



#KeepKidsConnected

Tips for Staying Connected Virtually

Rely on regular phone calls and text messages, or video chats via [FaceTime](#) or [WhatsApp](#) to stay connected with your Little. Use [this resource](#) or [this resource](#) for great conversation starters for kids and check out [this resource](#) or [this resource](#) to get chatting with teens!

- **Relying on Text Messages to Stay Connected with your Little?** Check out [this incredible resource](#) from our friends at MENTOR.
- [Messenger Kids](#) (from Facebook) is a great way to safely connect with your Little via a social media platform, while keeping their parent looped in. [Here's more on how it works.](#)
- Snail mail - *still a thing!* Write letters to your Little (become pen pals!), send postcards, a homemade card, try a fun new hobby like [letterboxing](#) or send them a homemade craft (like these [bracelets](#), or one of [these quick/easy kids crafts](#))
- **STAY CONSISTENT!** However you choose to connect, your consistency is more important to your Little now more than ever. Find days, times, and methods that work best for both of you, create a plan, set a schedule, and stick to it! This will make it easier on you both, while giving you each something to look forward to and depend on.
- **ASK QUESTIONS!** It's no surprise that everyone's day-to-day schedule is experiencing incredible upheaval. Reaching out and chatting with your Little and their parent/guardian about when is best to reach out, what days and time are easiest, and how you can help are questions that will be enormously helpful for you (and your Little!) in staying connected.

Video Chat Options

- **Zoom** has free 40 minute video calls and can be used on a PC or smartphone
- **GoogleDuo** allows Littles whose phones aren't "on" and can only connect to wifi to video chat
- **Skype**
- **Marco Polo**
- **House Party** has a good selection of games to play with friends and family, like the Ellen DeGeneres fave Heads Up and an app-friendly version of Pictionary.
- **Google Hangouts** (recently rebranded Google Meet)
- **Whats App**

Virtual Things to Do

- Not sure where to start with your virtual engagement with your Little? Try out an icebreaker activity to get conversation going and engage your Little in some fun question/answer scenarios - [Icebreaker Video](#).
- Need to move? Register for an online dance class with your Little. Class is donation based and available on Tuesdays at 7:00pm or Saturdays at 11:00am. Email krisi.olivero@gmail.com to register.
- Check out a museum together virtually [here](#), choose a [street art tour](#) you want to do or go on a guided virtual tour of one of your favorite [U.S. National Parks](#). Or, heck, even look at [cats around the world](#).
- "Travel" on Google Maps: [Google Maps](#) is a gold mine when it comes to armchair travel and keeping entertained. Matches that virtually travel together stay together.
- Go on a virtual scavenger hunt together! See page 5 for a template.
- Watch a movie or documentary together - [Netflix Party / Teleparty](#) is a great option!
- Send your Little a care package with some simple, inexpensive items like stamps, cards and envelopes to encourage some good old fashion snail mail exchange.
- Go on a virtual escape room together! [Click here](#) for a Harry Potter themed digital escape room or [here](#) for more themes. This is also a great option if your Little is working on their reading skills!
- Take a personality test with your Little! Support your Little in learning about themselves and talk about the results! Here is a list of tests to get you started: [Meyers Briggs/16 Personalities](#), [Enneagram](#), [The VIA Character Traits Survey](#), [Which Character Personality Quiz](#), [True Colors Test](#).
- Click [here](#) for a list of gratitude activities to do with your Little.
- Schedule game time! Using app-based games like [Words with Friends](#), [Draw Something](#), [Chess](#) ([click here for the web version](#)), [Checkers](#), or [Bowling](#) can be great ways to engage and connect with your Little, while enjoying some down time. [Check out this website](#) ([and this one too!](#)) for great games you and your Little can play on laptops or desktops.
- Start a virtual book club! You can read to your Little via FaceTime, WhatsApp, Skype, or Zoom, or plan to read the same book and discuss with each other - [here's some tips on how to get the conversation going](#). Have a library card? [Libby](#) is a great resource for accessing downloadable free e-books!
- Journal together by using a platform like [Story Bird](#) or [Google Docs](#) to document the day-to-day. [This example](#) provides a great format for this.
- Exercise or do a fitness challenge together (YouTube has a bunch, including yoga!) For more sports related at-home activities, [click here](#).
- Take a virtual college-campus tour with your Little if they are exploring post-secondary options or look into career-shadowing opportunities [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).
- Is your Little looking to start a part-time job post COVID? Check out these resume building websites for high school students to get a head start on their resume [here](#) and [here](#).
- Do a makeup tutorial together!

- Follow a recipe and cook together! If Littles don't have ingredients at home, you could drop the ingredients off at their home.
- Paint or do a craft together (there are a ton of painting tutorials on YouTube!)

Online Games

- [Kahoot!](#) is a free game-based learning platform that makes it fun to learn – any subject, in any language, on any device, for all ages!
- Feeling artistic? Check out [Skribbl.io!](#)
- Multiplayer Games that can be played free using a browser:
 - [Battleship Online](#)
 - [Backgammon](#)
 - [Speed Sudoku](#)
 - [Treasure Arena](#) is This 16-bit adventure game that has you battling in a dungeon over valuable treasure.
 - [Playing Cards](#): You can create your own "room" in which you could invite your Little to play checkers, go fish, crazy 8, or make up your own. It's even more fun when you video chat simultaneously!
 - Make your Little a [puzzle](#) from a picture of the two of you!
 - [Click here](#) to check out a dedicated gaming platform for playing Trivia, Pictionary, Charades, and more! Does require a subscription but they offer a 7 day free trial!

Free app games to play on your phones

- Words with Friends 2
- Draw Something Classic
- Ruzzle
- Trivia Crack
- Family Feud
- Facebook has tons of [games](#) in which you can challenge your Little.
- [Steam](#) is free to install video game platform that offers many free to play multiplayer games. See below for free Steam Games.
 - [LoveBeat](#), a casual rhythm game
 - [Brawlhalla](#), a fighting/action game
 - [Digimon Masters Online](#) is an action/RPG/adventure game full of characters your littles probably already know
 - [Risk Global Domination](#) is just like the classic board game
 - [Pixel Worlds](#) is an adventure game
- If both you and your Little already have an Xbox, Switch, Ps4, etc, definitely take advantage of this. Keep in mind the games below and in general are pricey, but if you both already have them, go for it! **Always be mindful of age appropriateness and game ratings.**
 - [Portal 2](#) has a coop option and is a riddle/escape room type challenge game. The robot narrator can be a bit satirical, but otherwise is clean.

- Rocketleague, 2k, Fifa, and Madden are fun sports oriented video games.
- Minecraft or Roblox allow you to meet in a virtual world and create structures or play games
- Not into an online game format? Below are some board games that can be played over Zoom:
 - **Yahtzee:** "Easy to teach, minimal setup, and suitable for any number of players, this absolute classic will have players pushing their luck to roll high-scoring combinations of dice," says Sparks. Each player will need dice and a *Yahtzee* sheet to track their progress — but if they don't have supplies on hand, players can also just use an online dice roller. The host starts by rolling their dice on camera, playing their turn. The next player can then either take a turn by rolling their own dice on camera or getting the host to roll for them.
 - **Boggle:** *Boggle* is perfect for an evening wordsmithing with friends," and it's one of the simplest games to play virtually. The host, who must own a copy of *Boggle*, shakes the *Boggle* dice, shows the other players the result, and sets the timer. Each player writes their words down, as normal, until the timer runs out.
 - **Pictionary:** Each player will need a timer and either a digital drawing board like Microsoft Paint, Photoshop, Zoom's Whiteboard feature, or just a pen and paper. You'll also need a copy of *Pictionary* for the category cards; a [category generator](#) works, too. Decide on a points goal — for example, first to 10 points — to replace moving around the board, says Sparks. To begin, the first player selects a category, either by using the online category generator or by asking the host to draw a category card to show the camera. From there, the game proceeds as usual, with the player who picked the prompt drawing either on the digital drawing board or with their pen and paper.



SCAVENGER HUNT

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- 3 YELLOW OBJECTS
 - SOMETHING ROUND
 - FAVORITE/OLDEST TOY
 - FAVORITE T SHIRT
 - OBJECT WITH WHEELS
 - FAVORITE BOOK
 - A PICTURE THAT MAKES YOU SMILE
 - AN OBJECT THAT MAKES NOISE
 - AN OBJECT THAT MAKES NOISE
 - SOMETHING YOU MADE
 - SOMETHING YOU'RE PROUD OF
 - OLDEST ITEM IN YOUR ROOM
 - SOMETHING SQUARE
 - SOMETHING SQUISHY
 - SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU LAUGH
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