



## **WE Game by APCAM: Inclusive Gaming for Young People to Encourage Engagement, Social Cohesion, Combat Isolation and Support APCAMs Mental Health Engagement Objectives**

At APCAM, we believe that gaming can be a powerful tool for connection, confidence-building, and inclusivity. Our initiative is designed specifically for young people who experience a lack of social inclusivity whether that is as a result of mental health challenges, Special Educational Needs (SEN), social anxiety or because they are LGBTQ+. By creating a welcoming and structured environment that blends vintage and modern gaming, we provide a safe space for participants to engage, explore, and enjoy gaming in a way that promotes personal and social development.

### **Overview**

- ⇒ **Event Name:** WeGame from APCAM
- ⇒ **Target Audience:** Young people experiencing mental health challenges, SEN difficulties, social anxiety and who are members of the LGBTQ+ community
- ⇒ **Facilitators:** Supervised by DBS checked staff, including specialist child therapists, online gaming experts and our parent support staff
- ⇒ **Activities:** A mix of vintage and modern gaming experiences, interactive and co-operative play, and guided social activities

### **Objectives**

1. **Provide a Safe and Supervised Space** – Ensuring a controlled, positive, and well-monitored environment where young people feel secure and confident to participate in gaming and social activities. Supervision by trained professionals ensures that interactions remain positive, encouraging a healthy and respectful gaming community.
2. **Promote Inclusivity and Accessibility** – Offering tailored experiences that accommodate different needs, including sensory-friendly gaming options, adaptive technology for accessibility, and personalised support to ensure that every young person can fully engage, regardless of their challenges.
3. **Encourage Social Development** – Fostering communication, teamwork, and social confidence through interactive and co-operative play. Structured activities provide opportunities for young people to practise social interactions in a supportive setting, helping to build friendships and resilience.
4. **Support Mental Well-being** – Creating a stress-free and enjoyable environment that contributes to reducing anxiety and promoting emotional well-being. The gaming sessions offer an escape from daily pressures, while structured engagement ensures that young people feel supported and valued.
5. **Parental Support & Guidance** – Providing parents with access to trained APCAM staff who can offer advice, reassurance, and practical strategies for supporting young people with anxiety, depression, OCD, EBSA, RSD, suicidal ideation, eating disorders and SEN-related challenges. This helps to build confidence in parenting approaches and fosters a supportive community.
6. **Online Safety Support** – Recognising the importance of online safety, we offer regular sessions to educate young people and their parents about safe online practices. Topics



include recognising online risks, setting healthy boundaries for screen time and gaming, identifying cyberbullying, and promoting responsible digital engagement.

7. **Engaging Fathers in Mental Health Support** – Actively encouraging fathers to participate by providing a welcoming and low-pressure environment where they can bond with their young person. Research indicates that fathers are less likely to seek support until a crisis arises; this initiative aims to engage them earlier, offering informal interactions through gaming while connecting them with APCAM’s mental health and parent support teams.
8. **LGBTQ+ Inclusivity and Acceptance** – Ensuring that all young people, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, feel welcome and valued. Our initiative fosters an environment where young people can be themselves without fear of judgment. Through inclusive gameplay and discussions, we aim to build friendships, teach acceptance, and promote a sense of belonging among all participants.
9. **Fostering Friendships Between Diverse Groups of Young People** – Many neurodiverse, SEN and those suffering with their mental health struggle with forming friendships and understanding social norms, often feeling isolated or misunderstood. WE Game APCAM provides a space where these relationships can develop organically through shared gaming experiences, allowing neurotypical peers to gain a better understanding of the challenges these individuals face. By fostering empathy, patience, and inclusivity, we create opportunities for genuine social connections that promote acceptance and mutual respect.

### Why WeGame Matters

Many LGBTQ+ young people, those with SEN challenges, anxiety, and social difficulties struggle to find inclusive social activities that cater to their needs. Traditional gaming environments can often be overwhelming, isolating, inappropriate or socially demanding. WeGame APCAM bridges this gap by providing a tailored experience that blends no-pressure game play with social-emotional support in a non-judgemental setting.

*We invite parents, carers, and young people to join us in this unique, supportive gaming initiative. Whether for fun, connection, or confidence-building, WeGame from APCAM is here to make gaming an inclusive and empowering experience for all.*

For further details email [wegame@APCAMGroup.org.uk](mailto:wegame@APCAMGroup.org.uk) or contact Lauren Ridley, Chair of Trustees/ Parent Support Volunteer Worker [lauren.jacobs@apcamgroup.org.uk](mailto:lauren.jacobs@apcamgroup.org.uk)