

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT





KEITH CORCORAN PHOTO

SAFETY FIRST

Chris West, in the driver's seat, stopped by the Bridgewater fire station on Saturday, July 18, to have his children's car seats checked for proper positioning and other safety issues during a special vehicle checkpoint hosted by Bridgewater-area police services. Lane, foreground, is all smiles as Amy Ellis checks little Nora's seat restraints. The Bridgewater Police Service and the Lunenburg County RCMP partnered with Child Safety Link, a youth and child injury prevention program at the IWK Health Centre, to educate parents and other caregivers about appropriate booster-seat restraints based on a child's age, size and development.

"I think it's amazing you do this to educate people. I've learned so much – and feel very confident my son is safely buckled in. Thank you! "

Athena MacIsaac
Mom to a 1 year old

"I attended a collision scene where 3 children were in one vehicle, the youngest being about a week old. There were no serious injuries which I attribute to the kids all being properly secured in their appropriate car seats. The parents advised that they had just very recently had them checked by a technician and felt the same way. "

Cst. Angela MacEachern
Lunenburg County District RCMP

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

Table of Contents

Purpose and Definitions	1
Introduction	2
Getting started: Planning the checkpoint	3
On the Day of the Event	5
Sample Scenarios for Discussion	7
Recommended Tools and Supplies	8
Child Safety Link Resources	9
Child Restraint Laws in Atlantic Canada	10
Roadside check form	11



We would like to thank Pictou County Babies to Boosters for providing many of the photos that illustrate this document.

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

Purpose and Definitions

Purpose:

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide guidance to technicians and other partners on how to plan and run a child passenger safety roadside checkpoint in their community.

Definitions:

Roadside Checkpoint: In this toolkit this term will refer to a child passenger safety roadside checkpoint where the focus of the event is to ensure that children are restrained according to the law.

Check/inspection: A check refers to technicians inspecting the way a child is restrained in a car seat, booster seat or seat belt and making recommendations for corrections if needed.

Check area: This is the space defined by chalk or cones where the checks will occur.

Partners: This term is used to refer to groups or individuals who are planning or supporting the roadside checkpoint including police officers, technicians and community partners.

Law Enforcement: This refers to police officers with the RCMP or the local police force.

Technicians: Technicians in this document are certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians. Technicians can include police officers, fire fighters, nurses and those who work in the community as well as volunteers.

Lead Technician: The designated leader and point of contact for the technicians at a roadside checkpoint.

Community partners: Community partners could include a local business, fire station or individuals such as community health workers or parent volunteers who are supporting the roadside checkpoint in some way.

Parents and Caregivers: This term refers to the driver and other adults in the vehicle transporting children.

Child: For the purposes of this toolkit a child is defined as a person aged 14 and under.

Child Restraint System: The car seat, booster seat or seat belt used to protect a child in the event of a vehicle collision is a child restraint system.

Best Practice: This term refers to the recommended ways in which children are safest in the car.

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

Introduction

What is a roadside checkpoint?

A roadside checkpoint is a police and partner initiative where police officers stop cars and Child Passenger Safety Technicians conduct a check to ensure that children are appropriately restrained according to the law.

A roadside checkpoint is an effective way to reach parents and caregivers with children of all ages with education on the proper use of child restraints including car seats, booster seats and seat belts.

Goals:

- Educate parents and caregivers about how to legally and safely transport children
- Evaluate the use of car seats, booster seats and seat belts for children aged 14 and under
- Enforce the laws to increase the number of children being transported safely
- Create awareness of police presence in the community and local traffic safety efforts
- Reduce the incidence and severity of injury to children and youth in vehicles

How does a roadside checkpoint work?

Police officers stop drivers. Those who are transporting children are asked to drive into the check area for a brief check.

At the check area technicians use a check form to determine if each child is using a seat that is:

- the appropriate seat for his or her age, weight and height according to the law, and is
- used correctly in a few key ways (see attached check form).

Technicians then show the parent or caregiver how to correct any issues with the way the seat is installed or used. Drivers receive education about how to correctly restrain all children in their vehicle in accordance with the law and the best practice for safety.

The law enforcement partner can determine whether an event will be focused on education only or if there will be tickets issued for non-compliance. If you are a technician, please direct all questions concerning tickets in general or for a specific situation to the police officer leading your checkpoint event.



A technician consults with a police officer about the way a child is restrained

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

Getting started: Planning the checkpoint

In order to plan a successful roadside checkpoint event, you will need the following:

Partners:

Law Enforcement Partners:

Setting up a child passenger safety roadside checkpoint requires the support of **at least 2 police officers**. When contacting your local police or RCMP detachment ask to speak to the head of the Traffic Services team who will be the initial contact for organizing a roadside check. Some police officers may also be certified as technicians.

Technician Partners:

Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians have been trained in the correct use of child passenger restraints and the identification of misuse. Technicians are qualified to assist families in correctly installing and using their child's restraint system, including car seats, booster seats and seat belts.

You can estimate the number of volunteers you need based on your location and the expected traffic flow of the site. For a slower site, **3-4 technicians** would be required. A busy site would require **6-10 technicians** to run smoothly. Contact [Child Safety Link](#) to connect with technician volunteers in your area or to become certified yourself.

Other volunteers

Non-technician volunteers may be associated with a local business or community organisation, fire station or health centre. Depending on the expected traffic flow of the site, **1-3 extra volunteers** would be required.

These volunteers can help in a variety of ways:

- Greeting drivers and directing traffic within the check area
- Handing out educational postcards and tear-sheets to parents and caregivers
- Setting up the clipboards with check forms and providing support to technicians
- Running a weighing and measuring station for when parents are unsure of their child's measurements
- Handing out stickers or colouring sheets to keep children occupied during a check

Date and time:

Choose a **date** and a **rain date** for your checkpoint. The officer may cancel the event due to weather that may cause poor visibility and conditions that would make stopping vehicles unsafe. Have contact information for your volunteers ready in case the event is cancelled. Some points to consider when choosing a date include:

- Consider choosing a date on a weekend; it may be easier to get the volunteers you need and children are more likely to be travelling.
- When choosing a **time** of day, consider who might be travelling at this time as well. If you choose a time when children are in school you may miss the opportunity to reach parents with school aged children.

Most roadside check events last between 2 and 4 hours. Consider the number of volunteers you have for the check event and the weather conditions.

Location:

Police will set up the checkpoint on the road and technicians will set up an inspection area in a nearby parking lot or fire station.

Choose a location in collaboration with the traffic services team. Choose a street that has a steady flow of traffic in order to help as many families as possible. Avoid a site near construction. If you are considering choosing a site near a school without prior notice, be aware that parents may worry that the police presence may indicate an emergency situation.

Supplies:

A list of recommended supplies can be found on page 8 of this document.



Volunteer technicians before a check event with vests, supplies, handouts and water ready to go!

Are the checks mandatory?

Inspections are not mandatory at checkpoints in all cases. It is helpful when police officers encourage drivers to participate. Officers have the authority to propose a **mandatory inspection** if they are concerned that a child is improperly restrained. Some common concerns that can be visible from the roadside include:

- Unrestrained children
- Children (aged 5-9) using only a seat belt
- Young children (aged 2-4) in booster seats
- Seats that look particularly old
- Forward-facing car seats with no top tether attached
- Harness straps that appear loose

Discuss with the police officer if it would be helpful for a technician to stand at the roadside to help identify misuse and flag concerns.

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

On the day of the event

Designate a lead technician:

Designate a technician to be the leader for this event. This **lead technician** will be the main point of contact for the technicians at a roadside checkpoint.

Communicate with police partners:

The lead technician will speak to the officers on the day of the event to confirm their expectations including:

- In what sorts of situations would they want to be called over to speak to a driver
- What to look for in terms of misuse and non-use at the roadside

Meet with technicians and non-technician partners:

The lead technician should then **meet with technicians and non-technician partners** prior to the event and communicate expectations for the roadside checkpoint, including the logistics of the event, where cars should park for a check, where all supplies are kept and how technicians should get help with a check in the moment if needed. Make sure that technicians know where they can find water and washrooms (sometimes these are a short drive away). Distribute safety vests and name tags.

The lead technician should then discuss an example to technicians of how to approach a vehicle. (There is a sample script below). Technicians should work in teams whenever possible and inexperienced or new technicians should partner with those who have more experience.

Set up:

Set up the check area spaces with traffic cones and/or chalk. Set up all paperwork, handouts and other supplies.

Traffic direction: A volunteer should greet each car as the officers send it to the check area and instruct the driver where to park for the check and keep track of the order vehicles arrived in. The volunteer in charge of traffic direction should communicate with officers if the checkpoint gets busy with a wait for drivers. The police may choose to let traffic flow normally or only stop vehicles in one direction for a short while to allow for the technicians to get caught up.

Approaching a vehicle:

Approach each car in a friendly way. Drivers and parents may feel vulnerable or defensive in this situation, and a positive approach can go a long way to help make a difficult situation easier.

Be respectful. Ask for permission to inspect the child restraint. Be sure to tell the driver or parent the ways in which a seat is used correctly as well as the ways you can help them to correct any errors in installation or harnessing.

Please refer to your law enforcement partner if you feel uncomfortable or need extra support with a difficult situation or one where you need guidance on how to proceed.



Technicians work together to check a car seat.

Sample script for technicians:

“Hello, my name is _____ and I'm a car seat technician helping out today. Thanks for stopping. Do you mind if we have a look at your car seats to check the installation? It won't take long and then we'll have you on your way. Feel free to ask me any questions as I go along. Is it okay if I open the door and check the car seat?”
(Remember to smile!)

Document your observations and ask questions about anything that is not visible like the child's age, weight and height. For older children ask, “Can I take a look at your seat?”, and talk with them throughout the check.

Consult with your police partner:

Don't hesitate to consult with the police officers if:

- You are unsure of how to proceed.
- You feel unsafe.

Most drivers are receptive to the information. If a driver is not receptive or becomes upset don't hesitate to ask the officer to stand beside the car to support you during the check or to step in.

Direct all questions concerning tickets to the Police officers. An officer may choose to not issue tickets for child passengers at a roadside checkpoint. They may also choose to only issue tickets in specific circumstances or issue a ticket that can be dismissed once a driver demonstrates compliance.



The Law and Best Practice:

At a child passenger safety roadside check the focus is on ensuring that children are restrained according to the law (Appendix A). The role of a technician also includes educating parents and caregivers on how to keep the children in their care as safe as possible and that should include identifying best practices.

Here is a summary of best practices for each stage of Child Passenger Safety with the legal minimums:

- Best practice: children should use a **rear-facing car seat** for as long as they fit in their rear-facing seat.
 - Legal minimum: children must use a rear-facing seat until at least 1 year old and 10 kg or 22 pounds.
- Best practice: Children should use a **forward-facing seat** with the 5-point harness until they are at least 4 years old and have the maturity to sit correctly.
 - Legal minimum: must use a seat with a 5-point harness until they weigh at least 18 kg or 40 pounds.
- Children should remain in a **booster seat** until they reach 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall and fit the adult seat belt correctly (5 step test is included on parent information postcard).
 - Legal minimum varies by province – see Appendix A
- Children should remain in the back seat until they are 13 years old.
 - Legal minimum: all car seats and booster seats state that they cannot be placed in front of an active airbag. If no airbag is present or the child is no longer required to use a car seat or booster seat, no law requires that a child remain in the back seat.

What if a child does not have an appropriate seat?

It is recommended that you have a few car seats and booster seats on hand to provide for children who cannot leave safely without a new car seat or booster seat. Sometimes a community will have a sponsor who may donate the seats or the funds to purchase the seats. Some local groups raise funds throughout the year to purchase seats for roadside checks.

When there is no new seat available and a child cannot leave the checkpoint legally or safely, the officer will discuss the options with the driver to determine how the child should be transported from the checkpoint.

Please see the scenarios for discussion on page 7.

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

Sample Scenarios for Discussion

What do you do when there is no “quick fix”:

It is recommended to have a few car seats and booster seats on hand to give away when a child does not have a safe seat, but there may be situations where you do not have seats to give away.

Here are some sample scenarios to provide a discussion on how to address possible issues. These have been provided so that the technicians and police officers can discuss how they might proceed in a similar situation. Remember that it is up to the police officer to decide on the solution for any situation where the child cannot leave the checkpoint legally or safely and there are few or no seats to give away.

Scenario #1

A van is stopped with more passengers than there are seats and seat belts in the vehicle. All the passengers were restrained except for one child who was riding on an adult’s lap. The car seat is in the trunk.

Some possible solutions could include:

- The officer may ask the driver to leave an adult passenger behind to allow for every child to be restrained.
- The adult could make his or her own way or phone a friend or family member for a pick up at a later time.

Scenario #2

A grandmother is stopped with a grandchild who is riding in a forward-facing seat that has expired and is outgrown by height and weight.

Some possible solutions could include:

- The officer may request that the grandmother call and have a family member or friend bring a safe and appropriate restraint for the child before the child can travel in the vehicle.
- The officer may allow the grandmother to leave with the child in the seat as is and instruct her to replace the seat as soon as possible. The technician will be asked to teach the driver to correct any installation errors.

Scenario #3

A father arrives with an 8 year-old child in the front seat with no booster seat.

Some possible solutions could include:

- The officer may allow the father to leave with the child in the backseat without a booster.
- The officer may request that the father call and have a family member or friend bring a safe and appropriate restraint for the child.



Expired or damaged seats that were replaced with new seats during a roadside checkpoint in New Glasgow, NS in May 2015

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

Recommended Tools and Supplies

Paperwork:

- Clipboards
- Pens
- Roadside check forms (a sample form can be found on the last page of this document)
- Print off the latest recalls found here:
<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/roadsafety/safedrivers-childsafety-notice-menu-907.htm>
- Print off a list of expiry dates here:
<http://www.cpsac.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ExpiryDatesbyManufacturerandType1.pdf>

Safety Supplies:

- Safety vests (all volunteers should wear a reflective vest– ask the police if they have these available)
- Name tags for volunteers
- Pylons or chalk (to define the spaces for cars)
- Water, sunscreen and hand sanitizer

Check supplies:

- 2-4 pool noodles cut into 10.5 inch lengths (to adjust recline for rear-facing seats)
- Electrical tape (for attaching pool noodles into stacks of 3)
- Scissors (to cut tape for pool noodles and for general use)
- Small Phillips screwdriver (to insert Graco Turbobooster screws)
- Graco Turbobooster screws (Call Graco CS at 1-800-667-8184 to order 10 for technicians to use)
- Elastic bands (for tying up loose tether straps if needed)
- A bag or plastic tote for the tools and supplies
- 2 locking clips
- Measuring tape
- Scale (optional)
- A copy of the Child Passenger Safety Technician Manual (for reference)
- A copy of the Latch manual (optional reference if available) (<http://saferidenews.com/>)

Educational information and extras:

- Informational handouts (Child Safety Link has postcards and tear-off sheets for each stage of restraint)
- A table (optional – most times, an open trunk of a vehicle serves as a table)
- A sandwich board with a sign to let people know what the checkpoint is about (optional)
- Several new car seats/booster seats to give away in cases where a child cannot leave safely without a seat.
Note: if you are able to purchase seats to give away, choose a seat that would fit children of a range of ages and sizes. Consider choosing a seat that is narrow and would fit in most vehicles as well as several booster seats. Contact Child Safety Link for current recommendations for seats that may fit these criteria.

Notes:

ROADSIDE CHECKPOINT TOOLKIT

Child Safety Link Resources

These resources are [available by request](#) or you can click below to view and print.

- [Infant-seat fact sheet](#)
- [Rear-facing fact sheet](#)
- [Forward – facing fact sheet](#)
- [Booster seat fact sheet](#)
- [Seat belt fact sheet](#)

- [Cliquez ici](#) pour l’obtenir en français.

[Is your child in the right seat? \(Postcard\)](#) – [Cliquez ici](#) pour l’obtenir en français. [Click here](#) for Arabic.

Cards for police officers in [Nova Scotia](#), [New Brunswick](#), and [Prince Edward Island](#).

To order printed informational handouts such as postcards and tear-off sheets contact Child Safety Link at childsafetylink@iwbk.nshealth.ca or call 902-470-7324 or 1-866-288-1388.

Appendix A

Child Restraint Laws in Atlantic Canada		
Province	Rear and Forward-Facing Car Seats	Booster Seats
Nova Scotia	<p>Must be rear facing until at least 1 year old AND 10 kg (22 pounds)</p> <p>Must use a car seat until at least 18 kg (40 pounds)</p>	Must use a booster until 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall OR 9 years old
New Brunswick	Must use a car seat* until at least 18 kg (40 pounds) OR 5 years old	Must use a booster until 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall OR 9 years old or 36 kg (80 pounds)
Prince Edward Island	<p>Must be rear facing until at least 1 year old AND 10 kg (22 pounds)</p> <p>Must use a car seat until at least 18 kg (40 pounds)</p>	Must use a booster until 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall OR 10 years old or exceeds weight limit of the seat.
Newfoundland & Labrador	<p>Must be rear facing until at least 9 kg (20 pounds)*</p> <p>Must use a car seat until at least 18 kg (40 pounds)</p>	Must use a booster until 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall AND 9 years old AND 37 kg (81 pounds)

In all provinces: The child restraint must be used according to the manufacturer's directions. The driver is responsible for all child passengers under 16 to use appropriate restraints.

Front seat:

Because car seats and booster seats will state that they cannot be used in front of an active airbag, this prohibits the seat from being used in the front seat with an active airbag.

*Rear-facing minimums:

Almost all seats in Canada cannot legally be used forward facing until a child is 1 year old and 10 kg (22 pounds). Many seats cannot be used forward facing until a child is walking sturdily, and there are a few seats that require a child to be at least 2 years old to use forward facing.

Forward-facing seats:

The top tether is required for use for all forward-facing seats in Canada.

Child Restraint Inspection

Roadside Check Form

Date:

Plate #

Child #1



ARRIVAL		Child Age:		Weight:	Height:	Child Not Present <input type="checkbox"/>	
Correct seat type/direction for child? (legal mins met)			Y N	Back seat <input type="checkbox"/>	Front seat <input type="checkbox"/>	Child Unrestrained <input type="checkbox"/>	
RF to min 1yr and 22lbs. FF to min 40lbs. Booster to min 9yrs and 4'9" (145 cm)						CR Damaged/Expired <input type="checkbox"/>	
Rear Facing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forward Facing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Booster	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seat Belt	
Harness snug	Y N	Harness snug	Y N	Lap and shoulder belt	Y N	Lap and shoulder belt	Y N
Chest clip armpit level	Y N	Chest clip armpit level	Y N	Shoulder belt correct	Y N	Shoulder belt correct	Y N
Strap at/below shoulder	Y N	Straps at or above	Y N	Lap belt low on hips	Y N	Lap belt low on hips	Y N
Seat tightly secured	Y N	Seat tightly secured	Y N	Adequate head support	Y N	Adequate head support	Y N
Correct belt path	Y N	Correct belt path	Y N				
Recline correct	Y N	Tether strap secured	Y N				
Handle position correct	Y N	N/A (not an infant only seat)					
Notes:							
DEPARTURE		Vehicle Issues to fix <input type="checkbox"/>		New seat required for child <input type="checkbox"/>		Seat now correct & legal <input type="checkbox"/>	

Child #2

ARRIVAL		Child Age:		Weight:	Height:	Child Not Present <input type="checkbox"/>	
Correct seat type/direction for child? (legal mins met)			Y N	Back seat <input type="checkbox"/>	Front seat <input type="checkbox"/>	Child Unrestrained <input type="checkbox"/>	
RF to min 1yr and 22lbs. FF to min 40lbs. Booster to min 9yrs or 4'9" (145 cm)						CR Damaged/Expired <input type="checkbox"/>	
Rear Facing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Forward Facing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Booster	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seat Belt	
Harness snug	Y N	Harness snug	Y N	Lap and shoulder belt	Y N	Lap and shoulder belt	Y N
Chest clip armpit level	Y N	Chest clip armpit level	Y N	Shoulder belt correct	Y N	Shoulder belt correct	Y N
Strap at/below shoulder	Y N	Straps at or above	Y N	Lap belt low on hips	Y N	Lap belt low on hips	Y N
Seat tightly secured	Y N	Seat tightly secured	Y N	Adequate head support	Y N	Adequate head support	Y N
Correct belt path	Y N	Correct belt path	Y N				
Recline correct	Y N	Tether strap secured	Y N				
Handle position correct	Y N	N/A (not an infant only seat)					
Notes:							
DEPARTURE		Vehicle Issues to fix <input type="checkbox"/>		New seat required for child <input type="checkbox"/>		Seat now correct & legal <input type="checkbox"/>	

Best Practices Discussed: Rear facing for longer Harness longer/Booster readiness 5 Step test for SB
 After market products/bulky coats Projectiles UAS weight limits Expiry dates Check for recalls

Technician Signature: _____

Officer Signature: _____