



California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Vehicle Occupant Safety Program (VOSP) e-Newsletter for California's Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Community (Spring 2024)

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

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I. CPS/OP Conviction Data

Attached is the annual Excel spreadsheet with all the county (and California) CPS, OP and Kaitlyn's law convictions. Overall, we have seen a decrease in Kaitlyn's Law convictions (30), but an increase in CPS related convictions (2,591). If all convictions yielded the optimal \$100/conviction that's \$262,100 worth of fine monies coming into CPS prevention at the local level. Spread out all over the state and by county it's not much and many counties tend to use it to purchase car seats when they have no other way to obtain them for their local activities.

What's interesting is that some counties saw an increase in CPS related convictions, including: Fresno, Imperial, Kern, Kings, LA, Madera, Marin, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara. This is good news for everyone because it means it's possible to increase the number of convictions with the strengthening of your program efforts to train and encourage law enforcement (and outreach to the courts to convict) on knowing how to cite for CPS violations. This [video](#) is available on YouTube for those of you who want to offer a training tool to law enforcement.

A. Background

CDPH/VOSP receives conviction data from CA Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) for convictions to Vehicle Codes (VC) [27360](#) (ages 0-8 in the rear seat), [27360.5](#) (ages 8-16), [15620](#) if children are left unattended in vehicles, as well as the adult seat belt code [27315](#). As you can see in the California table there has been a drop in convictions across all vehicle codes over the years (table includes 2012-2023, except 2016 and 2017), as our adult seat

belt use goes up, and we hope that CPS use is also increasing, but more likely there is less funding and ability/commitment to citing for CPS violations.

As you know, parents (or the driver in the absence of a parent in the vehicle) are cited for CPS violations by California Highway Patrol (CHP) or local law enforcement (police or sheriff) ticket. A conviction yields a \$500 ticket; the violator may choose to pay the fine, attend traffic school (to eliminate the point), and may take a CPS violator education class (to waive or reduce the fine) if a class is offered within 50 miles of their residence (and if a class is not offered than this component is waived). CPS Violator Education programs exists in several California counties; please check the [Who's Got Car Seats? resource](#) for a program in your county. After a conviction, the courts will send this information to the DMV, and the local public health program receives the \$100 base fine (or portion of it) for its CPS program. These fines do help keep CPS prevention activities going in our local counties.

B. How do I use the Data?

DMV conviction data can help with identifying trends in CPS activity in your county. Review the data for total numbers of convictions (in each of the vehicle codes) to see if they have gone up or down or remained constant. Compare across several years and think about factors to attribute to any variations in convictions. Changes in the law often engages law enforcement who will then cite more rigorously during the first year to raise awareness and gain public compliance.

Use the information in all the vehicle codes provided to compare between years and across counties. Review counties with similar population size or neighboring counties for comparisons. In addition, you can review your fine monies, secured through the courts to your local public health jurisdiction, and evaluate if the fine monies trend corresponds to the number of convictions. (Although this is not an exact correlation because fines may be reduced or waived). You can use all this information to direct your program efforts by better informing your anticipated fine money coming in, taking action to support local law enforcement to cite CPS violators, or deciding if you want to offer a violator education program in your county. Contact VOSP if you have any questions.

II. Behavior Skills Training (BST) Study for CPS

Ever wonder how we can make a lasting impact with our educational outreach when we install car seats and provide information to families? Jim DeCarli has conducted primary research using a behavior skills training model and applied it to the CPS car seat inspections. Please join us to learn about Jim's newly published work on a [webinar](#) on March 19, 2024, 10:00-11:00am. This webinar will discuss a brief scope and outcomes of a recently published longitudinal study of 2,448 expectant women and their partners that assessed the efficacy of the use of behavioral skills training to reduce car seat misuse. The discussion will describe the background on what led up to this study as part of the California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), why the use of behavioral skills training is beneficial, and how it can be an additional method to help improve the objectives of CPSTs.

III. Upcoming Conferences

[Lifesavers](#) – National conference for transportation safety professionals. April 7-9, 2024, Denver, CO. Next year it's in Long Beach, CA, so plan on attending! Registration is \$600-700.

[Kidz In Motion \(KIM\)](#) – International Child Passenger Safety conference, August 22-23, 2024, Florida.

IV. We are here to support you!

Please contact VOSP staff if you have any CPS programmatic, Technician Training requests or questions, need CPS educational materials, or want to be on the list to receive future VOSP e-Newsletters. Please reach out to our team with any questions you may have.



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If you have any questions regarding CPS grant opportunities, please contact **Nancy Wolf**, the Office of Traffic Safety CPS State Coordinator, at Nancy.Wolf@ots.ca.gov.

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