

# CPS Express

E-News for Child Passenger Safety Technicians

TOP NEWS

CEU RESOURCES

FOR INSTRUCTORS



SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017

Recertification

## Top News

### CPS Month: Social Media Reach

Last May marked the fourth year that we celebrated CPST Month. Not only does this serve as a time to honor and thank all our CPS techs, but we also worked hard to increase the number of new technicians certified during the month.

As in previous years, the campaign had two strategic pushes. The first push was outreach to CPS instructors asking them to teach a course in May through our [Facebook](#) page. The second push was aimed at the general public - with an emphasis placed on reaching first responders, nurses and parents -

to try to get more people to sign up for the courses. This was through the Safe Kids Worldwide [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.

The social media campaigns resulted in 1.8 million impressions from these sites with 150,750 social actions taken. Impression breakdown of the results by social media channel:

- Facebook: 794,807
- LinkedIn: 8,570
- Instagram: 49,181
- Twitter: 948,406

CPST Month 2017 was a success with 94 Certification Courses offered in 44 states. There were 1,313 new technicians certified in May.

Plan now to offer/support a Certification Course in May 2018!

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## **CPS Month: What is Going on With Safe Kids Worldwide and NHTSA**

### **SKW CPS Week 2017: It's all About the Tether**

Safe Kids' primary goal for Child Passenger Safety Week, [September 17-23, 2017](#), is to make sure all parents and caregivers are correctly using the right car seats for their children. As in years past, the week concludes with National Seat Check Saturday [on September 23](#).

Safe Kids considers the whole month of September to be CPS Month so you will see an increase in our activities in September. We can't thank you, our colleagues and partners, enough for your time and dedication to child passenger safety, not just during September, but each and every day throughout the year.

This September, General Motors and Safe Kids Worldwide are doing a few new things. We are asking our coalitions to go one step further at their Buckle Up events to help us better understand why tethers are not recognized as a great safety benefit for every forward facing child in a car seat with harness. Specifically, participating coalitions will conduct pre- and post-inspection surveys, asking families with forward-facing children to physically touch a tether, point to one or more tether anchors and explain what tethers do. By the end of the inspection, caregivers should be more comfortable and familiar with the tether. Only time will tell! Our always popular Gary on the Street video will highlight tethers as Gary asks parents what they know about them and what they do for kids in cars! Stay tuned for that. A new infographic will illustrate tether benefits. Finally, our Ultimate Car Seat Guide will be available in Spanish by CPS week. Go to [www.ultimatecarseatguide.com](http://www.ultimatecarseatguide.com) for both versions.

SKW, with the support of General Motors, will share what is learned from the pre and post surveys with advocates and manufacturers by the end of 2017. Perhaps a fresh perspective from consumers might influence how tethers and tether anchors look or are identified, making them more recognizable in pictures, on products, instructions and labels. For now, NHTSA has helpful handouts and materials in the [Activities Planner and Toolkit](#) (see below). Our end of year survey report will be available on the [Safe Kids website](#). A new study comparing what parents learned at checkup events in 2005 and comparing it to what they learned in 2016 is eye-opening. The study was done in cooperation with the National Safety Council and funded by NHTSA and will be provided to the [CPS Board website](#), the [Safe Kids website](#), advocates, manufacturers and colleagues in early September.

We strongly encourage you to join us, not just in September, but all year long to make tether use a priority making children safer in their cars! For more information email [Lorrie Walker](#).

Submitted by Lorrie Walker, Safe Kids Worldwide (Deerfield Beach, Fla.)

### **NHTSA: Tools You Can Use**

As you know, Child Passenger Safety Week 2017 is right around the corner, and this year the NHTSA Occupant Protection Division has a new product that we'd like to share: an [Activities Planner and Toolkit](#). This comprehensive toolkit is for CPSTs and injury prevention professionals to plan CPS-related events in their community during the week, highlighting the basics of child passenger safety: selection, direction, installation, location and harnessing. Additionally, we've developed a variety of handouts that focus on [tether use](#) and [harnessing](#) that can be printed and used as education take-aways at events throughout the week. If you prefer to order printed materials, the [store](#) might be a good option for you.

NHTSA's Child Passenger Safety Week 2017 earned media and advertising materials, which are designed for use by state and local governmental agencies and advocacy organizations, are available for download from NHTSA's [Traffic Safety Marketing site](#), so please take advantage of these free resources.

Submitted by Laura Dunn, NHTSA (Washington, D.C.)

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### **Seat Check Saturday – Be ready! Tips for Setting Up Checkup Events**

Child Passenger Safety Week (September 17-23, 2017) is coming soon. This campaign is an opportunity for technicians to increase awareness throughout the year with materials through NHTSA ([NHTSA.gov/TheRightSeat](#)) and Spanish PSAs ([NHTSA.gov/Protegidos](#)) where parents can find information on how to determine if their child is in the right seat for his or her age and size.

Hopefully, you have organized a few events during the month of September with your community partners to assist families in underserved areas that would benefit the most from technicians' guidance. If this is the first event you have organized yourself or your hundredth to organize, you may benefit from some tips that experienced and resourceful technicians have developed. The [CPS Inspections and Checkup Events](#) prepared by the National Child Passenger Safety Board is a great reference. Highlights include: setting the stage (will your event be indoors or outdoors?) and staffing: How many techs, scribes, volunteers, etc. will you need?

Staffing is essential for a successful event. Someone needs to coordinate the event and set the tone with everyone involved that safety is a priority. Someone who has a ready smile and welcoming nature would be perfect as a greeter. Volunteers as runners or baby wranglers are always appreciated. Well-trained volunteers can also be scribes to make sure that the checklist forms are completed properly. And if you have really promoted this event, you will need a traffic coordinator to keep the flow of vehicles entering and exiting running smoothly. Techs that are participating need to be sure that a second set of eyes will check their work. Ask that techs bring their [wallet card](#) or show the wallet card from a smartphone screen shot.

So far so good! Now be sure that you have all the necessary equipment from current recall lists to LATCH manuals, car seat Instructions and first aid kits. If you assign lanes, than be sure to have enough duplicate bins with all that is needed. You may want to consider a special transportation needs lane with special needs-trained techs.

Some partner agencies that are providing techs may have [liability concerns](#), so address this as soon as you can. Provide accurate and current educational resources, use car seat and vehicle manual and if you may be providing car seats, have a clear written policy. Have a pre-event meeting to clarify roles and responsibilities emphasizing consistent inspection procedure. The coordinator may want to put new techs with experienced techs to help build upon skills.

September is Child Passenger Safety Month so the media will be participating and promoting local events. Be sure to designate a spokesperson and have a few media packets available. Be sure to follow up with them following the event and take time to thank everyone that participated. No one can do this alone. Each of us makes a difference with every family to be competent and confident in putting their child's car seat in properly.

Additional Resources: [Using Your New Skills](#) and [Map It Out](#)

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

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### **Recommendations for Personal Safety – CPS Techs: Inspections and Checkup Events**

Personal safety at a checkup event while you are assisting a family in a vehicle depends on your own awareness of potential risks. Instructors and event coordinators have always and will continue to preach, "Never put your hands in the bight of the seat!" Including the caregiver can help as they reach in to retrieve the seat belt or find the lower anchors. Old Cheerios are the least of what you may encounter. Technicians may wear gloves, but sharp objects can penetrate them. Technicians may be exposed to a variety of biohazards, contaminants and unknown chemicals and should take precautions before, during and after each inspection.

Recommendations for personal safety include:

- Never put your hands in the bight of a seat, have the caregiver do that
- Keep gloves available for those who choose to use them; change them following each inspection
- Wash hands up to the elbows before, during and after each inspection
- Have hand sanitizer (liquid, gel or hand wipes) available and use them frequently
- Wear comfortable pants and shoes, not sandals or open toe shoes
- Reduce back injury by guiding the caregiver through the installation steps
- Always have a first aid kit available
- If you are injured during an event or have some altered condition during or after the event, contact the event coordinator immediately
- Be sure to stay hydrated
- Apply and reapply sunscreen regularly

The person most responsible for your safety is you!

### What Happens After the Car Seat Check?

Do you ever wonder if that expectant couple you helped with their rear-facing seat actually got it right once the baby arrived? Or if the dad who insisted his 4-year-old should be in a booster really understood that each stage offers less protection? Are the people who attend your car seat checks still using what they learned six months later?

One of the ongoing challenges with car seat checks is measuring changes in knowledge, attitudes and behavior after the event. Yes, we teach best practice and fill out checklist forms that document misuse and corrections, but how do we know if people actually understood and practice what we talked about?

Say the word “evaluation” and your event organizers may run for the hills. But evaluation is a necessary process that should be more than just calculating the number of families seen. It doesn’t have to be time-consuming or tedious or distract us from what we need to do. In fact, it can help us pinpoint issues, attract sponsors and measure how well we are achieving our goals. Evaluations tell us what we don’t know so we can act to improve how we provide education.

One of the simplest ways to measure impact is by using a survey. Some techs use paper and pencil surveys and enter the data in a program like Excel. Some call people after the seat checks to follow up on the service and to see if parents and caregivers have any questions. Others use online forms through services like [Google Drive](#) or [Survey Monkey](#).

[I’m Safe!](#) is testing a new evaluation platform called “Results Now.” Data is collected in the way that is easiest for the participant, and you can see the results in real time. It also provides an easy way to follow up with people three to 12 months later to see how much they have retained. The end result is simplified data collection and analysis so you can improve your outreach. I’m Safe! **needs your help**. They are looking for four to six pilot sites to test the new platform (for free, of course!) and help you demonstrate the effectiveness of your injury prevention programs. If you are interested, please contact Wendy, [wendygordon@imsafe.com](mailto:wendygordon@imsafe.com).

Submitted by Wendy Gordon, I’m Safe! (Rockland, Maine)

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### Adapting Resources: Including Nurses as CPS Educators

As CPS technicians, we know that involvement and support from the medical field is critical. Most nurses may be very supportive of the CPST certification, but simply can’t take that step. Understanding that not everyone has to be a CPST, a basic education program can build those bridges.

In California, hospitals and birthing centers must educate caregivers of child patients on child passenger safety basics. Specifically, [California Health & Safety Code 1268](#) mandates a hospital’s responsibility to educate parents on the risks of improper restraint, and provide referral to a resource for checking proper installation. [California Vehicle Code 27363.5 a & b](#) states that hospitals must provide information on the car seat laws to the person into whose care the child will be discharged.

Often, child passenger safety education falls to the nursing staff and is accomplished by handing out a pamphlet at discharge. If a hospital is following best practice, it will have policies in keeping with The American Academy of Pediatrics’ policy statement, “[Hospital Stay for Healthy Term Newborn Infants](#).”

It recommends that prior to discharge and after an appropriate car seat has been obtained, the mother is to demonstrate to “trained” hospital staff appropriate infant positioning and use of the car seat.

How are nurses being trained in proper car seat use? What happens after the parent of the soon-to-be-discharged infant finishes reading the pamphlet and now has questions about getting their child home safely? By mandate or out of the necessary born by questioning caregivers, nurses need to be trained.

Hospitals in California take unique approaches to their legal responsibilities in car seat education. For some, it is a pamphlet and for others it is training key nurses to be CPSTs. However, it is clear that a hospital-oriented curriculum on car seat safety is lacking for child passenger safety.

To develop a basic course for nurses, we are using the Safe Kids Basic Awareness Course as a base. The materials, including speaker notes, PowerPoint slides, sample certificate and evaluations, are all available to [download for free](#) and we are encouraged to adapt it to best meet our needs. Developed to be used abroad, it is a useful starter for communities where seat belt and car seat use is not the norm. [Read more](#) about the materials to see how you can use it in your community. When you are ready, you can fill out the [short online form](#) to download the materials. Stay tuned for more information and resources about a new eight hour course being developed specifically for RNs.

Building relationships with nurses can begin now, so when the one-day awareness course is ready you will have made a connection already.

Submitted by Bonnie Lovette, UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospital (Oakland, Calif.) and Carol Powers, Alameda County Emergency Medical Services (San Leandro, Calif.) and Kat Woolbright, Safe Kids Alameda County (San Leandro, Calif.)

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### **It’s Not Personal: Seat Check Sign-offs for Recertification are All About the Kids**

You’ve got mail. It’s that time again or maybe for the first time! The letter arrives in the mail and an e-mail in your inbox reminding you that it is time to recertify. Hopefully, you have begun to prepare long before this time by earning CEUs, participating in community events and working with experienced technicians or instructors. However, for some this means a panicky feeling begins to form in the pit of their stomach. Someone is going to judge me! Or for some, [where do I find that instructor or event to get sign-offs?](#)

As we all know, both technicians and instructors are required to have five specific seat checks signed-off for recertification. The instructors or tech proxies that are evaluating these sign-offs are not checking how well *you* can do each installation. Safe Kids requires this review to evaluate your communication and technical skills with the caregivers for these installations. Don’t take it personally if you are asked to explain something in more detail or where to find more information!

Following [current curriculum](#) and manufacturer guidelines are the key. As techs, we promote best practice but we can always accept use following manufacturer instructions. Think of **good, better, best.**

- **Good** is following the minimum manufacturer instructions for height and weight.
- **Better** is mid-way. No matter how long or short of a time you have been a technician, there is always something to learn. This field is not black

and white. We don't have to have all of the information. We just need to know how and where to get it. Technicians and instructors need to allow the caregiver's input, questions and concerns when assisting with a car seat check.

- **Best** is best practice, such as maxing out height or weight limits on seats.

There are a variety of resources available to help guide the seat check reviews and allow for helpful feedback to the technician. One of these tools, a [checklist](#), is sent via e-mail to any technician who requests seat sign-offs. We also use a [weighted evaluation form](#) to conduct the review.

Sometimes a technician does not pass a particular sign-off. However, since it is all about the kids and their safety, please recognize this as an opportunity to grow. The instructor then has an opportunity to work with you and provide some mentoring before you try again.

We are not judging you! We are ensuring quality seat checks are performed for everyone to be safer.

Submitted by Danielle Kessenger, Safe Kids Northeast Florida (Jacksonville, Fla.)

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### **Communication is Key: Seat Checks**

CPSTIs have an important responsibility within the CPS Certification Program. Other than training new technicians, they are responsible for making sure the existing technicians are keeping their skills current. The skills necessary for being a CPST involve not only technical skill, but communication skill. It will do a caregiver little good to watch a CPST install their car seat. During a seat check, the CPST needs to use their communication skill to educate the caregiver. During a seat check sign off, the verifying instructor needs to observe that communication. If the CPSTI does not feel confident in the communication skills of a CPST, the sign-off should not be passed. There are [tools](#) available to help the verifying instructor to make sure all of the necessary topics are covered with the caregiver.

With [Seat Check Saturday](#) approaching, technicians may be looking at large events as an opportunity to complete one or more of their sign-offs. Because these events are usually large and heavily attended, it is probably a better idea to say no to any sign-offs. Instead, suggest that techs in need of sign-offs come to fitting stations that take appointments. This will provide a calmer environment for everyone involved and ensure that the verifying instructor can stay with the technician throughout the entire seat check, which is required. Set yourself up for success by making sure you and the instructor (or technician proxy) are prepared and can spend the time needed for each seat check. Good, better, best applies here, too. For example:

**Good:** The Instructor or Technician Proxy works with you to set up a mock (fake) seat check. In this scenario, someone will need to play the role of the caregiver so that the observing instructor/TP can listen to the communication. Sometimes a coworker or friend are willing to step in to help. The verifying instructor/TP should not take the role of the caregiver. Real or mock, an actual vehicle must always be used for seat checks.

**Better:** An actual seat check at an event, fitting station or scheduled appointment for the sign off. The caregiver is present, the seat check is being done in their vehicle but the child(ren) is not present.

Best: A caregiver comes to a seat check event, fitting station or scheduled appointment for the sign off. The caregiver is present, the seat check is being done in their vehicle and the child(ren) is present.

There are a variety of [FAQS](#) to help techs prepare for their seat checks, including [“I want to recertify and I need to know how to complete my seat check sign-offs. What should I do?”](#).

If you have any tools, tips, or ideas about making the seat check sign-off process better for either the technician or the instructor, we would love to hear from you! Send any comments, suggestions or ideas to [cpsaudit@safekids.org](mailto:cpsaudit@safekids.org).

Submitted by Jami Eklund, Safe Kids Worldwide (Massillon, Ohio)

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### **Coming Soon...Nominations for the National Child Passenger Safety Technician and Instructor of the Year**

Each year, the National CPS Board sponsors the CPS Technician and Instructor of the Year Awards. This is the only national award that honors the men and women who dedicate their time, passion and skills to help improve the safety of children and their caregivers on the road.

What Technician and/or Instructor from your area demonstrates these qualities? Take the time to show them how valuable and appreciated they are by nominating them for one of these national awards.

The nomination period will be September 11, 2017 through November 17, 2017. Go to [www.cpsboard.org](http://www.cpsboard.org) for the nomination form. In the meantime, start thinking about those deserving CPS professionals who should be nominated.

For information about previous winners and nominees, guidelines and eligibility go to [www.cpsboard.org](http://www.cpsboard.org).

Submitted By: Suzanne LeDoyen, National Child Passenger Safety Board, Diversity Representative (Raleigh, N.C.)

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## **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 unless otherwise noted.

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

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## **Conferences**

[Maine CPS Conference](#)

South Portland, Maine  
September 17 – September 19, 2017

[Lifesavers Conference](#)

San Antonio, Texas  
April 22 – April 24, 2018

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## Online Courses

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

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## Upcoming Webinars

- Troubleshoot to avoid problems: [Test your connection now](#)
- [Can I get credit for watching a webinar with a group?](#)
- [Can I use my smartphone?](#)

### **CPST Tools to Introduce CPS to OT/PT Specialists\*\***

Tuesday, September 26, 2017  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET  
[Register now](#)

### **CPS in Pickup Trucks**

Thursday, September 28, 2017  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET  
[Register now](#)

### **CPS and Head Start\*\***

Thursday, October 12, 2017  
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. ET  
[Register now](#)

### **Car Seat Manufacturer Update: Diono**

Thursday, November 16, 2017  
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. ET  
[Register now](#)

More webinars coming soon! Mid-month updates posted on [Facebook](#).

\*\* Not eligible for CPS CEUs but eligible for the Community Education requirement

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## For Instructors

## Don't Teach to the Test – Teach to the Curriculum

Instructors teaching the current curriculum prepare themselves as a team to provide the best learning experience they can for the technician candidates. We would all like to have 100% of the class pass the course and go on to be a valuable resource in the community. Teams at the end of the day meetings often look to see who may be struggling and see how they may support that tech with after class - review sessions or team up with a stronger candidate or instructor.

Prepare for a class like it was when you were an instructor candidate: What are the most important points in each of the modules and exercises or activities that reinforce those points. Have periodic meetings with fellow instructors. Be creative, but follow the curriculum.

If we are following the curriculum guidelines and details properly, there should not ever be the need to prompt students during the course on a question they may expect to see in a test. No pounding the desk, clearing the throat or other variations. Information that we highlight or repeat should be on what is important to share with a family; rear facing, harness at or below the shoulder, etc. How they share this information with families is what is important. The end game is not just passing the test, it is what they have learned and communicate to help a family travel more safely. We must never push someone through who isn't ready – either by skills or for the written test. We have to keep our eye on the end game—quality technicians helping kids.

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

## Questions? Comments? Concerns?

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[cps.certification@safekids.org](mailto:cps.certification@safekids.org)  
Phone: 877-366-8154 (toll free)  
Fax: 202-393-2072

### 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](mailto:kchausmer@safekids.org).

All submissions may be edited for content and length.

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[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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