

PLAN A RESPONSE

Sometimes, we worry about social situations because of how people might react to our appearance or CMN. These worries can get in the way of us relaxing, making new friends and enjoying ourselves. If you find yourself worrying about other peoples' reactions, you can **Plan a Response**. Planning what you could say if someone makes a comment, asks a question or stares at you means you may be better prepared if this does happen and might help you to feel more at ease in social situations.

DIFFERENT WAYS TO RESPOND

1 SHUT IT DOWN

If you aren't comfortable talking about your CMN, you can just say you don't want to talk about it. This might be more appropriate for a stranger, but you may want to say more if you're speaking to a friend,


2 SAY A LITTLE BIT MORE

If you feel comfortable, it can reassure people if you give a little bit more information. Try saying something like 'it's just a birthmark I was born with. It's called CMN'.

3 BRING IT UP YOURSELF

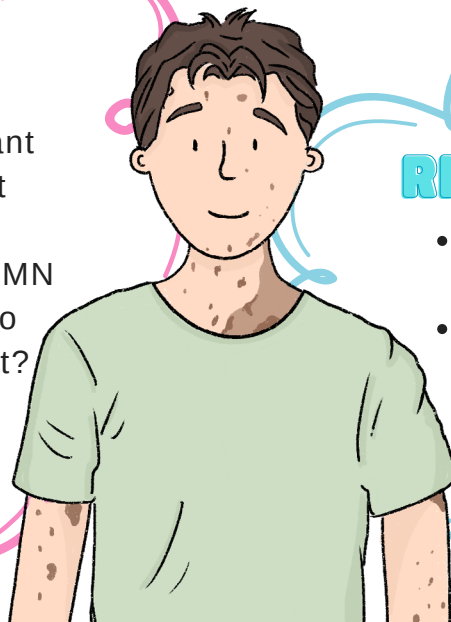
Some people might find it easier to bring it up themselves, rather than waiting for someone to ask. This puts you in control.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

 See 'starting something new' page for more info

YOUR CMN

- How much do you want people to know about your CMN?
- How visible is your CMN - how likely are you to get questions about it?



RIGHT NOW

- Who else is around you?
- How do you feel right now?

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To use the planner, print and write on the sheet or use your device to type in the boxes. If you are struggling, it can help to talk it through with an adult. This could be a parent, or you can contact our [Support Pathway Coordinator](#).

1 A QUICK AND EASY RESPONSE

This is the one you would use most often. Use this when someone asks a casual or friendly question about your CMN. Think about the **different ways to respond**.

2 A CONFIDENT AND FIRM RESPONSE

You can use this one if someone seems more forward or rude with their comment or question. It's also a good idea to come up with a way of moving the conversation forward.

3 REASSURE YOURSELF



Write down 4 sentences you can say in your head to reassure yourself.



Remember: It can be hard to deal with others' reactions, but remember, most people are not trying to be rude and probably haven't seen CMN before.

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Here are some examples of some responses. Remember, just say what **you** are comfortable with.

1 A QUICK AND EASY RESPONSE

It's just a birthmark, I was born with it.

2 A CONFIDENT AND FIRM RESPONSE

You don't need to comment on it. I'm going to class now.

3 REASSURE YOURSELF

They don't mean to be rude.

It's fine. They just haven't seen CMN before.

1 A QUICK AND EASY RESPONSE

This is a scar from a surgery I had when I was younger to remove a birthmark.

2 A CONFIDENT AND FIRM RESPONSE

I don't want to talk about it anymore. Have you finished the homework?

3 REASSURE YOURSELF

My friends and family don't care what I look like.

It's fine. They just haven't seen CMN before.



It can be helpful to repeat the exercise thinking about how you might respond in different scenarios. For example, you might respond differently to a stranger in a shop than you would someone at school.