SESSION PLAN

Youth Group: Ages 10 to 16

Topic: Hot Heads & Cool Choices: Managing Emotions & Anger

Learning objective:

- Help young people understand that anger is a normal emotion
- Explore what happens in the body and mind when we're angry
- Identify personal triggers and warning signs
- Learn practical techniques to cool down and respond, not react

Materials Needed:

- Mood colour cards or coloured pens
- Trigger poster or worksheet
- Breathing square visual
- Scenario cards

Icebreaker – "What Colour Is Your Mood?" (3 minutes)

Give students coloured cards (red, orange, yellow, green, blue) or let them imagine them.

Ask:

- "What colour do you feel today?"
- "What colour do you feel when you're angry?"
- "What do you think your body feels like in red zone?"

This introduces the idea that emotions have energy, and recognising them is the first step to managing them.

What Is Anger, Really? (3 minutes)

Explain:
Anger is an emotion - just like happiness or sadness. It isn't bad, but what we do when we're angry matters.

Anger often comes from:

- Feeling unheard
- Feeling disrespected
- Feeling scared, hurt, or embarrassed

Ask:

- "Can you be angry and not shout?"
- "Can you feel it and still make a smart choice?"

Let them reflect on how anger feels in their body - sweaty hands, fast heart, shaky voice, clenched jaw.

Triggers & Early Warnings (4 minutes)

Group activity:
Use a whiteboard or poster: “What pushes your buttons?”

Examples:
- People laughing at you
- Being told what to do
- Feeling left out
- Getting blamed for something you didn’t do

Then ask:
- “What are your early warning signs?”
- “What does your body do before you explode?”

Help them build self-awareness around physical/emotional cues.

Cool Down Toolkit (5 minutes)

Teach 5 calming strategies:
1. Breathe Box: In for 4, hold for 4, out for 4, hold for 4
2. Step Away: Walk, stretch, move
3. Name It: “I feel angry because…”
4. Calm Words: “I need a second,” “Can we talk later?”
5. Safe Outlets: Journal, punch pillow, draw, blast music (safely)

Activity: Let each person choose one they want to try next time they feel angry.

Respond, Don’t React (3 minutes)

Quick scenario role-play or discussion:

“You're in class. Someone calls you a name. You feel your fists clench. What are two different choices you could make?”

Option A: React - shout, throw something, fight

Option B: Respond - take a breath, ask to leave, talk to a teacher

One choice might feel better right now… the other feels better later.

Final Thought:

“You are allowed to be angry. You are not allowed to hurt others or yourself. Power is in how you handle it.

Optional Follow-Up:
- Anger journal page: “What set me off today, and how did I cool down?”
- “My Calm Plan” worksheets to keep at home or in school bags
- Invite a youth worker or coach to speak about emotional resilience