SESSION PLAN

Youth Group: Ages 10 to 16

Topic: Cool Heads, Kind Words: Solving Conflict the Smart Way

Learning objective:

- Help young people understand what conflict is and why it happens
- Teach healthy ways to deal with disagreements
- Introduce simple steps for resolving conflict calmly
- Build empathy and communication skills

Materials Needed:

- "Agree/Disagree" signs or space
- Conflict scenario cards
- Poster or slide with 4 steps
- Pens and paper if written reflections are included

Icebreaker – "Agree or Disagree?" (3 minutes)

Instructions: Read out some statements and have students move to an "Agree" or "Disagree" side of the room (or use thumbs up/down). Keep it light and discussion-based.

Examples:

- "It's okay to argue with your friends sometimes"
- "Walking away is always weak"
- "Saying sorry means you lost"

Facilitator Notes: Use their answers to introduce the idea that conflict is normal, but how we handle it makes all the difference.

What Is Conflict? (3 minutes)

Ask:

- "What does conflict mean to you?"
- "Where have you seen conflict - in school, home, online?"

Key message:
"Conflict happens when people see things differently, feel hurt, or want different things. It doesn't mean someone's bad - it just means there's a problem to solve."

“React or Respond?” Activity (5 minutes)

Purpose: Help students understand the difference between reacting and responding
Instructions: Read quick role-play situations (or act them out with volunteers).
After each one, ask:

- “What would be a reaction?” (impulsive/emotional)
- “What would be a response?” (calm/thought-out)

Examples:

- Someone skips you in the lunch queue
- A friend spreads a rumour about you
- You disagree with someone on group project work

Facilitator Note:
Reinforce the idea that taking a pause before responding can keep a conflict from exploding.

The 4 Steps to Solving Conflict (5 minutes)

Introduce the steps with simple hand actions or a poster:
🧠 1. Cool Off - Take a breath, walk away, calm your body
🗣️ 2. Use “I” Statements - Say how you feel, not just blame
👂 3. Listen to Understand - Hear their side too
🤝 4. Find a Solution Together - Agree on how to move forward

Example:
“I felt left out when you didn’t include me. Can we talk about it?”
Mini Roleplay Practice:

Let pairs practise the “I” statement step:

- “I feel __ when __ happens. Can we fix this by __?”

Conflict Isn’t Winning or Losing (3 minutes)

Discussion: Ask:

- “Why do you think people get stuck in arguments?”
- “What feels better - being right or being at peace?”

End with this reminder:
“You don’t have to win every argument. Sometimes, walking away or talking it out is the stronger choice.”

Optional Follow-Up:

- Create a class or group Conflict Toolkit (posters, calming strategies)
- Offer a peer mediator role in school
- Journal prompts: “A time I solved a problem calmly was…”