



California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Vehicle Occupant Safety Program (VOSP)

e-Newsletter for California's Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Community (Summer 2022)

This quarterly e-Newsletter provides a summary of CPS laws and programmatic support for the California community of local health departments, instructors, technicians, and advocates.

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I. CPS Technician Curriculum – The HYBRID is Here!

As a CPS Instructor you've already heard about the Hybrid CPS Technician curriculum that will be launched as of July 1, 2022. The new delivery method was created to expand the reach and accessibility of the nationally standardized certification training. The hybrid "offering" (as it's being called) includes self-paced e-learning, virtual instructor-led trainings and in-person meeting (hands-on testing and check-up event) components. The hybrid course is designed to fit the learning styles and schedules of anyone who would benefit from a flexible instruction setting.

To be eligible to teach the hybrid, Instructors must successfully complete the *Instructor Hybrid Endorsement Training*, which includes the new e-learning modules of the hybrid curriculum, a *Train-the-Trainer* e-learning and an accompanying quiz. Information to access the *Instructor Hybrid Endorsement Training* is available on the [Instructor Protected Materials page](#).

The CPS Board has useful tools and information to answer all your questions on how to use to the curriculum, what it looks like, and options around implementation.

- [CPS Board Hybrid Curriculum](#)
- [Video](#) on Implementation
- [Webinars](#) for Instructors all throughout June 2022
- [Comparison](#) with Hybrid and In-Person

II. 5 Step Test – Is it time to be out of booster seat, or not?

[SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A.](#) developed the [5 Step Test](#) over 20 years ago, advocating for children to stay in booster seats until they fit properly in the vehicle seat belt alone. The 5 Step Test assists parents (and law enforcement) to evaluate each child in the vehicle to know if a child is ready to come out of a booster seat and can use only the vehicle seat belt as their primary restraint. Have you tried the 5 Step Test yet?

The 5-Step Test!

Here is the exercise to do with children who have outgrown a forward-facing car seat with a harness. First have the child get ready for a “pretend” ride by sitting in the car and buckling up with the lap and shoulder belt in the back seat. And then answer the following questions:

1. Is the child sitting tall so his/her whole back is touching the seatback? ___Yes ___ No (If no, ask the child to move all the way back before continuing.)
2. Do the child’s knees bend comfortably at the edge of the seat? ___Yes ___ No
3. Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm? ___Yes ___ No
4. Is the lap belt touching the tops of the legs? ___Yes ___ No
5. Can the child sit like this for the whole trip? ___Yes ___ No

If the answer to any of these questions is “no,” the child needs a booster seat to ride safely in the car. Remember, the point of boosters is to improve belt fit (and comfort) in the car until the child fits appropriately in the vehicle seat belt alone!

A. Include the 5 Step Test as part of California’s CPS law?

Typically, children are not ready to graduate out of a booster until they are 10-12 years old according to their sizes based on the standardization of the vehicle seat belt. Even though current CPS laws require children to be “appropriately restrained in a car, booster or vehicle seat belt” under Vehicle Codes [27360](#) and [27360.5](#), having more specificity and a tool to administer for each child to determine best fit for restraint, can assist parents and officers for each child restrained in the vehicle. Potentially changing CA exemption of 4’9” to the 5 Step Test, and corresponding language to encourage booster seats to a higher age, can be a part of the next steps to improve CA CPS law. One state who has incorporated the components of the 5 Step Test into their CPS law is [Louisiana](#). Join us for a discussion about this for the [webinar on July 7, 2022](#), 10:00-11:30am co-sponsored by SafetyBeltSafe U.S.A. and CDPH, and worth 1 CEU (for CPS Technicians).

III. Who Should Be In The Back Seat?

Is it time to change CA back seat component of our CPS law? We all know that the front passenger seat visor says, “no one should ride in this seat until they have reached 13 years old?” Why is that? Children’s internal organs cannot withstand the crash forces of the airbag being deployed without damage until they are this age. We see support for this in all the research from the [Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia](#), [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), [NHTSA](#), and the vehicle manufacturers.

California law requires children to ride in the back seat only until they reach their 8th birthday, but should they ride in the front seat from 8-12 years? If they do, they are increasing their risk of injury if they are in a crash. [According to Insurance Institute for Highway Safety seventeen other states](#) have a rear seat component to their CPS law, with four specifically keeping children restrained in the back seat to 11 or 12 years old (WA, DE, ME, and LA).

IV. We are here to support you!

Please contact VOSP staff if you have any CPS Technician Training requests or questions, need CPS educational materials, or want to be on the list to receive future VOSP e-Newsletters. We appreciate your efforts to improve vehicle occupant safety even during these trying and uncertain times. We will strive to provide you with the best customer service and support possible. Please reach out to our team with any questions you may have.



Kate Bernacki, M.P.H.

Kate.Bernacki@cdph.ca.gov



Claudia Angel

Claudia.Angel@cdph.ca.gov

If you have any CPS programmatic questions, please contact **Mitch Zehnder**, the Office of Traffic Safety Occupant Protection and CPS State Coordinator, at (916) 509-3026 or Mitch.Zehnder@ots.ca.gov.

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