OBJECTIVES

• Determine the safest seating positions and appropriate restraints for all occupants.
• Communicate effectively with caregivers.

SAFE SEATING POSITIONS AND RESTRAINTS

The safest vehicle seating position varies by many factors such as the occupant’s age, weight, height, type of car seat, type of vehicle seat, and seat belt system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seating Position</th>
<th>Safety Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front seat</td>
<td>• Near the windshield and front air bag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Closest to front impact crash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More safety features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second row driver side outboard</td>
<td>• Passenger on closest side to oncoming traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seat</td>
<td>• Typically on traffic side when parking on a street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Near side air bags, if present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not easy to glance at a child from this seat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Side impact crash could affect this seat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second row passenger side</td>
<td>• Typically on curbside when parking on a street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>outboard seat</td>
<td>• Near side air bags, if present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second row center seat</td>
<td>• Furthest from impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Away from air bags</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Seating Considerations

• When there are multiple children, typically putting the child needing the most protection (such as youngest, and special needs) in the center seat is favored.
• Caregivers may want to keep children away from the doors and windows.
• The rear-facing child may fit better in the rear center seat if the recline of the car seat pushes the front seats too far forward.

Consider the needs of all family members when discussing seating positions.
“Above all other documentation, always follow the car seat and vehicle instruction manuals. If you need further assistance, call the car seat manufacturer directly. Many of them are car seat technicians like you.”

Manufacturers Alliance for Child Passenger Safety (MACPS)

**Practice Activity: Identify Safe Seating Arrangements, Part 1**

Review the needs of a family and identify possible safe seating arrangements.

1. Identify the appropriate and best seating position in the vehicle for the four family members using the appropriate child/vehicle restraint systems.

2. Review the information about the family members and vehicle restraints. Determine where each of the following family members can sit safely and write your seating position and vehicle restraint selections in the spaces provided.
   - Driver (Parent #1)
   - Parent #2
   - 2-month-old, 11 pounds
   - 3-year-old, 30 pounds
   - 8-year-old, 72 pounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front Seat of Vehicle</th>
<th>Back Seat of Vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver seat (Parent #1)</td>
<td>Air bag and lap-and-shoulder</td>
<td>Lap-and-shoulder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air bag and lap-and-shoulder</td>
<td>Air bag and lap-and-shoulder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lap-and-shoulder</td>
<td>Lap only</td>
<td>Lap-and-shoulder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Practice Activity: Identify Safe Seating Arrangements, Part 2

Review the needs of a second family and identify possible safe seating arrangements.

1. Identify the appropriate and best seating position in the vehicle for the 4 family members using the appropriate child/vehicle restraint systems.

2. Review the information about the family members and vehicle restraints. Determine where each of the following family members can sit safely and write your seating position and vehicle restraint selections in the spaces provided.

   - Driver (Parent #1)
   - Parent #2
   - 7-month-old, 24 pounds
   - 2-year-old, 27 pounds
   - 4-year-old, 41 pounds
   - 12-year-old, 85 pounds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front Seat of Vehicle</th>
<th>Back Seat of Vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driver seat (Parent #1)</td>
<td>Air bag and lap-only belt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lap-and-shoulder</td>
<td>Lap only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Effective Communication With Caregivers**

Words that CPS technicians use may be confusing to caregivers.

- Use simple and correct terms. Do **NOT** use shortened versions of terms (such as ALR, ELR) or slang. CPS means child protective services to some and child passenger safety to others.

- Define technical terms or words before you use them.
  - For example, convertible car seat may mean baby seat to the caregiver or rear-facing-only seat may mean infant carrier to the caregiver.
  - Consider what will make more sense to the caregiver – retractor or the part that winds up and stores the seat belt?

- When possible, use the caregiver’s primary language, an interpreter, or photographs/illustrations from the vehicle/car seat owner’s manuals, NHTSA website, etc.

Engage the caregiver and family members.

- Involve caregivers as active participants from the beginning to the end of the educational process.

- Ask follow-up questions to determine what caregivers need. Sometimes caregivers ask a question about one aspect, but upon further questioning they really want help or information about something else.

What are caregivers or family members really asking?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When they ask…</th>
<th>They may really mean…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which car seat is escape-proof?</td>
<td>My child can get out of the car seat by himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When can I turn her around?</td>
<td>I want to see my child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it really safer to face the back?</td>
<td>I don’t feel comfortable not being able to see my child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does my youngest child really need to be in the center of the back seat next to her brother?</td>
<td>My son may bother or poke her causing a disruption in the car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I move him to a seat belt yet?</td>
<td>He is pressuring me to move to a seat belt like all of his friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I need the booster seat for my other child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH CAREGIVERS (CONTINUED)

Look for information about the vehicle and family members that can help you understand their needs.

☑ Is the vehicle or car seat/booster seat old or recalled?
☑ Is English their primary language?
☑ Are there multiple young children in the family?
☑ Are there cultural differences that could affect the caregiver’s knowledge or attitude about safety?

Additional Considerations When Working with Caregivers

Becoming a good CPS Technician takes time and practice.

• Remember that the caregiver should be a full partner from beginning to end. Adults learn best by practicing the skill being taught.

• Your job is to educate – NOT to install the car seat or booster seat for the caregiver. CPS Technicians should be able to talk a caregiver through correct installation and harnessing without even getting into the vehicle. CPS Technicians should never simply install the car seat or booster seat for the caregiver.

• As the caregiver demonstrates correct installation, have him/her explain what he/she is doing. This provides a better learning experience.

• Some caregivers will need more time than others to learn proper use and correct installation of car seats. Do NOT rush them through the process. Allow enough time when you make appointments for families.

• Be positive and encouraging. Point out what they have done correctly.

• Make sure your information is up-to-date and correct before sharing it with caregivers. Even the most experienced CPS Technicians do not know all of the answers. The field is always changing because of new technology.

• It is OK to tell the caregiver that you do not know an answer to a question, but that you will find it for them. It is a good idea to always have a phone available to contact another CPS Technician, Instructor, or manufacturer, if needed. Make sure to have the caregiver’s contact information.

• Remind caregivers of the importance of using vehicle safety features such as child locks that disable power locks on the rear door and automatic window locks that disable rear windows to help keep children safe.

Your goal should be for the child to leave safer than when they arrived – and to equip the caregiver with correct information and a working knowledge of their car seat or booster seat.
Practice Activity: Conduct a Seat Check

Work with your team to apply the information you have learned and skills you have developed to conduct a seat check.

1. Assign roles within your team:
   - **Lead** directly interacts with the caregiver (Instructor).
   - **Scribe** records the findings and works with the caregiver to complete the sample CPS Check Form (located in the TG Appendix).
   - **Assistant** ensures that nothing has been omitted and all appropriate sections are completed.

2. Approach each seat check as you would if you were working with a caregiver.
   - Introduce the team members.
   - Complete the paperwork requirements.
   - Inspect the car seat or booster seat. Remember to take it out of the vehicle and look it over thoroughly inside and out.
   - Identify any misuse and discuss with the caregiver.
   - Teach the caregiver how to use the car seat correctly.

3. Remember the 5 steps to conduct a seat check.
   - **Selection**: Did the caregiver choose the right seat for their child?
   - **Direction**: Is the seat facing the right way in the vehicle?
   - **Location**: Is the seat installed in an appropriate location in the vehicle?
   - **Installation**: Is the seat secured to the vehicle in the right way?
   - **Harnessing**: Is the child placed correctly in the seat with the harness?

Progress Check and Summary

1. Which seat location is the safest in a vehicle for an occupant?

2. What is the main goal for the CPS Technician who is working with a caregiver?

3. Why is it so important for caregivers to practice installing their car seats and booster seats?