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CPS Express

E-News for Child Passenger Safety Technicians

TOP NEWS

CEU RESOURCES

FOR INSTRUCTORS



SUBMITTED BY KATIE HONEGGER



MARCH/APRIL 2020

Recertification

Top News

Need Help? We are here for you.

As CPSTs, you know to go to the car seat manufacturer when you have a question. Well, when you have a CPS certification question, we are here for you. We are dedicated to answering inquiries on a variety of topics such as log in issues, COVID-19 extensions, CEUs, seat checks, payment or course management.

Our contact number has changed, so please update us in your contacts. Our certification team, Wardell Bonner and Sarai Burnett, can be reached at (202)-875-6330 or by email at cpscert@safekids.org. We would love to hear from you!

Submitted by Wardell Bonner and Sarai Burnett, Safe Kids Worldwide (Washington, DC)

CPST Mission: Assisting Caregivers With Their Car Seats

Remotely

For many years, CPSTs have been assisting families over the phone with their car seat questions. While we cannot count this as an “inspection,” we can certainly provide education to the caregiver by following the basic principles of child passenger safety.

In this time of national crisis with businesses closing, services being suspended, telecommuting becoming the norm and health concerns, Safe Kids Worldwide remains committed to the safety of children. Because of the overwhelming demand for CPSTs to continue providing education, we developed a CPS Phone Consultation Tool Kit which helps CPSTs provide remote CPS education. You have a three-tier option, using whichever one works best for your organization. CPSTs can provide proven, quality resources to caregivers, provide personalized education over the phone or offer virtual car seat checks. Providing phone education is not intended to be considered an inspection, but as a way of providing caregivers with the key points to ensure their child(ren) will be riding safer. Safe Kids also collaborated with CR manufacturers and other leaders in the CPS field who have already been conducting virtual car seat checks. A webinar, “Safe Kids Worldwide A Timely Solution: Remote Education by Phone,” was created explaining these educational options, including how to get a virtual system set up if it is determined this will work for your organization.

The tool kit includes a Remote Education Consultation Guide to assist CPSTs with providing education over the phone, a Family Worksheet to help caregivers identify important information about their family, car seat and vehicle, and a Car Seat Consultation Handout to be used for caregivers as homework before talking to a CPST or prior to their appointment. The Car Seat Consultation Handout lists step by step things for the caregiver to do at home which includes photos of labels and key parts of the CR such as harness slots, belt paths, and tether which should be completed prior to contacting a car seat technician for assistance. Also included in the kit is a list of resources such as a manufacturer contact list.

This tool kit is in no way a reflection of the technical skills of CPSTs. We realized that it takes an entirely different skill set to be able to provide phone education compared to in-person curbside education which many may see as being uncomfortable.

Go to the Safe Kids Certification website (under the [Resources/FAQs tab](#)) to view the [Child Passenger Safety Remote Education](#) webinar and access the toolkit.

Submitted by Debbie Landoskey, Quality Assurance Specialist, Safe Kids Worldwide. (Ormond Beach, Fla.)

Suggestions for In-Person Car Seat Inspections

Safe Kids Worldwide has been contacted by many technicians in the field who continue to provide in-person seat checks, requesting guidance and tips during COVID-19 and social distancing.

Safe Kids strongly supports **remote education**, referring caregivers to car seat manufacturers for additional assistance (example: virtual car seat checks) and following [CDC guidelines](#). If you absolutely must provide an in-person seat check, there is no guarantee of safety from COVID-19.

However, if you **must** provide an in-person seat check, you should meet with your supervisor or risk manager to seek permission to proceed. You may need to sign a waiver releasing the organization from all liability.

Special thanks to the Georgia Department of Public Health for sharing their guidelines, which were used, in part, for these suggestions.

Download the PDF

COVID-19 Update: CPST Extensions

Safe Kids Certification continues to monitor the COVID-19 situation, like all of you. To help ease concerns and anxiety, we processed a series of extensions for CPSTs. If your certification expiration date was originally March 11-September 30, please log into your online profile for your new date.

- On March 11, every CPST with a March 11-June 15 certification expiration date was extended to June 30.
- On April 4, every CPST with a June certification expiration date (includes every tech in the first extension) was extended 4 months.
- On April 4, every CPST with a July, August or September certification expiration date was extended 3 months.

If you are ready to recertify but can no longer do so due to the extension (more than 4 months away), please contact us by [email](#) or phone (202-875-6330). We will change your certification expiration date to the end of the month, and you will be able to complete your recertification.

If you need additional time for your seat checks, enter your other requirements and then [email us](#) with your plan on completing the seat checks (so we know how much time is requested).

We are happy to provide modest extensions for instructors to earn their 20 required teaching hours. In order to help, please enter your seat checks, CEUs and Community Education and then [email us](#) your plans on how you will earn

the hours (so we know how much time you need). If you need time to come up with a plan, just let us know.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication.

COVID-19 Update: New Online Resource

Even as families try to stay home as much as possible during the coronavirus pandemic, there are times when a trip in the car with a child is essential. Safe Kids and the Juvenile Products Manufacturers Association have teamed up to provide parents and caregivers with [online and virtual resources](#) to reinforce the most important car safety tips during COVID-19.

Submitted by Alexis Kagiliery and Gary Karton, Safe Kids Worldwide (Washington, DC)

Earning Your CEUs From Home!

Health and safety concerns have caused technical updates to be cancelled all across the country as well as Child Passenger Safety technicians working from home. Technicians and instructors do not need to be alarmed with the requirements to complete their recertification. There are a number of free online ways to earn CEUs while you are safely at home.

Tips On How To Earn Your CEUs at Home

You can earn 6 CEUs online! There are several quick links for online CEUs available through your CPS Online Profile. Simply log in and click on the "Online CEUs" link in the Recertification section.

Action
View Summary
Add/Review CEUs
Online CEUs
Add/Submit Seat Checks
Comm Education

Review the choices and click on one!

Online CEUs

This page allows certified technicians to access online CEUs and information. Some sites are only available through this page.

Featured sites:

1. [Safe Kids/NHTSA Online Tech Update Courses](#)
2. [National CPS Board](#)
3. [Britax Tech Site](#)
4. [Evenflo Tech Site](#)

The [Safe Kids/NHTSA Online Courses](#) site gives you six online options, including Vacation Travel Safety so you can plan ahead for when it is safe to travel again. The [National CPS Board](#) site has a variety of online recorded webinars, many from car seat manufacturers, available for viewing. Each include an online quiz and earning a CEU by scoring at least 80% on the quiz to receive a certificate.

Community Education can also be earned online without having to attend an in-person checkup event. There are three kinds of [community education](#) that can count toward recertification, including attending a one hour-educational session(s), live or online. There is no quiz (quizzes are only required for CEU sessions). Community Education is not audited, and no proof of completion is provided. After you watch the webinar enter it in your online profile. You can mix and match to total 1 hour (minimum requirement).

Be safe and stay healthy during these uncertain days.

Submitted by Stephanie Heitsch, Certification Associate, Safe Kids Worldwide. (Port Orange, Fla.)

2019 National Program Report

The National Child Passenger Safety Certification Training Program (CPS certification program) certifies people as child passenger safety technicians and instructors. Since the CPS certification program began in 1997, more than 179,000 people have successfully completed the CPS Certification Course, including more than 43,000 currently certified CPS technicians (CPSTs). Many CPSTs are trained health and safety professionals who use this knowledge in their jobs. Others are parents and volunteers who use this in their personal lives. All have one thing in common: they care deeply about kids and want to make sure children are safe.

The more than 1,800 certified instructors held 772 Certification and 158 Renewal Testing courses in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Northern Mariana Islands, Canada, China, Israel, Malaysia and Singapore. Nine courses were held outside of the U.S. and our territories.

With these 930 courses, Safe Kids Worldwide certified 10,600 new technicians and 167 new instructors. These technicians and instructors are now out in their communities, honing their skills and working alongside more seasoned technicians.

In 2019, 21,798 technicians were eligible to recertify. Of those, 12,104 technicians recertified, resulting in a national recertification rate of 55.5 percent, the lowest since 2012's 54.9 percent. A survey of technicians whose certification expired in 2019 revealed 43 percent changed jobs, had health/family issues or never planned on recertifying. The [2019 Expired Technician summary](#) is available for your review.

The CPS certification program offers more than just certification courses. In 2019, just over 1,300 technicians attended one of 10 local updates supported by State Farm, our sponsor since 2005. Additionally, for technicians who can't attend an in-person update, Safe Kids offers online training modules where they can earn CEUs, a requirement for recertification, at training.safekids.org. More than 12,700 CEUs were earned online, far surpassing the 9,000 CEUs that were earned online in 2018. Safe Kids also offered 10 live webinars in 2019 for techs to earn CEUs and more than 3,600 techs attended.

Safe Kids closed out 2019 with two major changes to the program in December: Customer service moved in house and we launched fully revamped online portals.

Due to our long-time customer service provider, printer and fulfillment partner ProExam closing their New York office, Safe Kids took over call and email responsibilities as of December 2, 2019. In addition to hiring 2 full-time staff, we began work to launch a new phone call management system. The system will launch in the first quarter of 2020. Innovative Concepts, another long-time Safe Kids partner, is our new partner to ship technician guides to courses.

After 15 years of a working but ancient system, the Certification and Course management systems were upgraded for improved user experience, security and stability. The new system launched December 2, allowing current technicians and instructors more streamlined access to their CPST information. Potential CPS Technicians saw improved [FIND A TECH](#) and [FIND A COURSE](#) searches.

A special thank you to our dedicated partners: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the National Child Passenger Safety Board and State Farm. Thanks to their continued and steadfast commitment to keeping kids safe on our nation's roadways, the National Child Passenger Safety Certification Training Program continues to make a difference in the lives of children and families in the United States and around the world.

[Read the Report](#)

CPST Month update

With COVID-19 and courses being cancelled for health and safety, we are no longer actively celebrating/promoting courses during May, CPST month. Any instructor teaching in May will still receive a lapel pin as we look into other ways to promote CPS technician certification courses.

Social Media Communications and CPS Code of Conduct: Part 1

Social media has become an integral part of our personal and professional lives. It has become powerful in shaping and influencing conversations. The [2020 Technician Guide](#) has devoted attention to this issue in Chapter 12, emphasizing social media can provide opportunities for community education and help engage caregivers in a format that can be easily shared. It is a great concept to help new technicians in the field understand how their newfound information, skills, and resources can reach more people. In discussing the social media guidance in the curriculum with fellow instructors, the consensus was that technicians should always be thinking about how to help caregivers understand the basics of child passenger safety in conversation and social media.

Not everyone has warmed up to or embraced social media because it can get out of hand so easily and a new, enthusiastic technician can get caught up in the conversation and the message that was intended can get lost. This happened in a class I assisted recently when the students started discussing the misuse on social media slide in the curriculum. Soon, more students got involved going back and forth, yes, you got it...just like times that many of us have seen how social media may go sideways. The instructor calmed everyone down and showed how easy it is to get caught up in social media when a post does not provide an accurate response, resource or link to correct information. Technician Candidates are encouraged to share their solutions, and some may offer suggestions that have worked in their agencies. It is important that the Instructor Team members listen to the discussions and guide students as needed by stating "You Are What You Share." This creates an opportunity to provide more guidance to the technician candidates.

As CPSTs, we must continue to uphold the ethical standards set forth in the [CPST Code of Conduct](#). When participating in social media in a personal or organizational capacity, our posts should be responsible in addressing issues by providing accurate and positive information. The new curriculum emphasizes this message: keep it short, keep it positive and keep it real.

It may have been a while since you read the CPST Code of Conduct, or perhaps you were not even aware that one existed, but you can find it in the Technician Guide. It is important to review it periodically because it can be easy to say or do something that does not reflect the conduct of a CPS technician. Longevity is a significant difference between what we say or do in public versus what we post on social media. If the way we choose to transport our own children is not reflected in the choices a family makes, this doesn't make them a bad parent/caregiver. Remember the good, better, best mantra (Technician Guide Chapter 2 page 5).

Look for Part 2 in the July/August CPS Express!

Submitted by Kim Herrmann, CPSTI (Ft. Myers, Fla.)

I am interested in becoming an instructor. Is it right for me?

Based on a national survey in September and October 2019 of 15 experienced CPS instructors were asked how they would respond to a CPS Technician approaching them with interest in becoming an instructor.

Many technicians will contact local instructors with interest in becoming an instructor. Overwhelmingly, the first question from the survey of instructors would be to ask the technician, **why do you want to be an instructor?**

A tech that has only been in the field for the bare minimum of 6 months may or may not have any idea what they are getting into but have strong personal feelings to make a commitment to the field. Aspiring instructor-candidates need to be aware that being an instructor is not a "promotion" or elevation in status. It means they need to know every chapter and be able and willing to teach any of the modules at any time. The best way to guide a technician regarding this commitment is to spend some time with them and have a discussion around some of the following questions.

Are they needed because of the lack of instructors in the area? If you are a technician interested in becoming an instructor, know that many states have developed a statewide plan that identifies the location and services provided by technicians and instructors. These states have identified target areas where there is a need for technicians and instructors. You may find that learning about the statewide plan would be helpful background for you to know where you can truly share your passion for CPS in underserved communities. Local instructors can be of great assistance in guiding you through the process. Definitely reach out to your [State Training Contact](#).

Can you meet the time commitment to be an instructor? Instructors set a standard of excellence in many communities and need to be open to continually learning. Besides committing time to teach the course, there are [recertification requirements](#) to meet. You will need to maintain your instructor hours over your two-year cert period and will need to be prepared and committed to teach regularly to do so. That could mean that you keep up with revisions to the curriculum, which may not be the curriculum you got certified with. The current curriculum is available at <https://www.cpsboard.org/curriculum/>.

How do you view the role of an instructor? There is more to being an instructor than teaching a class. Check out: <https://cert.safekids.org/i-am-a-tech/im-an-instructor>. Work with local instructors and assist with organizing or offering technical content by presenting at a technical update.

What have you been doing to increase your knowledge of car seats, vehicles, national, state, and local resources? Measure your level of knowledge and confidence by assessing your strong points and areas that you need to beef up and develop that plan with a local instructor who can mentor you. If you typically work with new mothers utilizing RFO or convertible seats, you would benefit from working at events that work with a variety of seats and children of different ages. Working with techs and instructors at events and

technical updates as well as serving as a [tech proxy](#) provide excellent experience you will continue to build upon. There is a huge opportunity to learn and get CEUs through [recorded](#) and [live](#) webinars, [Safe Kids Online Trainings](#), manufacturer websites, statewide CPS programs, and, if you are able, participating in national and state conferences. Don't forget the value of the free emailed bimonthly [CPS Express](#).

Anyone who is good at speaking or teaching from a lesson plan can teach to the "letter of the manual," but can you really explain if you are questioned further than what's in front of you? Or do you know where to get that answer?

No one is expected to know and remember everything – the field of CPS is constantly evolving. However, we do want technicians and especially those interested in becoming instructors to know where to find the answers. It is important to always be developing reliable resources to assist families and support technicians. Don't be surprised that instructors will not provide you with an answer to your question but give you a resource to find the answer for yourself. Instructors may have a series of technical questions that you will want to be comfortable and confident in answering.

Assisting during the certification course is a great opportunity to get a feel for a class by participating in the "behind the scenes" and seeing how the activities support the content of the chapters. It is also a great way to learn about instructor teaching styles. Be prepared to take the quizzes without the aid of the textbook to help identify areas that you need to work on.

Does your agency or organization support your interest in becoming an instructor? Will your agency or statewide program pay for your time when teaching? Are you permitted to teach outside of your county?

Take the time to talk with your supervisor/manager to let them know of your interest and discuss the responsibilities being an instructor may include, like travel outside of your community to expand the availability of technicians in underserved areas. Managers will want to know how your agency will benefit from your instructor certification. Instructors need to support their community as a whole, not just to keep certifying or doing seat checks for agency techs. There are some statewide programs that may pay some of your travel expenses and could be especially helpful for volunteer instructors.

Describe a learning experience you have had since becoming a tech that you think has helped you develop the skills necessary to be an effective instructor. Talk with instructors and discuss their real-world experiences in the field. What was a teachable moment that enhanced their ability to teach a concept from the curriculum? Discussing experiences or challenges in the field and what they learned from it and what they would do differently next time will also demonstrate a person's enthusiasm and willingness to learn and grow in CPS.

Do you teach any educational classes now? Having experience in teaching a curriculum that is textbook and skills based is so helpful. If a tech is regularly attending car seat checks or fitting stations and teaching a new parent class on a regular basis, that is great experience with adult learners. Teaching in front of a group will hopefully help the technician gain confidence in explaining key concepts that would also be taught in the curriculum.

These questions and the discussions that can follow are not inclusive but may serve to help prospective instructor candidates decide to take the next steps in preparing to become an instructor. Instructors will love to hear from you!

My thanks to the wonderful input from experienced instructors who took part in the survey.

Submitted by Kim Herrmann, CPST Instructor (Fort Myers, FL)

CEU Resources

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 Worldwide unless otherwise noted.

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

Conferences

[Kidz In Motion](#)

Orlando, Fla.

August 27-29, 2020

Online Courses

A variety of webinars are available online and free of charge. [Learn more](#).

Upcoming Safe Kids Webinars

- Troubleshoot to avoid problems: [Run a System Check](#)
- [Can I get credit for watching a webinar with a group?](#)

- [Can I use my smartphone?](#)

When the Car is Parked: Common Car Seat Challenges & How Manufacturers are Helping

Thursday, May 14, 2020

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET

[Register Now](#)

Car Seat Manufacturer Update: Summer Brand

Thursday, May 28, 2020

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET

[Register Now](#)

Understanding FMVSS 213 Labeling & Printed Instructions for CRS

Thursday, June 25, 2020

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET

[Register Now](#)

More webinars coming soon! Updates posted on [Facebook](#).

For Instructors

New Curriculum: Preparing the Team and Making Sure Your New Techs Get (and Stay) Involved!

The coronavirus caught us by surprise and emphasizes the need to work with our advocates, technicians, instructors and support team to figure out ways to use the digital tools we have at our disposal to put together a learning experience that will enable us to stay involved while connecting and learning from home.

Due to health and safety concerns about COVID-19 (coronavirus), the 2020 Lifesavers Conference on Highway Safety Priorities, March 15-17 in Tampa, Florida, was cancelled. Since you were not able to join us in person, the presession, New Curriculum: Preparing the Team and Making Sure Your New Techs Get (and Stay) Involved, was recorded and [posted online](#). Hear from three incredible speakers: Mandi Seethaler with the Center for Safe Alaskans, Amanda Jackson with the Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety and Jessi Hopkins with the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The rollout of the new curriculum may bring many questions, so this session covers varying topics such as tips for a well-run course, available webinars and curriculum resources on the new board website that can be used to enhance your course, ways to mentor instructor teams to implement and teach the new curriculum, tips on how to set up hands-on activities and creative styles to assist

in the learning, motivation and continual involvement of technicians and instructor candidates.

Watch the webinar

The session is not for CEU credit but can be used towards your Community Education requirement of re-certification.

Participating in at least one community event (education) is required for recertification for both technicians and instructors. Don't forget to add this session to your CPS online profile, under the "one hour (minimum) educational session(s), live or online" drop-down.

Take care of yourselves during this unknown time, as well as your friends and neighbors. This crisis brings a sharp reality for us all and we are here to bring every effort to assist you during these extraordinary times.

Submitted by Stephanie Heitsch, Certification Associate, Safe Kids Worldwide. (Port Orange, FL.)

When and where should I do seat check sign offs for Technicians?

All CPS Technicians are required to complete five seat checks witnessed by a CPS Instructor or Technician Proxy each certification cycle. The purpose of the seat check sign offs is for the Technician to demonstrate both their technical knowledge and communication skills.

The National Child Passenger Safety Board encourages Technicians to begin the seat check sign offs early in their certification cycle and to work to complete the sign offs on an ongoing basis. Technicians are encouraged to plan ahead and not wait until the last minute to complete their seat check sign offs. It is unlikely for a Technician to be able to complete all five seat check sign offs at one checkup event.

Whenever possible, seat check sign offs should be conducted during an actual checkup working with caregivers. Doing so will provide the opportunity for Instructors or Technician Proxies to observe the Technician in action demonstrating both technical and communication skills. With advance planning, seat check sign-offs may be [completed virtually](#) as well. When a seat check sign-up is not able to be completed during a checkup event, scenarios may be mocked up as a last resort. Keep in mind that mock seat check scenarios, like live seat checks for recertification, must be completed in a vehicle and not on a vehicle demonstrator seat.

Coordinate with instructors early to create an action plan for your recertification cycle. While not required by Safe Kids Certification, some Instructors may choose to suggest additional sign off conditions in order to feel confident in signing off seat checks. These conditions could include waiting until a Technician has been certified in their current cycle for at least 6 months or only signing off on actual seat checks.

Visit Safe Kids Certification for [seat check FAQs](#). For additional information on recertification requirements, review the Recertification section in the [National Child Passenger Safety Certification Policies & Procedure Manual](#).

Submitted by Tammy Franks, National Child Passenger Safety Board (Burton, OH)

Instructor Updates Available Online

In support of the release of the new 2020 edition of the National Child Passenger Safety Technician Certification Training curriculum CPST Instructors have now been sent 5 informational emails. Copies of each of these email updates can be found on the protected instructor materials page where the new curriculum materials are available online. To find these updates, log into the Protected Instructor Materials page (the link is in your online profile), scroll down below the PowerPoint Presentation Files and find the heading of "Instructor Updates". New and updated materials are provided with the Instructor Updates, as well as in the appropriate curriculum materials sections throughout the page.

Need to find the Protected Instructor Materials page? Log in to your CPS certification profile and see #4 under the Action List on the left side of your screen. The password to access is provided with the link to materials. Please do not include the parenthesis when you type in the password.

Also, please remember if you have questions or suggestions about the curriculum to submit them to the [Curriculum Feedback Form](#). With questions about locating the Instructor Updates you can email Secretariat@cpsboard.org. Thank you for being a CPST Instructor!!

Submitted by the National Child Passenger Safety Board, Itasca, Ill.

Correction: I Thought You'd Want To Know About...

The last CPS Express did not specify:

At a CPS technical update for CEUs, you can provide supplemental information, such as when and how you use a [belt shortening clip](#)—if that is something you see in your area.

Questions? Comments? Concerns?

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Phone: 202-875-6330

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 may be edited for content and length.

[Policies and Procedures
Manual](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Program Partner



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A Program of
Safe Kids Worldwide

[National CPS Certification Training](#) is a program of [Safe Kids Worldwide](#), which is the certifying body and responsible for managing all aspects of the program.

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