



The Friendship Connection, Inc.
“Virtual Friendship Connection”
2020 - 2021

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Changes to The Friendship Connection, Inc. due to COVID-19

Dear interested participants and parents,

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic we had to suspend all Friendship Connection related travel, however, we want to keep those “friendships” and the “connections” between Americans and Germans strong until we are able to travel again! For that reason, we are launching our new branch of The Friendship Connection, Inc. called “**Virtual Friendship Connection**” or “**VFC**” with *two different ways to participate*: with intent to host your virtual German partner and travel to Germany the *following* year or you can simply choose the virtual exchange only.

Before COVID:

Up until 2020 The Friendship Connection, Inc. had successfully arranged 4 week “home to home” exchanges every year for 39 years! We base all student pairings on age, interests and hobbies to help create lasting friendships. The German partners visit America around mid-March through mid-April. If an American wants to return the visit to their German partner this takes place around mid-June through mid-July. We hope to resume our travel exchange program in the 2021-2022 school year!

How to get involved:

If you are interested in being connected with a German friend *this school year* who is around your age and has many similar interests and hobbies, please go to our website (www.friendshipconnection.org) and follow the link to “Forms.” There will you find the “VFC application form.” Then please follow these steps:

1. Fill out the form online with *as much detail as possible*. The more detail you add, the better match we can find you! **Forms will be accepted between now and January 15th, 2021.**
2. Then print the form, attach a picture of yourself to the form and have a parent or guardian sign the form.
3. Scan the form and email it to: Krista.FC@gmail.com or take a *clear* picture of your form and text to Krista Winzer-Lee: 330-618-6127
4. Once you receive an email confirmation and invoice from VFC that your form has been processed, please pay the **\$75 participation fee** online with a credit card or by mailing a check.

What comes next?

We will begin the pairing process in January then put you in contact with your German partner at the end of February, at which point you can begin communicating! You will have more than a year to correspond before the real exchange would take place in the spring and summer of 2022, if you opt to participate. Each month during the virtual exchange, VFC will email “check-ins” to participants to encourage frequent correspondence and suggest topics to discuss and projects to do together.