

## **Practical ideas for keeping in touch with friends (all ages)**

Hannah McHugh ([Hannah@catalystpsych.co.uk](mailto:Hannah@catalystpsych.co.uk)) and Ruby Noble ([ruby@catalystpsych.co.uk](mailto:ruby@catalystpsych.co.uk))

Ruby and Hannah have reviewed the variety of ways to stay in touch and ideas for virtual socials/play dates.

- Join a video chat with your friends using Google Hangouts (<https://hangouts.google.com/>), Facetime (<https://support.apple.com/en-gb/HT204380>) or Zoom (<https://zoom.us/>). Google Hangouts and Facetime are free and Zoom Basic is free and gives you an unlimited number of 40 minute group meetings.
- Play online games with your friends. Have a look at what is available on the app stores on your phones or go to gaming platforms such as Steam (<https://store.steampowered.com/>) to browse multiplayer games. Steam has some free games, and there is currently a sale on a few Remote Play games, including classics such as Uno. You can also access virtual versions of board games. Hop into a call with a friend and load up your favourite game! Kast is a good screen capture app that could be used to share your gameplay (<https://www.kast.gg/>).
- Go on a virtual trip together. Museums, zoos, aquariums and more are offering livestreams and virtual tours. Personally, I've been enjoying watching jellyfish floating around! Some links are available here (<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/20-virtual-and-educational-field-trips-that-might-help-keep-your-kids-occupied-2020-03-30>) and there are plenty more to be found online. Again, use a video chat platform to make this a group trip.
- Organise a film night with your friends using Netflix Party (<https://www.netflixparty.com/>). You can watch a programme together and join a group chat to talk Netflix Party lets you synchronize Netflix watching across device/locations and adds chat feature between a group
- Kast (<https://www.kast.gg/>) is a real-time video sharing app with screen capture, voice, text, and video chat technology that makes it easy to connect with friends wherever they are. Similar to Netflix party but you can play games etc. together and video message, text etc. at the same time. Download, invite friends, and share your experiences!

[On line Uno](#) – link up with friends on-line and play a game of Uno together

Algoriddim is a DJ app <https://www.algoriddim.com/>

Basic version is free and allows you to use your own music library to mix, scratch etc. and basically learn beginner DJing skills. Simple enough for KS2 child to do. They could take it in turns to provide the sound track via Zoom etc.

The Guardian has produce a [very helpful review of chat apps](#), ranked for the quarantine period.

### **Offline activities**

DIY Science: anyone can be an engineer

<https://new.siemens.com/uk/en/company/education/students/diy-videos.html>

quick and simple experiments that KS2 children could do simultaneously in their homes and watch how their friends are getting on at the same time/chat with each other. The experiments look fun, but the videos do feel a bit 'educational' .

<https://ideas.lego.com/howitworks>

Official (I think) Lego site where you can join in activities and competitions to build a design following a particular brief and then upload pictures of your models. I think the 'community' then judge the entries of the competition pieces. Groups of friends could do this together – i.e. all agree to a theme and then build their model before sharing via Zoom, Facetime, WhatsApp etc. They could also video call each other whilst they are building to chat and share ideas. [The 30 day Lego challenge](#) seems to be very popular.