Remote family members listening to synchronous music in the public space of the living room can share experience without intrusion.

Data Analysis on a Domestic Media Space Connecting Internationally Distributed Families
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What we see as problematic:
• Migrant families — yearning for connection — want to share context but not intrude.
• Very young children and their remote relatives are further disadvantaged due to language barriers and developmental stages that make it harder to maintain significant remote interactions over months and years.

Goals
• Run FamilySong in an experiment for six months, with six distributed families.
• Shared context should not override local living activities or privacy.
• Fit in with information ecology of the larger family (Skype, FaceTime, etc.).
• Enhance child-agency and awareness of the remote family.
• Gather detailed data collection e.g. interaction routines and music sharing patterns.
• Built software to analyze the experiment’s data.

How Family Song works:
• Songs are chosen by family members and play in both homes synchronously.
• Music selection is enabled by placing or swiping RFID CardSongs over an RFID reader on a FamilySong box.
• Playing, stopping, and queue management are negotiated via phone, Skype or FaceTime.
• Shared attention (perhaps interest, perhaps presence) is signaled by pressing pictures of family members on the Faces interface.
• Adults create CardSongs using a web interface and the box.
• Very young children can help create and decorate CardSongs, choose music, signal attention by pressing on their face on the Faces interface, and notice the attention of remote family if their faces have been pressed.

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Some households create more cards than others, but it seems everyone wants to create cards and share.

Notice the possibilities created by increasing shared context:
• About the child: “Mom, baby Joe really loved that!” or “I don’t know, he didn’t seem to be listening to that one!”
• With the child: Humming and singing, talking about songs, singing the same song in the other language.

Different homes, different activities, same song space!