



**CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY**  
**COLORADO**

**2013**

# Inspection Station and Event Guide



Child Passenger Safety Team Colorado

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# Inspection Station and Event Guide

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## Who Are We?

CPS Team Colorado encompasses a network of safety and transportation professionals in Colorado who represent Child Passenger Safety (CPS) through public education, technical training, fostering advocacy and providing necessary resources.

The CPS Team Colorado Advisory Council serves as a cooperative body established to monitor and provide program direction and technical guidance to Colorado communities, agencies and organizations, as a means to maintain a credible, effective child passenger safety (CPS) program. The purpose of the CPS Team Colorado Advisory Council is to manage the training, implementation and effectiveness of child passenger safety in the State of Colorado. The guidance developed by this Council is directed toward helping agencies, organizations and others wishing to implement child passenger safety training programs to benefit the public.

## Mission

The mission of Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Team Colorado is to provide an environment in Colorado where every child is properly secured in an approved and appropriate restraint system while riding in a motor vehicle. By leveraging and creating successful partnerships with public safety and community based organizations, CPS Team Colorado will aid in establishing, maintaining and enhancing public education, technical training, and advocacy.

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## INTRODUCTION

Child passenger safety inspection stations, educational events and check-up events are a valuable community resource. They are designed to increase the percentage of child safety seats and vehicle seat belts that are used correctly. "The goal of each event is for children to leave safer than when they arrived<sup>1</sup>." National statistics indicate 3-out-of-4 children are in car seats that are not being used correctly.

CPS Team COLORADO, the Colorado Child Passenger Safety Program, has developed this guide to increase the understanding of the complexity of offering this service and to ensure the quality of child passenger safety inspection stations, educational events and check-up events offered in Colorado. Businesses, governmental agencies and community safety advocates will find it helpful in understanding the components necessary to offer this service. Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technicians will use the guide to help plan permanent inspection station locations, educational events and check-up events in their communities.

Inspection stations and events provide an excellent opportunity to educate participants about how to safely transport their children using child restraint devices including child safety seats (CSS) and vehicle seat belts. During these events, nationally certified CPS Technicians perform the evaluations of all children in the vehicle and all occupants of the vehicle.

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## DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this publication, the following definitions will be employed to differentiate between child passenger safety inspection stations and events:

### **Inspection Station**

An inspection station is a permanent site operating on a routine basis where people can obtain educational instruction concerning the correct selection, use and installation of child restraints and booster seats as well as the proper use of vehicle seat belts. Inspection Stations typically offer to check the seat of the parent/caregiver on an appointment or drop-in basis. These can include mobile or floating inspection stations that travel to designated locations on a scheduled basis. Additionally, the inspection station site can be either indoors or outdoors.

### **Educational Events**

Education events are short educational classes or presentations. The classes consist of information regarding the various child restraint systems available for children, what is appropriate for each child and what parents should expect for their children's future regarding safe transport in vehicles. These events can include a didactic (classroom presentation) followed by a hands on "how- to" learning session to install their own seats properly. These types of events can also be one-on-one communication with parents/caregivers at safety fairs, health fairs, etc.

### **Check-Up Events**

Check-up events are held periodically in the community with no recurring schedule. Similar to inspection stations, these events also provide educational instruction to people concerning the correct selection, use and installation of child restraints and booster seats as well as the proper use of vehicle seat belts. Check-up events differ from Inspection stations in that the primary focus of a check-up event is to check and communicate with as many parents/caregivers as possible in one time frame.

The primary focus of this publication is to aid interested parties in establishing child passenger safety inspection stations throughout Colorado. All guidelines and best practice recommendations can be applied to setting up events as well.

## ASSESSING COMMUNITY INTEREST

### **Sufficient Demand**

Prior to establishing an Inspection Station, Educational Event or Check-Up Event, it is important to determine that a sufficient amount of demand exists within the community and which type of need would be most useful. Have there been numerous requests to CPS Team Colorado or local agencies, i.e. law enforcement and retail stores, for safety seat checks in the area? What is the estimated child safety seat misuse rate for the area? What is the observed seat belt use rate for the area? Is there community interest for further education than a check-up event?

### **Target Population**

Once need has been established, it is important to identify the target population: urban, rural, low income, minority, special needs, etc. Site location, publicity and services provided can be tailored to the target population.

### **Sponsoring Organizations**

Other area organizations, i.e. retail stores specializing in childcare products or corporations, may be interested in sponsoring the inspection station. Define their role and identify respective responsibilities early in the planning stage. Acknowledge their role at each event. Examples include: CDOT, CPS Team Colorado, Drive Smart, SafeKids, Kohls, etc.

### **Partnering Organizations**

Other organizations in the community such as local service clubs (Optimists, Kiwanis, or Rotary), local social organizations (sororities, moms groups) or SAFE KIDS chapters may be interested in working collaboratively to establish the Inspection Station. Define their role and identify respective responsibilities early in the planning stage. Acknowledge their role at each event.

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## **SITE CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Permanent or Mobile**

An Inspection Station can have a permanent or fixed location that remains consistent with each event date. Alternatively, an inspection station can be mobile, i.e. van, trailer or bus. Mobile inspection stations are able to address the needs of widely spread target populations.

### **Indoor or Outdoor**

An ideal indoor location is a service garage with drive-through bays such as those at a fire department, car dealership or auto care shop. The bays serve as lanes and allow the vehicles to pull through. Parking garages also work well as an indoor location although vehicles may have to back out of the check station rather than being able to pull through the lane.

For an outdoor location, a shopping center, business, school or daycare parking lot is an ideal location. Availability of shade or cover at these locations is a plus to help provide protection from weather extremes to both the inspection station staff and participants. Portable tents, if available, may be used to provide this cover.

For either an indoor or outdoor location, it is imperative that a safe zone be created. This is an area where all activity and movement of vehicles is controlled and safety seat checks take place. Refer to the section on safety for more information on creating a safe zone.

### **Accessibility and Visibility**

The location should be easy to find and largely visible from the street. Signs with directional arrows are helpful.

Determine if the location is situated away from busy streets that will make entering difficult or even dangerous. Also, if the inspection station or event is being operated on a drop in basis without prescheduled appointments, determine how the location will accommodate long vehicle waiting lines without causing major traffic congestion or safety issues for participants – especially small children.

Try to find a location that is near or at a place where families frequently visit.

### **Accessibility**

Restrooms need to be located close to the inspection station and be available to the participants as well as the inspection station staff.

For mobile inspection stations, identify proximity of restrooms prior to the start of the event.

## **SITE SCHEDULE**

### **Hours and Days of Operation**

Determine the hours and days of operation for the inspection station. It is imperative to establish a consistent schedule from the start. Checking child safety seats is very physical and most events are limited from two to four hours.

When establishing the hours of operation, designate whether the closing time is fixed or loose. A fixed closing time indicates that the lines will close at the published ending time regardless of event demand. A loose closing time indicates that lines may close early dependent on high event turnout. When employing a loose closing time policy, indicate this on all event publicity, i.e. "Event may close early due to high demand." Another option for an event with an expected high turnout is to publish an earlier closing time and staff the event until the actual closing time. For example, the inspection station's hours would be published as 10:00 am until 1:00 pm for an event that is planned from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm.

### **Appointments or Drop-Ins**

Plan at least 30 minutes for each seat check. Review the section on staffing to determine whether the inspection station will operate on an appointment or drop-in basis.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

Establish and publish a closure policy for inclement weather.

### **Point of Contact**

Provide a point of contact including a telephone number and/or website that will make available the site schedule. Include this point of contact on all printed materials. Answer any inquiries in a timely fashion.



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## PROMOTION OF SITE AND EVENT

### **Vital Statistics**

Include who, what, why, where and when as well as a contact name and telephone number in all publications.

### **CPS Team Colorado Calendar**

CPS Team Colorado maintains a calendar of inspection stations and events held in Colorado. The calendar will be posted on the Colorado CPS Program website, [www.carseatscolorado.com](http://www.carseatscolorado.com). To have the event listed on this calendar, email or fax the information to CPS Team Colorado.

### **Fliers**

Design a simple, attractive flier announcing the event or use the CPS Team Colorado fliers with pertinent event information added. Distribute to local merchants, day care centers, preschools, etc.

When operating within a larger organization, include inspection station information or an event flier in the organization's schedule of events.

### **Public Service Announcements**

Develop public service announcements that are 10 to 15 seconds in length. Send to the public service director of radio stations in the area. You may contact CPS Team Colorado for assistance. If you are unable to record your own PSA contact CPS Team Colorado, we may be able to assist in the recording.

### **Local Media**

Send information about the event to the calendar editor of newspapers in the area. Follow up with a telephone call.

Send a media advisory to the assignment editors of newspapers, radio stations and television stations in the area. Follow up a few days later by telephone to make certain that the media advisory was received. Encourage them to help promote the event. Ask them if they would like to send a reporter or photographer to the event.

### **Signage**

Display banners or sandwich boards advertising the inspection station or event. If local police, fire or merchants have a portable variable message board, ask them to post a simple message prior to the event.

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### **Size of Event**

When promoting the inspection station or event, keep in mind the resources available. Tailor the event publicity accordingly. Inspection stations that are highly promoted tend to be well attended. Balance the amount of publicity and advertising with the number of certified technicians that will be available to work.

### **Follow-up Promotion**

It is helpful to report back to the community on a periodic basis on the success of the inspection station or event. How many kids' lives were potentially saved? At the same time, promote upcoming event or hours of operation dates.

## SERVICES

### **Main Goal**

The goal of each event is for children to leave safer than when they arrived.

### **Education versus Installation Service**

An Inspection station is an EDUCATION service NOT an installation service. Participants should be educated on the proper use and installation of the child safety seats or they will return again and again for the same installation service. Participants should also be advised on future needs for their children and occupants routinely transported in their vehicles.

### **Areas of Expertise**

Be prepared to offer education and answer questions in the following areas:

- Proper Selection of Child Restraint Devices
- Proper Use and Installation of Child Restraints
- Proper Use and Installation of Booster Seats
- Proper Use of Seat Belts
- Proper Use of LATCH [Lower Anchors and Tethers for Children]
- Appropriate Positioning of Occupants in Vehicles with Airbags
- Colorado's Child Restraint and Booster Seat Laws

### **Replacement Child Safety Seats**

New child safety seats can be used to replace any safety seat that is unsafe or too old as well as any safety seat that fits poorly in the participant's vehicle. Additionally, new child safety seats can be made available to children who need to ride in a safety seat and are not.

Based on available resources, determine whether or not replacement child safety seats will be provided at the inspection station, educational or check-up event. This is an educational opportunity. The ability to provide child safety seats may be helpful in some circumstances but is not required.

If replacement seats will be provided, consider asking for donations to offset some of the purchasing costs. Determine what agency the donations will go to. That agency or organization should have the ability to purchase additional seats and supplies for future use. Currently we/you cannot accept donations for seats purchased with CPS Team Colorado funds, but if your agency purchases the seats your agency should be involved in deciding whether or not to accept donations.

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If replacement child safety seats will be provided, the following options can be made available:

- New child safety seats can be provided to the participants at no cost (required for seats purchased by CPS Team Colorado).
- New child safety seats can be provided to the participants with a request for a donation.
- New child safety seats can be sold to the participant at cost.

Be very cautious in promoting the availability of free child safety seats at the event.

If a new child safety seat is provided, ask the participant to leave the unsafe seat behind. Document that the participant agrees to leave the seat behind and that they understand that the seat will be destroyed immediately following the event. Make certain that the old or unsafe child safety seat is destroyed.

Alternatively, the old or unsafe child safety seat may be used for teaching purposes; mark the seat accordingly with permanent marker as soon as possible and store in a location where the seat will not be mistaken for a usable one.

### **Fees for Services**

CPS Team COLORADO does not recommend charging fees for services. Charging for a service changes the level of education to a professional service. Liability issues for this level of service are unclear at this time.

Many participants wish to express their appreciation for the service provided. Donations should be encouraged and accepted. Donations can be used to purchase vouchers or safety seats for children from low-income families or to support on-going education and training activities. Establish a procedure for managing donations.

## STAFFING

### Coordinator

Determine the level of child passenger safety training required for the inspection station coordinator. It is recommended that this person have a current National CPS Technician or Instructor Certification.

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Chooses location and coordinates on-site activities.
- Serves as main point of contact for the inspection station including answering inquiries.
- Coordinates activities with sponsoring and/or partnering organizations, if applicable.
- Gathers and prepares supplies for the inspection station.
- Reviews and updates handouts as necessary.
- Maintains contact lists for workers, volunteers and interested parties.
- Recruits staff for all event dates.
- Maintains time or attendance logs for all staff.
- Maintains records of how many CRS were checked.
- Catalogs statistics from each event or on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Coordinates pre-briefing for each event.
- Organizes workers into teams for each event.
- Supervising staff during event.
- Serves as contact person during event for replacement child safety seats.
- Reviews checklist forms (if confined CPS technician).
- Publicizes event and follows up with results.
- Reports data (including seat check numbers and volunteer hours) to CPS Team Colorado on a monthly basis by using [www.CPSTechsColorado.com](http://www.CPSTechsColorado.com).
- Reports summary of Check-Up and Educational events to CPS Team COLORADO on a monthly basis.
- Maintains forms and data for the Inspection Station.

### Senior Technician

The senior technician has the most training and/or experience installing and inspecting child safety seats. The senior technician should be available to all other team members during the event and, therefore, should not conduct individual seat checks. The number of designated senior technicians is dependent on the size of the event. The senior technician can also serve as the coordinator.

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### **Responsibilities:**

- Maintains current CPS technician or technician instructor certification.
- Keeps current with changes in the field of child passenger safety.
- Serves as trouble-shooter/resource person for the event. The senior technician should be comfortable with discussing tough choices and best practice with participants.
- Performs the final review of checklist form prior to participant's departure.
- Performs final inspection of installation if deemed necessary.

### **Check Teams**

A check team is comprised of a checker and a scribe. The number of teams should be based on expected turnout. Plan on a single seat check lasting approximately 30 minutes.

Check teams should NEVER feel pressured by long lines since rushing the process can lead to errors.

Inspection stations provide the opportunity for hands-on training. Often, check teams are a mastering process. New technicians are paired with more seasoned CPS technicians. A Nationally Certified CPS Technician and/or Technician Instructor must be present at all times during the hours of operation of the inspection station, educational or check-up event.

### **Checker Responsibilities:**

- Maintains CPS technician or technician instructor certification, as applicable.
- Keeps current with changes in the field of child passenger safety.
- Takes primary responsibility for the inspection of safety seats and proper belt use of older children.
- Follows the checklist form and allows time for the scribe to complete the form.
- Educates participant on how to install seats and secure child properly.
- Ensures that parent/caregiver can duplicate the installation.
- Assigns tasks to scribes or runners, as necessary.
- Consults with senior technician on "tough choices."
- Consults with coordinator and/or senior technician before offering a replacement child safety seat.
- Consults with senior technician for the final review of each vehicle unless designated by the senior technician as able to perform final reviews for the team.

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## **Scribe Responsibilities:**

- Maintains Child Passenger Safety Advocate (8 or 16 hours of training) status.
- Keeps current with changes in the field of child passenger safety.
- Ensures that the participant has signed the liability waiver section of the checklist form.
- Reads checklist form to checker and records results.
- Locates manufacturers' instructions for child safety seats or vehicle owners' manual when necessary.
- Looks up safety seat recalls on the recall list.
- Ensures participants have received applicable handouts on child passenger safety.
- Collects completed evaluation form from participant after safety seat check is complete.
- Acts as the traffic coordinator for the check team ensuring safe movement of the vehicle within the safe zone. This is particularly important when vehicles must back up to exit the safe zone.

## **Additional**

The following are suggestions for additional staff. Need for this staff is based on the size and layout of the event.

### **Greeters:**

Greeters welcome the participants, explain the check process and indicate the approximate wait time. Also, greeters ensure that the first part of the checklist form and the liability waiver are completed.

A greeter coordinator may staff the central area information table. This person collects all completed checklist forms and replenishes the forms and handouts on the clipboards as needed. The greeter collects all money for donations. Finally, the greeter may help to organize breaks for the event staff.

### **Traffic Flow Coordinators:**

Traffic flow coordinators are responsible for moving vehicles safely in and out of the safe zone as well as guiding the vehicle into the check lane. The greeter may be able to work as the traffic flow coordinator as well. It may be helpful to have another traffic flow coordinator at the exit especially when vehicles are exiting the safe zone into a congested traffic area.

### **Runners:**

Runners assist check teams in locating and retrieving supplies.

### **Childcare Providers:**

Childcare providers ensure the safety of children when they are out of their vehicle. They entertain and supervise children in a designated waiting area during a seat check.

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## SUPPLIES

The following is a list of supplies suggested for establishing/running a inspection station.

### Traffic Control

- Promotional Signs
- Traffic Cones
- Police Tape
- Directional Signs (Enter, Exit)
- CI Length of Wait Signs (If you are at this point in line, your wait will be approximately XX minutes.)

### Forms and Publications

- Checklist Forms
- Evaluation Forms
- Child Safety Seat Recall Lists
- Manufacturers' Directions for Child Safety Seats
- Current LATCH Manual
- Child Safety Seat Registration Forms
- Child Safety Seat Questionnaires
- Educational Pamphlets and Handouts

### Child Passenger Safety Supplies

- Styrofoam Noodles or Towels
- Locking Clips
- Belt Shortening Clips
- Demonstration Items
  - Add-On Products
  - Infant Dolls
- New Child Safety Seats
  - Infant or Convertible Seats
  - Combination Seats or High Back Boosters
  - Belt-Positioning Boosters

### Miscellaneous Supplies

- Pens
- Markers
- Clip Boards
- Masking Tape or Duct Tape
- Scissors
- Paper Clips
- Stapler
- Receipt Book for Donations
- Collection Container for Completed Checklists and Donations



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- Scale
- Tape Measure
- Flash Light
- Screwdrivers (Phillips and Slotted)
- Toys for Play Area
- Tables
- Chairs
- Trash Cans
- Caution Tape

### **Staff considerations**

- Nametags
- Time or Attendance Log
- Suggestions Sheet
- Snacks
- Fluids
- Cooler with Ice
- First Aid Kit
- Anti-Bacterial Wipes
- Kleenex
- Rubber Gloves

### **Optional**

- Tents

Big equipment, i.e. new child safety seats, Manufacturers' Directions for Child Safety Seats and demonstration materials, should be located in a central location. Frequently used supplies, i.e. locking clips, noodles, and scissors, should be located at or convenient to each check station.

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## **SAFETY**

Safety is the #1 priority of the event.

### **Safe Zone**

A safe zone should be set up to ensure that the movement of all vehicles is controlled. All child safety seat and vehicle seat belt checks will take place in this area.

Traffic flow should be maintained at all times in this area. Whenever a vehicle is moving within the zone, loudly announce, "Car moving." if at all possible, avoid set-ups where vehicles must back up. If vehicles must reverse to exit the checkup location, increase the number of traffic flow coordinators.

Additionally, ensure that all vehicle occupants are buckled up when moving within the safe zone. Children should be secured in their safety seats and never held by the parent, especially if airbags are present in the vehicle.

### **Check Teams**

To prevent injury check team members should never place their hands where they cannot see, i.e. in the bight of the vehicle seat, under the vehicle seat, etc. The participant should retrieve the vehicle seat belt if it is buried in the vehicle seat. Flashlights should be used to help find tether anchor points.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Establish and publish emergency procedures for the inspection station or event. Maintain a first aid kit at the event location.

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## EVENT SET-UP

Plan to begin set-up at least one hour prior to the start of the event. Be prepared: Participants often are encouraged to and will arrive early to the event.

### Setting Up an Indoor Location

- Ensure there are no obstacles or safety hazards in the check-up location. Create a safe zone.
- Designate where the vehicles will wait in line using traffic cones or tape to clearly mark the line.
- If using an area where individual bays are not available, determine where to park each vehicle for inspection. Clearly mark the check-up locations using traffic cones, yellow marking tape, etc.
- If possible, avoid having to drive in reverse. Ideally, vehicles will enter in one side of the safe zone and exit out the other.
- Determine how a vehicle will be allowed to safely get out of line if the participant does not want to wait any longer or they finish prior to the car in front of them.
- Set up enter, exit and length of wait signs.
- Designate a main supply area for clipboards, handouts, etc.
- Have a table accessible to each check team; putting one between lanes works best. The table is used for materials such as the noodles, locking clips, scissors, etc.
- Designate an area for the new child safety seats and to deposit old or unsafe collected seats,
- Designate a break area for event staff.

### Setting Up an Outdoor Location

- Set up in a parking lot or other controllable site out of the flow of traffic.
- Tape off an area to create a contained safe zone.
- Use traffic cones to delineate check lanes.
- If possible, avoid having to drive in reverse. Ideally, vehicles will enter in one side and exit out the other side of the safe zone. Determine how a vehicle will be allowed to safely get out of line if the participant does not want to wait any longer or they finish prior to the car in front of them.
- Set up enter, exit and length of wait signs.

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- Use traffic cones to funnel traffic in and out of safe zone.
- Set up tent(s) over the vehicle lane to provide cover from rain or shade from sun.
- Designate a main supply area for clipboards, handouts, etc.
- Have a table accessible to each check team; putting one between lanes works best. The table is used for materials such as the noodles, locking clips, scissors, etc.
- Designate an area for the new child safety seats and to deposit old or unsafe collected seats.
- Designate a break area for event staff.

### **Staff Orientation**

- Have event staff arrive 30 minutes prior to the start time.
- Establish check-in procedure. Provide time or attendance logs.
- Provide nametags.
- Assign Check Teams.
- Brief all staff about their responsibilities.
- Review checklist and contents of clipboards.
- Provide an overview of the event including the following:
  - o Traffic flow within the safe zone
  - o Policies for child safety seat distribution and collection
  - o Supply locations
  - o Central place for completed forms and donations
  - o Restroom and break area locations
- Review emergency procedures.
- Remind staff to take their time with each check and not to let outside factors rush them.
- Remind check teams not to set clipboards or child safety seats on vehicles.

## DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is extremely important!

### **Checklists**

Checklists help to reduce legal liability by providing a written record for each seat check. The checklist form should be used to record the misuse involved with each respective seat as well as the corrections that are made. It is imperative that each document is fully completed.

- Document what you saw!
- Document what you said!
- Document what you did!

All children under the age of 13 should be evaluated regardless of whether or not they are using a child safety seat.

The senior technician should do a final review of each checklist prior to the participant's departure to ensure that it is fully completed.

### **Maintenance**

Keep all checklists for an infinite amount of time.

## LIABILITY

### **Site or Event Insurance**

Some businesses require proof of event insurance to allow the use of their facility and/or property. Discuss this matter with the property owner or property management contact prior to the event.

### **Insurance for Technicians**

Generally, if participation in child passenger safety events is part of the "scope of employment," the staff should be covered by the event liability insurance or by their employer. The insurance generally addresses injuries but not misinformation.

For volunteers at inspection stations and/or events, professional liability insurance is currently not available.

Some of the most critical factors to consider in reducing liability are:

- Keep good documentation
- Keeping certification current
- Keeping current with new products, procedures and technology
- Attending continuing education classes whenever possible and as often possible

## EVENT FOLLOW-UP

### **Reporting Your Success**

Review all check sheets and compile misuse statistics. Submit the misuse information to CPS Team Colorado, as soon as possible, by using [www.CPSTechsColorado.com](http://www.CPSTechsColorado.com). Include a summary of the evaluation forms.

### **Suggestions**

In order to ensure continued improvement, solicit suggestions from inspection station or event staff. Review and summarize evaluation forms for participants' suggestions.

### **Thank You's**

Send thank you notes to sponsoring and partnering organizations. Include check-up results and evaluation summary in correspondence.

Send thank you notes to event volunteers. Include check-up results and evaluation summary in correspondence. Notify of future events as well.

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## CONCLUSION

CPS Team COLORADO has compiled this publication to provide guidelines and best practice recommendations for holding inspection stations, educational events and check-up events in Colorado. Details will need to be tailored for each inspection station, educational event or Check-Up event depending on size, staffing and location.

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