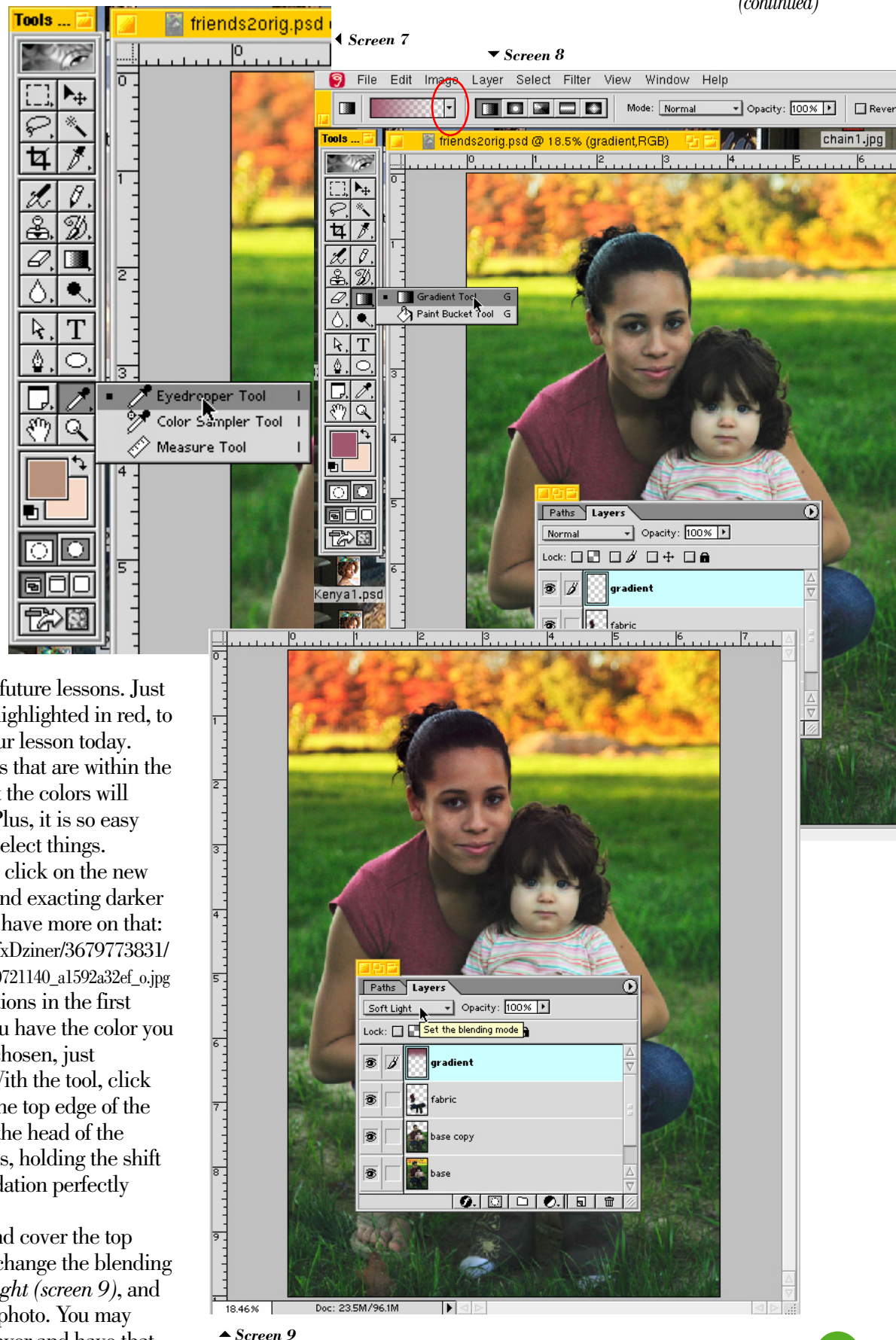
Name the new layer **Gradient**. We will be adding a small gradation over the trees, to tone the color and brightness just a bit. Rather than applying a black tone for gradation, I tend to use color from within the photo. I like the burgundy tones of the older subject.

Select your *Eyedropper Tool* (screen 7), and choose a shade you like from her shirt. It will appear as the new foreground color, as seen on screen 8. Switch now to the *Gradient Tool*, and have your style in the top left set for the color to fade to clear (screen 8). You will notice there are many options for the gradient tool, and we will explore them some more on future lessons. Just click the drop down arrow, highlighted in red, to choose the proper fade for our lesson today.

By using a colors and tones that are within the photo, it helps to ensure that the colors will compliment and not clash. Plus, it is so easy with the eyedropper tool to select things. Remember too, that you can click on the new foreground color square to find exacting darker or lighter tones. These links have more on that: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/GrfxDziner/3679773831/> [http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2557/3680721140\\_a1592a32ef\\_o.jpg](http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2557/3680721140_a1592a32ef_o.jpg)

It is the last of my descriptions in the first comment there. Now that you have the color you like, and the *Gradient Tool* chosen, just highlight the proper layer. With the tool, click and drag down...starting at the top edge of the frame, and coming down to the head of the subjects. As with all the tools, holding the shift key down will make the gradation perfectly straight and level.

It will at first be opaque, and cover the top portion of the trees. Simply change the blending mode for that layer to *Soft Light* (screen 9), and the color will mix with your photo. You may even want to duplicate the layer and have that as *Multiply* mode with adjusted opacity.



▲ Screen 9

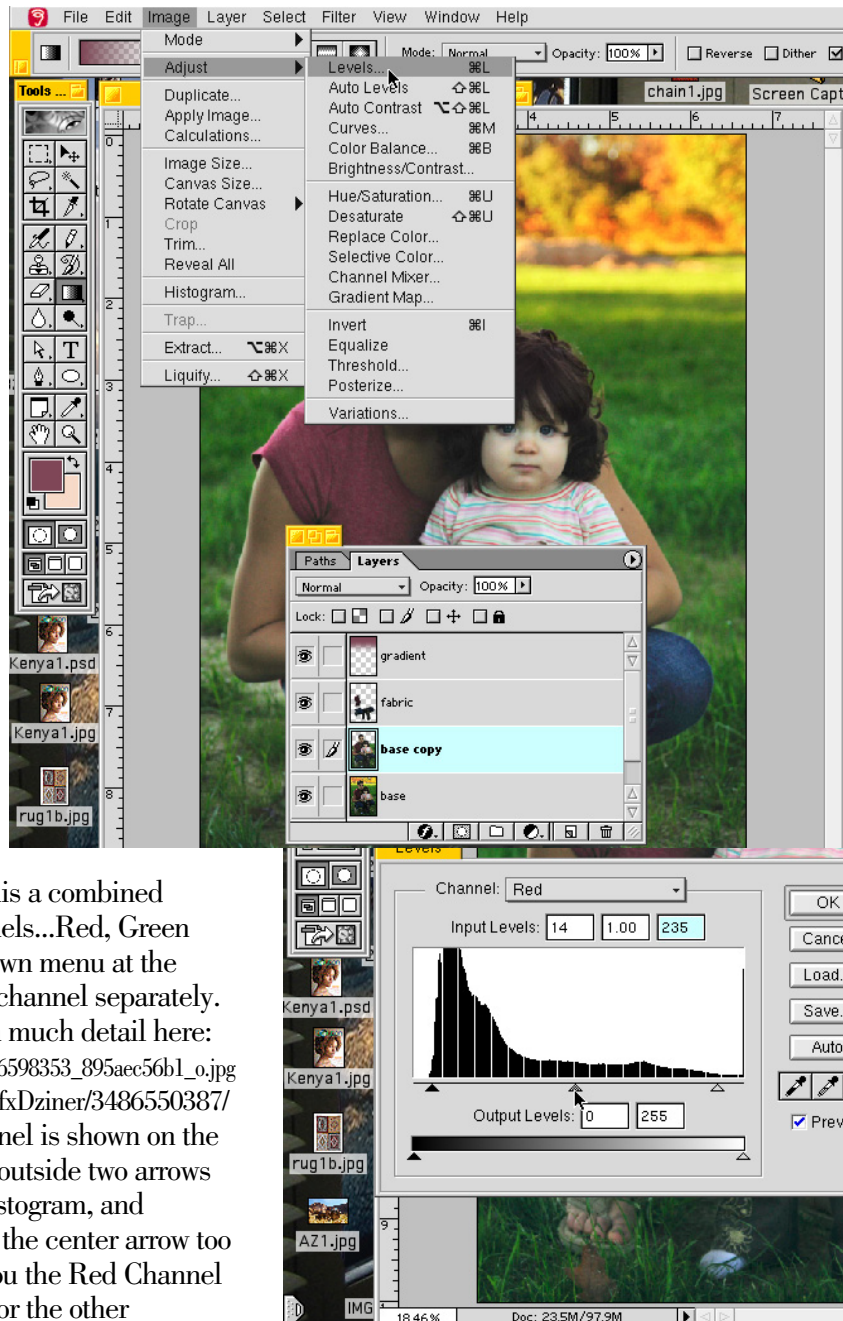
One thing I noticed when I added that gradient was that it made the older model's skin tone a little more natural. I used the airbrush erase to quickly remove the gradient where it crossed the subject matter. This will add a little more depth to an image too. And now, I think we need to adjust the color just a bit.

A very simple and quite accurate way to adjust the colors of an image is with the *Levels* control. Select and highlight the *Base Copy* layer from the layer stack. Then, from the Image drop down menu, choose *Levels* from the *Adjust* portion (screen 10).

You will get a new window showing the full histogram of your image. This is a combined histogram of all three channels...Red, Green and Blue. Click the drop down menu at the histogram, to work on each channel separately. This process is explained in much detail here:  
[http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3393/3486598353\\_895aec56b1\\_o.jpg](http://farm4.static.flickr.com/3393/3486598353_895aec56b1_o.jpg)  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/GrfxDziner/3486550387/>

When the particular channel is shown on the histogram, simply slide the outside two arrows towards the spikes in the histogram, and sometimes a little sliding of the center arrow too (screen 11). I have shown you the Red Channel histogram, but it is similar for the other channels. The spikes will be in different places for different channels, and photos, but the process is always the same. If the spikes of any channel histogram go to the edge already, that means it is already okay.

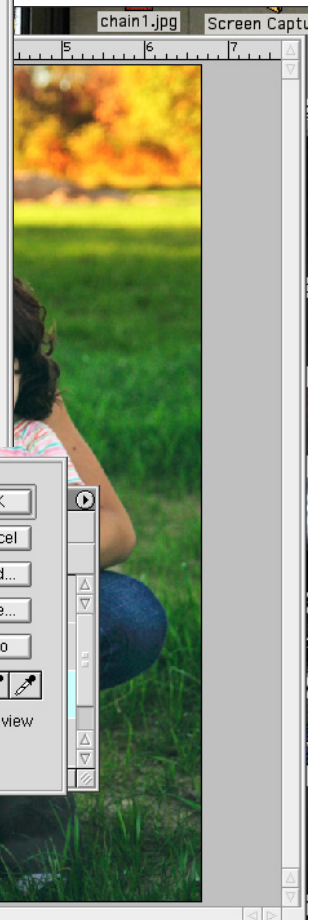
Well, I think we are all set with the image. You can see our before and after work to the right. I have to say it was a genuine pleasure seeing you incredible photography work {laturn}. You do an amazing job at capturing beautiful expressions. That is what portrait photography is all about. Thank you again, so much !!



#### Screen 10

**HINT:**  
Remember to adjust your levels individually for each channel...Red, Green and Blue. This will give you much better control of the work. Also, once you have edited the color, the histogram will appear segmented. This is why I always do it on a duplicated layer.

#### Screen 11



Before



After

