

CPS Express !



December 1, 2010

We don't want you to miss out on the latest edition of the *CPS Express!*
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In this Edition

Announcements and Notices

- Vince and Larry Go To Washington
- CPS New Year's Resolutions
- Discount Orbit Seats for Trainings
- Updated CEU From the CPS Board

Program Reminders

- Re-certification
- Customer Service Survey
- Auditor Alcove: *Juggling Course Requirements*
Building Your Course Training Kit - UPDATE

[General](#)

- By the Numbers Update
- Overtightening Seat Belts: 2 questions answered
- Featured FAQ
 - Who do I contact for help?
- Fact or Fiction
 - Fact or Fiction:
- Notes from the CPS Board: *Food for Thought*

[Just for Instructors](#)

- Instructor Tip: Using a Checkup From During Class
- When an Instructor Makes a Mistake

[CEU Corner](#)

- National CEU Event Calendar

[Contact Us](#)

Announcements and Notices [Back to the top](#)

Not sure of the steps needed to re-certify?

Check out the [re-certification flow chart](#), the [personal re-certification log](#), and the **Policies and Procedures Manual** (ver 8/17) under [Resources](#).

- Tech Gear and Course Products Now Available- [CHECK THEM OUT](#)
- What should you, as a caregiver, expect from a Child Passenger Safety Technician (CPST)? [CLICK HERE](#)

Vince and Larry Go To Washington

On November 1, the National Museum of American History opened a small [display about auto safety history](#).

“Inventing Automobile Safety” features the Vince and Larry heads and a prop hand, driver education instruction books from the 1930s, a custom dashboard pad of the 1940s, a collapsible steering column from 1967, an add-on lap belt from the 1960s, car models showing relocated fuel tanks of the 1980s, and a 1987 breathalyzer that disabled a car until the driver passed a blood alcohol test.

The display will be at the Smithsonian for about three months.

CPS New Year's Resolutions

1. Read and share information from the [CPS Express](#) & [Tech Update](#)
2. Get in touch with [instructors and techs in my area](#), what is everyone doing & how can we help one another.
3. Check and update [my personal profile online](#).

4. Explore one new CPS Resource within the next few months.
5. Challenge myself as an instructor to teach a chapter that I haven't taught before.
6. Challenge myself as a technician to present a basic CPS awareness program to a local agency.
7. Host a check up event in an area of need.
8. Go online to a [CR manufacturer web site](#) and learn about a new seat.
9. Go to a local specialty store or retail store and learn about a new seat.
10. Volunteer at a check up event with a coalition you have never worked with before.

Join us on Facebook to share your CPS New Year's Resolutions!

Discount Orbit Seats for Training

Orbit Baby announces a discount Training Seat Program for CPS technicians. You must be able to provide a copy of your wallet card as proof of CPST status. Both the Orbit Baby Infant Car Seat G2 and the Orbit Baby Toddler Car Seat (convertible) are available for purchase at a substantial discount to CPS techs who will be using the seat(s) for educational purposes such as providing national Certification or Certification Renewal Courses.

The application, as well as installation videos and technician-centered information, may be found at <http://www.orbitbaby.com/cps>. If you have any questions about the program or products, get in touch with Orbit Baby's own team of CPS techs on staff by emailing cps@orbitbaby.com.

Submitted by Colter Leys, Orbit Baby (Newark, CA)

Updated CEU from the CPS Board

The "Fact or Fiction" CPS CEU presentation and quiz on the www.cpsboard.org site has been revised and posted. The direct link to the Earn CEUs Online page is <http://www.cpsboard.org/ceus.htm>. Click on the link or scroll down to "Link to Session and Quiz 3: Fact or Fiction (Rev. November 12, 2010)" to view this revised presentation and quiz.

Already earned this online CEU? You can't use a new and an old webinar during the same cycle because the content hasn't changed drastically.

Program Reminders [Back to the top](#)

Re-certification Reminder

- CEU types, details, audit requirements [Learn More](#)
- Re-certification FAQs [Learn More](#)

You may re-certify up to **four months** before your certification expiration date without losing any time. Avoid problems--don't delay!

Basic re-certification requirements and deadlines:

- [Five seat checks](#) approved by a certified instructor (you may use the technician proxy option). You can do the checks at any time during your certification cycle as long as they are entered online and a certified instructor approves them before your re-certification date.
- [Community education](#) (choose one):
 1. Participation in at least one two-hour checkup event with at least one other CPS technician using any standardized checklist to provide documentation, if needed.
 2. Provide at least four hours of community education. Examples include making presentations to parents, educators, kids, organizations (such as PTAs or law enforcement), or other stakeholders who are not technicians.
- A minimum of six hours of CPS technical [continuing education units](#) earned and reported during a current two-year certification cycle.
 1. You cannot carry over CEUs from one period to the next, even if you have accumulated more CEUs than are required.
 2. Because your certification cycle stays the same, any CEUs obtained after you recertify but before the first day of your new certification cycle may not be applied to the new cycle.
 3. You can record CEUs at any time during your certification cycle, but they must fit into one of the [five approved categories and meet content requirements](#).
- **Register and pay** the re-certification fee before your certification expiration date. You can register up to 4 months in advance of your certification expiration date. You will NOT lose any time--your dates stay the same.

To get to the payment screen, you must have:

- (1) Completed all five seat checks (entered and CPSTI approved)
- (2) Entered at least six CEUs
- (3) Entered your community event information

Once all three are done, you will see a "Click Here to Continue" button that will take you to the payment screens.

Once your registration is complete, your re-certification will be processed in two to four days.

PPTs with step-by-step instructions on how to recertify, including screen shots, are available under [Resources -> Instructions](#).

CPS Customer Service Survey Available

Safe Kids USA is interested in your experiences with our CPS customer service. If you have contacted the customer service representatives by calling the toll-free number (877-366-8154) or by e-mailing them at cps.certification@safekids.org, please take a few minutes to complete the online survey under [Contact Us](#) on the Certification Web site.

This survey should take no more than five minutes to complete. There is no limit to the number of times you can share your opinions with us. Thank you for helping us improve our customer service.

Auditor Alcove: *Juggling Course Requirements*

As the Lead Instructor for a Certification Course, you may sometimes feel like you are trying to juggle 7 flaming swords at the same time. There are so many things to keep track of throughout the week! Calculation of instructor hours is a crucial part of the responsibility, so it is essential that it be done as accurately as possible.

One way to accomplish this is to enlist the assistance of your entire instructor team. Prior to your next course, develop a Word or Excel document listing the chapters and activities for each day in a column. In the next column, have an area for instructors teaching, start time, and end time. Share this with your team at your pre-course instructor meeting so they can become familiar with it.

During your course, have several copies printed out and taped in different locations. I try to keep one near the front of the room, one at the instructor table, one taped on the inside of the classroom door, one on my clipboard, and one outside in the van. By having the sheets in more than one location, it is easier for the team to remember to write down start and end times for chapters and activities. At the end of the day, you can transfer these times to one sheet and viola! Instant calculation of hours!

This data can also be useful when creating your future class agendas. Perhaps your team takes a little longer teaching chapters 4 and 5, but has chapters 2 and 3 done a little quicker. By tracking your actual times, your agenda can be modified for better accuracy.

Building Your Course Training Kit- UPDATE

Officer Traci Rebiejo, Traffic Education Officer at the Livermore Police Department in California, shared an idea for adding training seats to your kit.

As a Police Officer, she is often on scene for traffic crashes. She educates those with CRs in their vehicles about replacement after a crash. If it is a CR she could use for her training kit, she will ask the vehicle owner to donate it to the PD. Once the driver has cleared it with their insurance company (who **WILL** pay for a replacement CR look for a future article on responses from several insurance companies), they can donate the CR! Traci immediately writes "Crashed Seat" so it is clear that it is unsafe to use for kids but great for teaching! Traci has been able to add several high end CRs to her training kit this way without having to purchase them. Keeping them out of the landfills is an extra bonus!

Jami Revesz, Quality Assurance Specialist, is available for questions about course policy, calculation of teaching hours, CEUs or audits. She is also interested in sharing other ideas on how to teach the Certification Course so, if you have suggestions or ideas that and you would like to share, please send an email to cpsaudit@safekids.org.

General | [Back to the top](#)

By the Numbers

Children Alone in Vehicles

- Deaths of children left in hot cars in 2009: 32
- Deaths of children left in hot cars in 2010: 49
- Details are available at <http://ggweather.com/heat>

CPS Recertification

- 2009: 55.5 percent
- 2010: 49.8 percent (Jan-Nov)

Setting the Record Straight: Seat Belt Overtightening

There are two issues related to a “tight fit” that often resurface in the CPS community:

Question #1: Can a seat belt be over tightened when installing a child restraint?

Typically, inspection stations and check up events find that loosely installed child restraints as one of the major misuses. However, we also have seen the issue of over tightening of the seat belt. Although the NHTSA curriculum states that child restraints should not move more than an inch in any direction when tested at the belt path, technicians often work with an overzealous caregiver or fellow technician. The overzealous caregiver or technician believes in the Zen experience that a child restraint must be “one with the car” in order to be safely installed. Our responses often include:

1. It isn't necessary.
2. It isn't any safer.
3. A caregiver would have difficulty in replicating that measure of tightness.
4. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

These simple responses don't always seem adequate for the overzealous caregiver or technician and often continue to over tighten the seat belt feeling that this is the best way to secure the child restraint safely. Recently, the Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety, a group of child restraint manufacturers, was contacted about this issue.

This is their statement released on October 1, 2010 in reference to over tightening the seat belt:

Over-tightening a safety belt could damage a CR's belt path and/or its lock-off*. CR's should be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. Proper tightness should be confirmed by grasping the CR with one hand at or near the belt path and pulling on the CR. There should be no more than one inch of side-to-side or front-to-back movement at the belt path.

** Sunshine Kids does not endorse the statement above and it does not apply to any model Radian® car seat.*

It is critical that technicians let go of the “one with the vehicle seat” mentality. Please work with any overzealous tech or parent to assure them that the manufacturers know best how to properly use their restraint.

Question #2: Can over tightening a seat belt affect built in occupant protection systems such as pretensioners?

We have also heard that over tightening the seatbelt may result in damaging the seat belt pretensioners that are an integral function of the built- in or automatic occupant protection system.

This is not the case and the Alliance offered this statement:

Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety Statement for CPS Technicians/Instructors: Using Safety Belts with Pre-tensioners to install CRs:

Unless the CR manufacturer instructions state differently, using a safety belt with a pre-tensioner is allowed if allowed by the vehicle manufacturer.

2010 Members of the Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety include: Britax, Chicco, Clek, Combi, Dorel Juvenile Group, Evenflo, Graco, Learning Curve (The First Years), Mia Moda, Orbit Baby, Recaro, Safe Traffic Systems, Sunshine Kids.

Vehicle manufacturers were contacted to get their perspective on over tightening CRs with vehicle pretensioners.

Barbara Birkenshaw of Volkswagen Group of America, Inc.:

The vehicle seat belt can be loaded with more than 10 kN and it is not possible to tighten a CRS with more than 500N. So over-tightening may not be an issue.

Lisa-Townsend, Strategic Planning Specialist of Chrysler:

It would be difficult, if not impossible, for someone to damage the webbing or pretensioner of a seat belt when using it to install a child seat. The exception would be if something sharp was in contact with the webbing, it may be cut. Seat belts have to withstand pretty high forces during a crash that would be difficult for someone to achieve when tightening.

Julie Kleinert, Advanced Safety Development General Motors:

We have not had any issues with seat belt or belt pretensioner damage due to over-tightening of the seat belts in car seat installations.

M. Todd Moury, Engineering Group Manager - Advanced Product Development Active Safety Benchmarking / Validation of Delphi Electronics & Safety:

It is virtually impossible to over tighten a child seat into a vehicle without a mechanical aid of some sort. Most people who over tightened their seat belts utilized tightening devices . Others utilize the reclining seat mechanisms to apply the leverage necessary to over tighten the belt system. In this situation, they recline the seat and tighten the child seat in place then lever the seat back upright to further push the child seat against the belt system. Most often this situation happens in the reclining front seat locations which are not the best positions for the child.

Most reviewers/experts have concluded that the potential risks of damage to the seat belt and/or the child seat far outweigh the slight possibility that the child might be minimally better protected by a seat that has been excessively tightened into the vehicle. It simply is not necessary to excessively tighten a child seat into the vehicle.

However, the potential to damage the belt system can arise if the tightening device or the routing path of the

child seat causes the belt webbing or other belt components to be damaged (frayed belts, cracked plastic, etc.). The over tightened seat belt can also damage the child seat (cracked plastic routing guides, cracked seat bases, etc.). It is also possible to tighten the seat belt so much that the seat belt buckle can become extremely difficult to disengage. This is caused by the excessively tightened belt driving increased forces on the friction surfaces within the buckle release mechanisms. In this situation, the parent may not be able to quickly remove the child seat / child from the vehicle if the need arises.

The CPS Express staff thank all the contributors to this article and offer this summary to technicians responding to the overzealous caregiver or technician who over tighten the restraint:

1. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
2. It isn't necessary.
3. It isn't any safer.
4. A caregiver would have difficulty in replicating that measure of tightness.
5. It may damage the child restraint belt path and base as well as the lock-offs.
6. It may damage the seat belt buckle making it difficult to release to quickly remove the child seat and child from the vehicle in an emergency.
7. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.

It may also be reasonable to recognize that over tightening lower anchor attachments may result in similar ways. Stay tuned as our research unfolds!

Submitted by Kim Herrmann, Safe Kids Worldwide CPST (Ft. Myers, FL)

Featured FAQ: Who do I contact for help? (rev. Nov. 23, 2010)

If you have questions regarding the following, please contact the Safe Kids Worldwide headquarters directly:

- Instructor candidacy processing and approval
(J.J. - 202-662-0619, jcurrent@safekids.org)
- Challenges, complaint and appeals
(Kerry: 202-662-0639, kchausmer@safekids.org)

For all other certification-related questions, including the examples below, please contact Safe Kids CPS certification customer service toll free at 877-366-8154 or cps.certification@safekids.org.

- Accessing the certification system
- Username & password issues
- Assistance with course setup/ finalization
- Materials shipping
- Registering for a course
- Questions regarding payment

Contact information for both customer service and Safe Kids Worldwide headquarters can be found in [Resources->Contact Us](#) or by clicking the [Contact Us](#) button to the right.

Fact or Fiction: Once a tech's recertification requirements have been entered online, they have up to 30 days to

send in their fee.

Fiction: All the recertification requirements including payment must be completed (fee received) by the certification expiration date. To avoid any problems, please complete your recertification up to 4 months in advance. You won't lose any time: Your cert cycle dates will remain the same.

More details on recertification may be found at <http://cert.safekids.org/recertification.html>.

Have a tidbit to share? Submit your Fact or Fiction to [Safe Kids Certification](#).

Notes From The [National Child Passenger Safety Board](#):

Food for Thought

As child passenger safety advocates we see first-hand that using child restraints decreases the risk of death and injuries by astonishing numbers for infants and children. We also know that child safety seat distribution programs increase child safety seat use.

However, as advocates we must use research strategies to locate and direct more energy, dollars, resources and education in “at risk communities”. When we talk about “at risk communities”, we talk about locations that can be either rural or inner-city with barriers such as language, shelter, living conditions, transportation, violence and drugs and, of course, lack of education.

As CPS educators we must keep in mind that many parents and caregivers in these communities may be more concerned about where their next meal is coming from or how the rent, utilities, and medical bills will get paid; Or how to get from here to there with no transportation of their own, but yet transporting their children in other vehicles with no safety seat.

How do we begin to narrow down these communities that need so much attention and assistance?

What steps do we need to take as national, state and local CPS advocates to locate families within those communities with infants and children?

How do we share education and resources to those families that are really in need after we locate them?

All of these questions are much bigger than one person and bigger than any answers that I can come up with. However, if we can share with one another on a local, state and national level as we begin to identify these areas, then maybe we will reach those that are in most need!

Submitted by Lynn Ware, Cape Girardeau Police Dept, CPS Advocate - CPS Board (Cape Girardeau, MO)

Just for Instructors [Back to the top](#)

Instructor Tips: Using a Checkup Form During Class

The use of the check up form for every seat check is critical in providing written documentation of technical and communications skills between the caregiver and the technician. Additional benefits include reducing

potential liability and gathering statistics needed to determine use/misuse in a community.

Review of the Safe Kids Buckle Up checklist forms show that some technicians do not complete the checklist fully and completely. We have also heard that some techs go against tech guidelines and fail to use one at all, putting themselves, their agency, and the families they serve at risk.

Recently our instructor team used a check up form throughout a certification course by emphasizing its importance following each chapter as we would in referencing additional resources in the appendix. It provided an opportunity each day to familiarize the students with the form as well as pointing out the importance of recording each seat selection, direction, location, and installation when the technician assists the parent. By using the form consistently throughout the course, the students were more comfortable with it during the check up, thereby saving time and preventing documentation errors.

Now we have another great resource in the Abbey video CD provided to all instructors by NHTSA, which sets up the importance of how to communicate and record technical skills on the check up form. This video provides the opportunity to stress the importance of the check up form and its use for every family. The exercises that are learned in class will influence the practice in the field.

Submitted by Kim Herrmann, Safe Kids Worldwide (Ft. Myers, FL) with special thanks to the Safe Kids Suncoast Florida Instructor Team: Jean Shoemaker, Peggy Klimek, Ashley Marchese, Kris Scholz, and Patrick Vines.

When an Instructor Makes a Mistake

Occasionally, an instructor may misspeak during a Certification or Renewal course. It is important to provide correct information as soon as possible and in a way that does not embarrass the instructor. This is why it is important to have another instructor shadowing, or following along with each chapter. A team teaching approach may be appropriate as well, so that correct information is provided and an instructor doesn't overlook any teaching points. It may be helpful for an instructor to say at the end of their chapter, "does anyone on the teaching team have something to add"? This creates a smooth transition in to anything that may have been overlooked or needs additional clarification. The pre-course instructor meeting is an appropriate time for instructors to decide how this type of situation is best corrected.

Instructors may also make an error in judgment during skills assessments. This is reduced when the instructors review the selection requirements and available CRs for Skills Two and scenarios are double checked before and during Skills Three.

In Skills Three, a key may need corrected to assure that students get consistent grading and identify all misuses. For example, if the selection is listed correct based on the age and weight of the child in the scenario, and it turns out that the wrong CR was chosen and has a different weight capacity, it may make the selection incorrect, or not appropriate for the child in the scenario. This will then mean that prior to discovering that it was incorrect, students may not have identified the selection error. Instructors may want to have that part redone by the students or use it as a teaching point when everyone has completed the assessment. The pre-course meeting is critical to ensure instructors are all on the same page when deciding how this type of situation is best corrected.

Whether it is identified by another instructor, the person who made the error, or when a technician candidate

questions the scenario, it is important for the teaching team to take responsibility for the error and be sure that students understand the appropriate best practice answer. It is also an opportunity to reinforce that anyone can make a mistake, and to reduce mistakes in the field, it is important that the “second set of eyes” check our work before the family leaves the inspection.

A mistake could create an undue risk to a child so we must continue to promote best practice, including documentation, during coursework and in the field. We need to keep in mind that when we are working with students, we should never dismiss our mistakes or the students will carry that habit into their actions when working with families in the real world.

Submitted by Kim Herrmann, Safe Kids Worldwide (Ft. Myers, FL)

CEU Corner [Back to the top](#)

This section provides information on nationally available continuing education opportunities. We are not able to include information on state or local conferences, training or other technical updates if they cannot be made available nationally.

This information is provided as a *resource only*. Events and activities listed here are not endorsed by Safe Kids USA unless otherwise noted.

CPS Express CEU Corner Submissions: Please e-mail the necessary information (in the format below) to [Kerry Chausmer](#).

Nationwide CEU Calendar

To access the calendar:

1. <http://www.carseatscolorado.com/>
2. Click on Training Opportunities
3. Click on Continuing Education for Certified Technicians
4. On the drop-down menu, please select CEU Sessions Nationwide Listing

Instructions on how to post an event [Click Here](#)

Online Courses

Provided by: Safe Kids Worldwide and NHTSA

Total available: 6 CEUs

Location: <http://www.safekidswebinars.org/>

Currently available: Vehicle Safety Part 1: Federal Regulations, Vehicle Safety Part 2: Consumer Testing, School Buses, A Tech's Guide to Recalls and Transporting Children in Vehicles Other Than Cars.

Technicians will register, log in, finish the webinar and print a certificate of completion. This webinar requires participants to gather information from other sites (links provided) to have a quality learning experience.

** Each webinar is available for download (pdf) for local technical update sessions.

Provided by: UNC Highway Safety Research Center and NC CPS Conference -

<http://www.buckleupnc.org/>

Total available: 4.5 CEUs

Location: <http://www.buckleupnc.org/training/index.cfm>

For CEUs, you must create an account on buckleupnc.org. Techs will only be able to take the quiz and earn CEU credits if they have created an account, are signed in, and have watched the entire video.

NOTE: Non-CEU presentations are also available.

Provided by: National Child Passenger Safety Board

Total available: 4 CEUs

Location: <http://www.cpsboard.org/>

Four presentations -- one about new child restraints, another combined about boosters and airbags, one on LATCH and Tethers, and one called Fact or Fiction. Each presentation is available for download. Details and instructions are available on the Board's [Web site](#).

GET INVOLVED! The Board is interested in expanding its online course library and is requesting presentations from the field. Once submitted, the Board will review each presentation and then add to the online offerings. The presentations must be technically accurate, up-to-date, and be available in PowerPoint.

[Click here](#) for the presentation application and submission instructions.

National Conferences/Meetings

Event: Child Passenger Safety Restraint Systems on School Buses NHTSA's National Training; Offered in conjunction with 20th National Conference on Transporting Students with Disabilities & Preschoolers

Location: Kansas City, MO

Workshop Date: March 13, 2011

Conference Dates: March 11-16, 2011

CPS CEUs available: 6

Fees/Requirements: see Web site

For more information: <http://www.eduprogroup.com>

Event: Lifesavers Conference

Location: Phoenix, AZ

Pre-conference dates: March 26, 2011

Dates: March 27-29, 2011

CPS CEUs available: TBD

Fees/Requirements: see Web site

For more information: <http://lifesaversconference.org/index.html>

Teleconferences/Moderated Webinars

Title: Child Restraint Manufacturer Update and Q & A #3

Overview: Chicco, Evenflo and Orbit talk about their latest products

Date/Time: December 8 (Wed.) from 3 - 4 pm ET

CPS CEUs Available: 1 (CECH CHES credit also available)

Fees/Requirements: None except pre-registration

Pre-registration (REQ'D): <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/368581080>

[Contact Us](#) | [Back to the top](#)

Ideas and article submissions

Advocates and manufacturers are welcome to submit articles, or suggestions for articles, to the *CPS Express!* Send your ideas and submissions to kchausmer@safekids.org. All submissions will be edited for content and length.

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

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