

Maryland Child Passenger Safety Recommended Guidelines

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL UPDATES

There is one **nationally recognized certification course** available for Child Passenger Safety: the **National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Training Program**. This 32-hour technical training course is offered at various times and locations throughout the state. For more information or to locate a course in your area, visit www.cpsboard.org and click on "Class Registration and CPS Certification."

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has developed several child passenger safety training courses targeting specific audiences: RNs, law enforcement, bus drivers, and Fire/EMS personnel. Please note that upon completion of these courses, participants will have a greater understanding of child passenger safety and related issues, **but will not be certified technicians**.

For more information call: **Maryland Highway Safety Office** 410-787-4077
MD Kids In Safety Seat (KISS) 1-800-370-SEAT/410-767-6016 or e-mail:
kiss@dhhm.state.md.us

The National SAFE KIDS Campaign's SAFE KIDS Buckle Up Program provides child passenger safety technical update courses for certified technicians who would like to learn about new technology, products, or best-practice recommendations in child passenger safety. Contact **KISS** to find out when update-training opportunities are scheduled in your area.

Various awareness presentations for parents, care providers, loaner program staff and agency personnel may be provided by trained Child Passenger Safety Technicians. Contact **KISS** for more information or to schedule a program.

CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTION GUIDELINES

Child safety seat check-up events or inspections may be offered to the public in different ways:

- 1) **Permanent Fitting Stations (PFS)**- a location offering regularly scheduled seat check-up events (either by appointment or on a drop-in basis) staffed by currently certified CPS Technicians and Technician Instructors and/or Senior Checkers. For more information about becoming a PFS or to list your PFS as a Maryland resource, contact **KISS**.
- 2) **One-time Events** - staffed by certified CPS Technicians and Technician Instructors and/or Senior Checkers, and volunteers and held in advertised locations (can be open to the public or by appointment only).
- 3) **On-site Private Check-up Events** - usually scheduled for a particular group/organization and closed to the public. Staffed by certified CPS Technicians and Technician Instructors and/or Senior Checkers.

Note: Regardless of the setting, the goal of a child safety seat check-up event is for each child to leave safely and for the parent or care provider to be an active participant in the installation/education process.

Time Frame

A successful child safety seat check-up event takes at least 3 months to plan, organize, recruit Senior Checkers/Technicians/Volunteers, obtain sponsorship/site location and supplies, and finally, to publicize. Many well-meaning organizations have had to cancel an advertised child safety seat check-up

event or have had unsafe events with very long waiting lines, angry parents and too few technicians to inspect safety seats because the proper staffing/supplies were not obtained in advance. **Don't let this happen to you!!**

Staffing

At least one **Senior Checker** should be present at any of the above-mentioned check-up events. A **Senior Checker** is defined as an individual that:

- Has a **current** National Standardized Child Passenger Safety Technician certification and/or Technician Instructor certification;
- Has **at least one year of experience** in child passenger safety (after becoming a technician);
- Has participated in (actually installing seats) at least six (6) supervised child safety seat checkup events beyond the requirements for becoming a technician;
- Ideally is a CPS Technician Instructor or Instructor Candidate; and
- Has **completed the Senior Technician application** process through Maryland Child Passenger Safety Advisory Board by:
 - Submitting an application along with a listing of at least six (6) supervised safety seat checkup events.
 - Submitting two (2) letters of recommendation for senior checker status from certified CPS Instructors.
- And/or has been approved by and received his/her Senior Technician confirmation letter from the Maryland Child Passenger Safety Advisory Board.

Note: Regional lists of Senior Checkers approved by the MD CPS Advisory Board may be obtained from MD KISS at 800-370-SEAT or 410-767-6016.

A **CPS Technician** is defined as an individual with experience in child safety seat installation who has successfully completed the four day National Standardized CPS course as of 1996, and holds a current technician certification number issued by AAA or the National SAFE KIDS Campaign.

A **CPS Assistant** is an individual with experience in child passenger safety and who has participated in at least a four or eight hour course. An **Assistant** may assist a **Technician** by checking the recall list and completing the seat check form.

It is recommended that there be at least the minimum number of **Senior Checkers** and **CPS Technicians** present at every seat check. The **Senior Checker** should oversee each seat inspected by a **Technician**. *Under no circumstances should a vehicle leave the premises without a Senior Checker "double checking" the safety of the installation.* The number of **Senior Checkers** present shall be determined by the number of anticipated child safety seats to be inspected. The recommendations are as follows:

<u>Anticipated Number of Seats</u>	<u>Number of Senior Checkers</u>	<u>Number of CPS Technicians</u>	<u>Number of CPS Assistants</u>
Up to 25	2	6-8	6-8
26-50	4	10-12	10-12
51-75	6	12-14	12-14
76-100	8	14-16	14-16
101-150	10-12	18-20	18-20

Additionally, *no seat check should be planned without the availability of a law enforcement-trained Traffic Flow Coordinator, to ensure the safety of both participants and checkers.*

Obtaining the services of this Traffic Flow Coordinator is the responsibility of the sponsoring agency.

Additional personnel needed:

- Designated “trouble-shooter”
- Greeters/parent helpers
- Volunteers/Info Table & Clipboards
- Law enforcement officers

When setting up an event, please keep in mind that the average safety seat takes at least 30 minutes to check, and many cars come in with more than one seat. Technicians and other volunteers should be prepared to stay at the event at least two to three hours past the end time of the advertised check (i.e., if the event is scheduled to end at 2:00 p.m., checkers should plan to remain until approximately 4:00 p.m.). Based on Maryland seat check experience and other states’ recommendations, these guidelines have been set up to ensure smooth and safe operation of a safety seat check event.

Forms

The **Maryland Seat Check Form** should be used for seat checks in Maryland unless it is a SAFE KIDS sponsored event or the sponsoring agency/jurisdiction has created its own Risk Management approved seat check form. To obtain forms, the **Event Coordinator and/or Senior Checker** must apply in advance to Maryland KISS and submit an event summary. If the event is sponsored by SAFE KIDS, the **SAFE KIDS seat check forms** will be made available from the National SAFE KIDS Campaign. Good documentation on a well-crafted form is vital to ensuring a correct seat check and reducing liability- do not skip this step!

Materials

For a safe and smooth seat check, a technician must have all materials necessary to conduct a child safety seat inspection. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization/agency to provide either supplies or financial support for the purchase of supplies. Necessary supply quantities are dependent upon the size of the event.

Materials/equipment required for every child safety seat inspection:

Manufacturers’ Instructions (either hard copy or CD ROM w/ laptop computer)
Current Recall List(s)
Seat Check Forms (KISS/SAFE KIDS or other approved forms)
Educational brochures/handouts (list of suggested literature on last page)
Locking clips (regular and heavy duty/ belt shortening clips)
Clipboards
Pens/pencils

Larger events will also require the following:

Tables for information
Trash Cans
Traffic Cones (# is dependent upon # of seat checking traffic lanes)
Child Seat Checkpoint/Clinic Signs
Tape/Rope to designate “safe” area
Child Safety Seats for loan or giveaway (convertible or booster)
Towels, sheets, newspaper or fun noodles

Tape (masking or duct, to tape noodles together)
Slip Guard material [shelf liner, etc.]
Towelettes or anti-bacterial gel
Refreshments for checkers**
Easy access to rest facilities, shelter, and water**

** At a minimum, these last two items should be provided by the co-sponsoring agency (toy store, department store, Moms' Club, etc.) The co-sponsor should be asked to supply safety seats and other materials as well, with quantities to be determined by the expected size of the event.

Directions for "Off Street" Location

- Set up in a parking lot or other controllable site out of the flow of traffic.
- Rope or tape off area to create a contained "safe" zone.
- Set up signs leading to checkpoint/clinic "safe" area.
- Use traffic cones to funnel traffic into and out of "safe" zone.
- Have a traffic flow coordinator to move vehicles into a safe position. One person can be assigned the entrance: another, the exit.
- Assign a team of at least two, if possible, to check the child seat fit in each vehicle and assist the driver in correctly installing the child safety seat. This team will also be responsible for guiding the vehicle into a designated safe spot and guiding the car to the exit coordinator.

Event Summary

Data collection is vital to all child passenger safety efforts in Maryland. Data helps to establish misuse trends, track allocation of CPS resources, and justify community-based CPS programs. To support data collection there is a Seat Check Event Summary Form, available to senior checkers, PFS Coordinators and other seat check event coordinators which summarizes the following information:

- Event location and time
- Number of seats inspected, including breakdown of seat type (infant, convertible, forward-facing only, booster)
- Misuse rate, including most common error(s) or problem(s) detected
- Indication of any media coverage

Upon completion of any CPS seat check event in Maryland, this form should be faxed to KISS at (410) 333-5385. If your senior checker or Event/Permanent Fitting Station Coordinator did not receive this form, please call 800-370-SEAT or 410-767-6016 to request a copy.

COMMUNICATION WITH KISS

Maryland Kids In Safety Seats is the statewide resource for child passenger safety, accessible to all Maryland residents and professionals. In order for the citizens of Maryland to obtain consistent child passenger safety information and assistance, **organizations or individuals should:**

- **Notify** KISS of seat check, PFS calendar or related event location, time, and date to be included on the KISS website.
- **Register** your agency/organization so it may be entered into KISS's database in order to receive technical updates and/or educational resources as available.

- **Inform** KISS if you or your organization will be offering additional services to the public such as answering questions and/or inspecting seats by appointment (i.e. PFS).

KISS will provide:

- CPS information, referrals, and technical assistance to parents, caregivers and professionals via 1-800-370-SEAT or www.mdkiss.org
- Contact information for potential Senior Checkers. Please note: The responsibility for securing volunteers (i.e. Senior Checkers, certified technicians, and others as outlined above) ultimately lies with the sponsoring agency or organization.

Child Passenger Safety Resources Available From KISS Upon Request:

Senior Technician List (listed by regions)
 Senior Technician Application
 Maryland Seat Check Forms
 Safety Seat Check Forms Request
 Seat Check Event Summary Form
 Seat Check Promotion/Listing/Referrals Services
 Maryland Regional Child Passenger Safety Trailer Request Form

Suggested Educational Brochures/Literature Available From KISS, SHA and/or NHTSA:

Every Child Deserves a Safe Ride
 Are You Using It Right?
 Safety Belt Safe Tip Sheets
 Maryland Occupant Protection Law Cards
 NHTSA Recall List

Call 800-370-SEAT/ 410-767-6016 or e-mail kiss@dhhm.state.md.us for any of the above.

A Final (but Very Important) Note:

*Please remember that our job as child passenger safety advocates is not to install each seat by ourselves, with no assistance from or interaction with the parent or caregiver. Parents or caregivers **MUST** be involved in the seat installation to the extent that they are physically able to. When we involve the caregiver in installations--and give them the information they need for their child's development into the next restraint system--not only are we reducing our liability, but we also are empowering them to become CPS advocates and to use best practices.*

These guidelines are recommended by the **Maryland Child Passenger (CPS) Safety Advisory Board**. The MD CPS Advisory Board has been established to monitor and provide direction & technical guidance to individuals, communities and organizations as a means to maintain a credible, standardized and diverse Child Passenger Safety Program.