

Putting Together a Successful Tech Update

Introduction

The CPS Technical Update will provide accurate and up-to-date information to child passenger safety technicians and instructors who provide various programs in the community. Updates or refreshers are designed to assist families, caregivers, and agencies in the correct selection, use, and installation of child safety seats. Sessions assist certified child passenger safety technicians and technician instructors maintain their knowledge in the ever-changing child passenger safety environment. Topics covered may include a review of research reports, new terminology and or updates from the revised Standardized CPS Course, new vehicle/car seat technology, and other topics of interest. Keep in mind that there are a range of technician experiences from brand new to seasoned technicians looking to be challenged.

Attending a Technical Update class allows the opportunity for discussion and questions to be asked so participants can gain a clear understanding of difficult or misunderstood topics. Attendees also may earn CEUs that can be used toward their CPS Re-certification process and other non-CEU topics that will provide valuable tools for CPS programs.

Technical Update classes provide additional benefits:

- Continuing connection between the instructor and cps technicians serves as a mutual resource for information, clarification, and questions that may arise.
- Networking: getting to know other technicians in the area that will be able to support each other in the community.
- Updated technician contact information for state databases and a chance to remind technicians to update their personal profile online.
- An opportunity to view new CRS technology and products or topics that may be of interest.
- An opportunity for technicians to build upon technical and communication skills.
- Provide continuing education units (CEUs) for recertification. The number of CEUs offered may vary according to the agenda planned by the instructor team and needs of the local program(s) hosting the class.
- An opportunity to share non CEU information that would assist programs and staff.
- Motivate or re-motivate technicians.
- An avenue to encourage recertification.

Lessons Learned:

Agenda:

- Consider what type of agenda is most beneficial and cost effective; 1 or 2 hr.; ½ day or full day events.
- Consider the audience and number of potential participants when choosing a location or facility.
- Technicians come from a variety of different backgrounds - law enforcement, hospitals, EMS, public health, etc. It is possible to accommodate different groups by offering either an **Attendance Certificate** for each session or use a passport system. A sticker or stamp by each session completed may fit the needs for someone that can participate all day or only for one or two sessions. (Passport examples available at <http://cert.safekids.org/ResourcesFAQs/Forms/Recertification.aspx>)

- Consider applying for continuing education from other disciplines – law enforcement, nursing, Social Worker, etc., so participants will get CEUs for their technician recertification, as well as for their professional discipline.
- If it is a short day, technicians may be provided with the resources to get the remaining CEUs outside of the workshops – For example: a copy of the LATCH quiz, information on on-line opportunities, CR manufacturer instructions, etc.
 - Check out [Tips on How to Earn Your CEUs \(at home, no fees\)](http://cert.safekids.org/ResourcesFAQs/Forms/Recertification.aspx) available at <http://cert.safekids.org/ResourcesFAQs/Forms/Recertification.aspx>.
- Copy the agenda on the back of the certificate of attendance so they only have one piece of paper.

Looking for potential topics? Review NHTSA, IIHS, and manufacturer’s websites, Safe Ride News, Tech Update, online conference topics and speakers like Lifesavers. Survey your technicians to what they want/need.

Advertising or promoting the update:

- Keep your list or database of techs and instructors updated.
- Broadcast email sent out to all the technicians by county or multicounty.
- Ask for participants to register for the class and send a follow-up confirmation email as a reminder.
- Ask the State CPS Coordinator for assistance in reaching technicians.

Consider duplicating or rotating the technical update or refresher class around the region or state. This makes the classes accessible to CPS Technicians without them having to drive long distances.

Incorporate discussions to break up the day and hands-on activities following lunch.

Evaluate topics to determine if they meet CEU eligibility and [submit for preapproval](#). This is most helpful in promoting event to employers who may be sending staff to the update.

Handouts are most helpful, provide new fact sheets, information on resources and where to get them, download recertification information and the Code of Conduct from <http://cert.safekids.org/ImATech.aspx>.

Outline

The following is a list of potential considerations in planning for a technical update or refresher course; it is not exhaustive. Some of these considerations may not apply to some refresher or technical updates.

It is best to start out small and build upon your success. Don't forget to utilize the resources in your own community.

Pre-Tech Update

- Type of update: 1 or 2 hrs.; ½ day; all day
- Determine date/alternate dates
- Location; alternate locations
 - Conduct site inspection
- Facility/location: Free or Fee
- Availability to parking lot or indoor bays for hands on exercises
- AV equipment and screen/wall
 - Availability of IT person to assist with AV issues
- Onsite coordinator
- Updated database or list of CPST and CPSTI
- Registration free or fee
- Develop a registration form and process; volunteers
- Printing for student manuals/handouts; include selected recertification handouts
- Internet access/wireless
- Clicker system
- Set up (classroom or conference)
- Breakout rooms
- Technician folders/manual
- Name tags; ribbons for speakers, special guests
- Confirm registration of attendees
- Seats checked for recertification; before/after/announce check up events with instructors present
- Identify opportunities for networking
- Food, breakfast, snacks, lunch, afternoon break; local restaurants
- Certificate of Attendance or passport

- Potential speakers/topics
 - Survey of what techs want
 - Assist speakers/guests with travel/hotel recommendations/accommodations
 - Deadlines for speakers presentation and handouts
 - Allow for questions (during presentation, end of session)
 - New Technology; contacting manufacturers to participate well in advance)
 - Request 2 or 3 objectives for each session that qualifies for CEUs
 - Prepare and submit CEU preapproval request (allow 30 days prior to event)
 - Opportunity in agenda for topics that do not qualify for CEUs but are important to include

- Station with a computer and someone to assist in entering CEUs
- Establish Budget/Additional sponsors needed to cover expenses
 - In-kind donations

- Promotion
 - Post reunion on national calendar
 - Contact the State CPS Coordinator

- Incentives/tools for techs
 - LATCH manuals, CRMI CD
 - Drawings
 - Resource table with handouts
 - Recognition awards

- Exhibitor space
- Develop a good evaluation tool of speakers, facility, future topics of interest

During Tech Update:

- Familiarize each speaker with audio-visual equipment
- Registration
- Sign in sheet (keep for records)
- Welcome
- Distribute CEU certificate/passport

Post Tech Update:

- Collate and summarize evaluations and send to speakers
- Thank you letters/notes to sponsors, special guests, manufacturers
- Debriefing for committee; lessons learned; tentative plans for next event
- What topics are of interest for the next event

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