

What should you, as a caregiver, expect from a Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technician?

The car seat installation experience is an interactive one. As the caregiver, you should leave confident that your child's seat is installed correctly AND that you are comfortable reinstalling and using it correctly. To ensure that you have the best experience you should prepare for an education.

- If expecting, schedule an appointment 1 to 2 months prior to Mom's due date. Many CPS Technicians and their agencies require appointments several weeks in advance and some moms deliver early.
- If your child is already born, know your child's weight and height.
- If your child is already born, bring your child with you. If possible, also bring another adult to help watch the child while you are learning.
- Using the Child Car Seat Instructions, install the seat into your vehicle prior to your appointment.
- Look up "Child Safety Seats" in your Vehicle Owner's Manual. You will learn how a child's car seat should be installed in YOUR car. The Car Seat Manual may not reference the requirements specific to your vehicle.
- Bring the Car Seat Instructions AND the Vehicle Owner's Manual with you to your appointment!
- Be prepared to learn, not just watch the CPS Technician install the car seat. They're trained to teach you, not install it for you.

This one-on-one education typically takes 20-30 minutes, depending on the car seat and the vehicle. The CPS Technician should take **all the time necessary** to ensure that you feel competent and confident in re-securing the car seat into the vehicle and re-buckling your child into the car seat **on your own**.

Card your tech! Ask to see proof of his or her current certification.

During the check up, a competent CPS Technician will:

- Fill out a checklist form (including car seat type, location in vehicle, misuse observations, if any, etc.).
- Review car seat selection appropriate for your child's age, size, and review factors affecting proper use.
- Review the Car Seat Instructions and the Vehicle Owner's Manual with the caregiver and ensure that both are being followed correctly.
- Ensure that an appropriate seating position in the vehicle is being used, especially when using LATCH.
- Check the car seat for recalls, visible damage and an expiration date.
- Have you install the car seat(s) correctly using either the seat belt or LATCH system. You are encouraged to ask to learn how to install the seat with either options or in different seating positions.
- Discuss the next steps for each child, such as when to move to the next type of car seat.
- Discuss the benefits of everyone riding properly restrained, including all adults.
- Discuss safety in and around the vehicle.
- Discuss your state laws and best practice recommendations for occupant safety.

After the check up, ensure you can say yes to ALL of these questions:

- Did you perform the installation?
- Do you feel confident about installing and using the car seat correctly?
- Were your questions answered? If not, were you given direction as to who you should contact or will the CPS Technician follow up with you?

This tool is brought to you by the Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety. Members include: Britax, Chicco, Clek, Combi, Dorel Juvenile Group, Evenflo, Graco, Learning Curve-The First Years, Mia Moda, Orbit Baby, Recaro, Safe Traffic Systems and Sunshine Kids.