



HOW TO RUN A CHILD CAR RESTRAINT CHECKING CLINIC

A guide for professionals and volunteers



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Introduction

This book has information and tips to help you to run a child car restraint checking clinic and/or take part in a police check point. It does not provide expert advice on child car restraint use.

Child car restraints (seats) provide the best possible protection for a child if they are involved in a car crash. There are many makes and models of car seats so expert advice is vital.

Hosting a checking clinic and/or a police checkpoint is the best way to provide families and whanau with advice about child car restraints and how to use them correctly.

Why a checking clinic?

To keep children as safe as possible while they are passengers, it is essential families and whanau know how to install and use their child car restraints correctly.

This is because of the complex issue of compatibility between vehicle seats, safety belts, types of child car restraints and children.

All child car seats sold in New Zealand (new and second hand) must meet product Safety Standards specified by law. There are many different brands and models of child car restraints (seats) that meet our legal requirements.

There are also a large number of places where child car seats can be bought or rented. Sometimes it is not possible to obtain the advice needed when buying a child car restraint.

Child car seat checking clinics and check points are one of the best ways to provide the best advice for families.

What are checking clinics and police check points?

A child car restraint checking clinic is an event that provides your community with the chance to receive hands-on advice about the correct installation and use of child car restraints.

Families are invited to come along with their vehicle, children and car restraints so they can receive free advice specific to their own circumstances from people who have been trained to provide this service.

A child car restraint police check point is run by the police, usually in conjunction with local community groups. Checking clinics and police check points look similar in many ways, but are different.

Checking Clinics and Checkpoints

| Checking Clinic | Police Check Point |
|---|---|
| Families are invited to attend. | Vehicles are stopped by police. |
| Focus on providing information about correct use of car seats. | Focus on legal compliance and ensuring correct use. |
| Voluntary attendance by families who are seeking advice. | Drivers may not be willing participants. |
| Other events, such as a school fair, may be happening. | People from agencies other than the Police may be present, but the check point is usually the only event. |
| Well planned events will have plenty of space and time for seat adjustments and safety messages | There may be less time and/or space for education and child car restraint adjustment. |

Planning a checking clinic

At the start of your planning it is helpful to write down what you want to achieve for your clinic. A police check point will be arranged with your local police.

Your aims and objectives can cover large issues, such as the availability of resources, how many clinics you plan to hold during the year, how much advertising you want to carry out; or specifics such as how many families (or car seats) you would like to check.

It is important to make sure qualified car seat technicians take part in your checking clinic.

Consider who to invite onto your organising committee and who might like to come along and help on the day.

The following are examples of people who might wish to become involved;

- An advisor who is qualified on child car seat use and installation
- Safekids Coalition members
- Plunket staff & volunteers
- Public health workers
- ACC staff
- Ministry of Social Development
- Police – Strategic Traffic Unit or Community
- Police staff
- Local businesses
- Road Safety Co-ordinators
- Child restraint loan scheme staff
- Iwi representatives
- Maori Health Service providers
- Pacific Health Service providers
- Local emergency service personnel, such as St Johns Ambulance and Fire Service staff volunteers
- Community volunteers
- Early Childhood Education Centre staff and volunteers

- Local celebrities or community figures who wish to be involved in promoting child safety
- Primary Health Care Organisations
- People from specialist local programmes such as Otara Health's Child Restraint One Stop Shop (CROSS) team
- Parent Teacher Associations



Photo courtesy of Plunket

Tip One

Child car restraints are complex and differ in how they fit into different types of vehicles

It is essential to have a person who is qualified in fitting and using child car restraints at your event

Planning Checklist

Before the event

- 
- Invite people to be part of a planning team – organise meetings, set agendas and keep records. Arrange staffing for the event – car seat technicians, plus plenty of helpers.
 - Explore community needs and decide upon your target audience.
 - Identify people who can interpret languages used in your local community.
 - Write a project plan that sets aims and objectives – and plan your evaluation.
- 
- Decide a date, time and location for the event – backup plans may be needed.
 - If your Clinic is to be held on public land, check with your local Authority; a Council Event Application might have to be filed with your Council.
 - A Council “Traffic Management Plan” may also be needed if any impact on local traffic flow
 - Prepare a traffic management map for the site
- 
- Advertise and promote the clinic - write and distribute media releases.
 - Organise High Visibility Vests for all participants – and cones.
 - Arrange for staff refreshments.
 - Order educational brochures and photo permission slips
- 
- Develop local information sheet containing information about local hire schemes (with qualified staff) and where to get anchor points fitted. Have a few items for sale on site, or where to purchase such items as extension straps and anchor bolt kits.
 - Prepare discount vouchers if you have arranged a discount on anchor bolt fitting.
 - Source all equipment, giveaways, and signage needed for the event.
 - Create a list of timings and responsibilities for people who will be working on the event.
- 
- Develop an injury control factor sheet or safety plan.
 - Car seats can be dirty. Ensure you have hand sterilising wash/ wipes to protect technicians from illness, and to prevent the spread of germs from vehicle to vehicle.

During the event

- Conduct a team briefing to ensure everyone knows their role
- Discuss health and safety measures.
- Set up the venue and clearly establish traffic flow arrangements.
- Check the child restraints (to be done by expert technicians).
- Provide assistants for people checking the car restraints.
- Greet and direct traffic and hand out information packs and give-aways.
- Take photographs – ensure a permission slip is signed at the time the photo is taken.
- Provide a host and spokesperson for any media that may attend.
- Distribute refreshments to workers.
- Collect competition entry forms.
- Assist families by standing with any children who may need to get out of the car while a seat is being adjusted.

After the event

- Dispose / destroy any old seats that may have been collected during the clinic.
- Collate and analyse data collected in checking forms.
- Assess if event objectives were achieved e.g. number of seats checked.
- Write a follow-up media release.
- Conduct a team debrief – share the results.
- Send thank you letters and pay the bills.
- Write event report. And conduct follow-up evaluation e.g. phone calls to those participants who agreed to be part of follow-up evaluation.

Example of Aims and Objectives

Aim

To run a checking clinic that will enable families to have their child car restraints inspected and receive help and advice, plus attracting wider public attention to the importance of using child car restraints correctly.

Objectives are to:

Clinics

- Run checking clinics at six child care centres in... (for example; in Beachlands)
- Run a checking clinic at the Kindergarten open day

Participants

- Check at least 20 vehicles
- Check at least 30 child restraints
- Give away at least 20 information packs

Media

- Achieve a mention of the checking clinic in the local newspaper

Advertising

- Provide an invitation to every family attending Smith Street Kindergarten
- Distribute up to 500 flyers to retail outlets and child care centres in the area
- Achieve one mention of the checking clinic in one local school newsletter

Where and When?

Where: Checking clinics are best held where there is easy access and plenty of space for people and traffic to move about safely; cover in case of rain and for shade; and plenty of light.

Gain the support of the venue owners, so they can 'sell' the idea to others using the venue.

It is also good to hold a Clinic when and where there are already families present and available to participate.

Look for the following;

- Large car park
- A good presence and/or flow of families (irrespective of checking clinic)
- Easy entrance and exits
- Plenty of safe space that can be put aside for the Checking Clinic
- Opportunities 'on site' for pre clinic promotion and advertising
- Good lighting is essential for technicians to see interiors of cars
- Covered areas in case of bad or very sunny weather
- Toilets
- Proximity to retailers and refreshments

When: A four-hour time frame is the most ideal.

This might be:

9am to 1pm... or ...

10am to 2pm... or ...

11am to 3pm.

Checking Clinics at child-care venues are best held at drop-off or pick-up times. This can be co-ordinated well in advance with staff and parent committees.

If held at a church, the best times will be before or after church services on Sundays. This needs to be co-ordinated well in advance with church leaders and Sunday school teachers.

Equipment Checklist

Venue set-up

- Chairs
- Tables
- Tent – or shelter
- Notice board for messages
- Food/drink for workers

Traffic flow

- Cones
- Checking clinic signs or banner
- Directional signs, arrows
- Tape or rope to 'rope' off areas

Health and safety

- Cell phone
- First aid kit
- High visibility vests
- Name tags for workers
- Suitable footwear
- Hand sterilising wash/ wipes

General equipment

- Clipboards, pens
- Checking forms
- Restraint products for demonstration purposes e.g. child harness, booster seats
- Locking clips
- Anchor bolts
- Educational Brochures and parent information
- Camera – Permission forms to ensure you are able to use the photos later
- Free goodies for families

Check list of roles and responsibilities

- Facilitator – Coordinator
- Child car restraint technicians / experts
- Interpreter
- Traffic Guides
- Child minders
- Ushers / reception
- Mechanics
- Other helpers – to arrange food, take photos
- Clean Up Crew

Advertising and Promotion

Take time to think about how to achieve plenty of well targeted advertising.

Advertising suggestions

- Send a letter home to parents and families attending local schools, churches and childcare centres.
- Send a media release to local daily and community newspapers
- Place paid advertisements in your local papers – large advertisements if you have a budget – or a small advertisement in the newspaper classified section.
- Place a message on local radio station ‘community notice boards’
- Approach your local Council for advertising in their newsletter and community billboards
- Create flyers (see template) you can distribute to your local library, General Practitioner’s surgery and put up on shopping centre notice boards and in local shop windows.
- Ask if notices can be included in local church and school newsletters. Plan in advance, so the notice is included more than once.

Other promotional Ideas

Arrange and advertise sponsored ‘Spot Prizes’

Hold your clinic in conjunction with another high profile event

Tip Two

Replacement seats

If you have free car restraints to replace unsafe or unsuitable restraints DO NOT publicise that seats will be given away.

The child must be present to receive a replacement restraint as the child is the key to ensuring the seat is the correct fit

Tip Three

Disposing of unsafe seats

If the clinic has replacement seats available, participants may be willing to leave behind unsafe restraints so they can be taken out of circulation.

A local child restraint rental scheme will be able to advise or help with the disposal of unsafe child car seats.

It is best to remove all straps and buckles and when possible also cut or crush the plastic shells.

Don't wait for a crash to see if your child's car restraint is safe

**Free child car restraint checks
Saturday 7th May 2011
Smith Street Kindy Car Park: 11am to 3pm**

Trained staff and volunteers will check your child's car seat and provide information on:

- Rear facing seats
- Locking clips
- Booster seats
- Harnesses
- Tether straps
- Forward facing clips
- The right seat for your child
- The right seat for your car

**Bring along your car, seats, kids
and all your questions**

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Invitation letter & media release

Sample invitation letter

Date

All Parents and caregivers
c/- Smith Street Kindergarten
Smith Street
RODNEY

FREE child car restraint check

Smith Street Kindergarten Committee invites you to a free child car restraint checking clinic.

Where: Smith Street Kindy car park

When: Monday 7th August 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm

This is a great opportunity to have your children's car restraints checked by an expert. Please bring your car, car seats, kids and lots of questions.

Car seats SAVE lives – are yours fitted correctly?

Looking forward to seeing you on Monday 7th August

Committee Secretary; Susan Smith
Contact phone: 201 555 999

Sample media release

The <<<name of organisation>>> will be checking child car safety seats in a bid to save children's lives.

The free "clinic" will be held Monday 7th August at the Smith Street Kindy car park. Everyone is welcome to come.

<<<Spokesperson>>> says that properly fitted child car restraints can reduce the risk of death or serious injury by as much as 70 percent.

"Unfortunately these benefits can be lost if the car seats are not fitted properly," <<<he/she>>> says "we also know that the incorrect use of child car seats is too common." <<<Use statistics from local surveys if they are available>>>

"This is an opportunity to bring along your car, car seats, kids and questions. Everyone is welcome; there are no trivial questions when it comes to keeping kids safe in cars" <<says spokesperson>>

Parents will be given advice about moving their child from an infant seat to a booster seat and about using tether straps and locking clips.

It would be a shame to have a car seat that wasn't doing the safest job possible. In most cases our team will be able to fix any problems on the spot, or give easy fix it steps, or referrals," <<<spokesperson says>>>

Every year 12 children younger than 10 years old die and 116 are admitted to hospital on average as a result of being injured in a motor vehicle crash.

Contact name and phone number

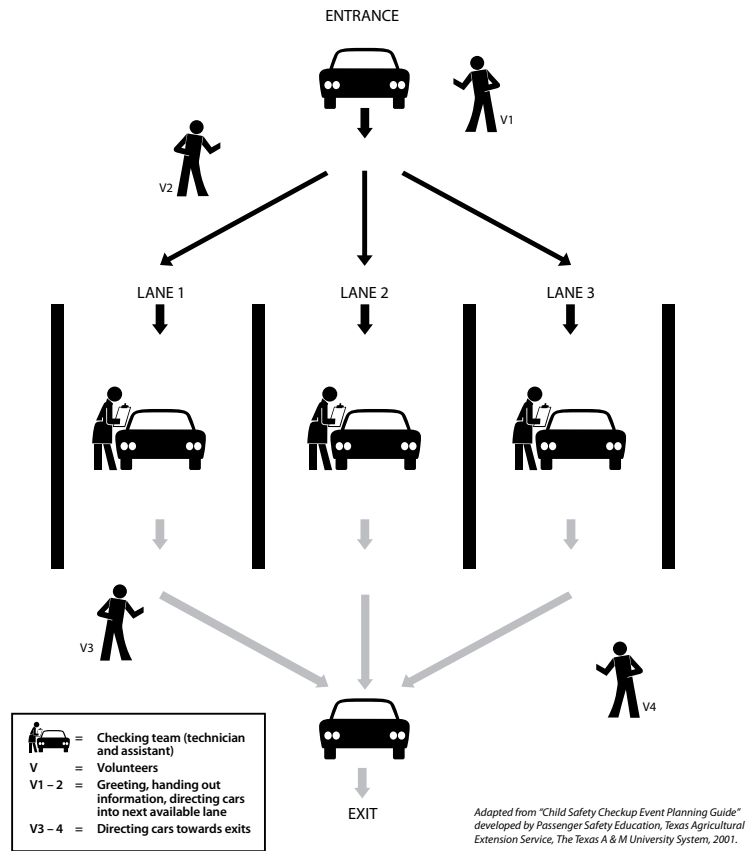
Setting up the location

Your site will need plenty of space for cars and people to move about safely.

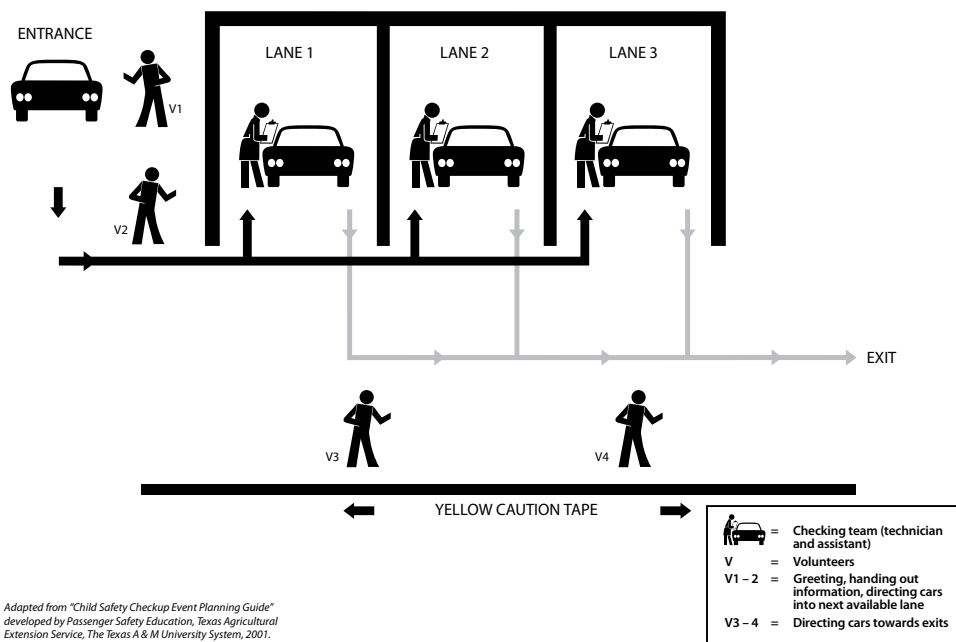
It is best to have a separate place, away from vehicles for a shaded table and chairs where helpers can have access to refreshments, resources and information.

Check the vehicle layout maps for suggestions about how to direct vehicles.

Option A



Option B



Safety First!

Create your hazard checking and reporting system that will help you carefully plan to avoid all possible hazards that might otherwise occur during your checking clinic.

Think about the danger presented by moving vehicles.

Members of the public may be unaware of your arrangements for traffic management. Provide High Visibility Vests for workers, cones and highly visible signs to make sure everything is self explanatory and obvious.

Ensure children always have an adult who is especially identified as looking after them, include their own family members or care givers.

See the **Example Hazard Sheet** for a suggestion of how to set out a hazard sheet

| Specific Factor – potential risk and/or danger | Recommended Measures | Responsibility |
|--|---|----------------|
| Moving vehicles | Traffic management plan. Use cones and tape to set up the entrance and exit. Have directional signs to assist motorists. | |
| | Guide vehicles into and out of checking lanes. Provide team with Hi Visibility clothing | |
| | Be aware of vehicle occupants while the car is being checked, especially children. Ask all on the team to be aware that children must not wander away from their car or parent. | |
| Managing any injuries that might occur | Bring first aid kit that has been fully checked | |
| | One team member with first aid certificate | |
| | Identify nearest medical centre or emergency service | |
| Further points... | | |

Recording & reporting

When running checking clinics you will want to report how the checking clinic went, how many car seats were checked, how many problems were addressed and lots of other information. This is both to have information for your funders, and to remind you of useful information for next time.

The information will be part of your overall evaluation. See the recording form on the next page.

Recording Clinic details

Record the details of your clinic on a page that you keep with your clinic recording forms.

Your master sheet will have the:

- Name of the Clinic
- Address
- Date and time
- Organisations that have supported the clinic
- People who came on the day and their roles

| Name | Role | Contact details |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Chris Brown | Technician /volunteer | Mobile Home Number |

Recording Form (see page 14)

The standard form on page 14 has been written by teams running checking clinics regularly and who wish to combine the results from many clinics.

Check with others who are running clinics in your community and ask if they would be happy to also use this form.

When everyone uses the same form it is possible to begin to combine your information and reports so you can create a bigger picture of how many clinics are being held and the sorts of issues you are identifying.

Tip Four

Using the recoding sheet

Save time!

Before you photocopy your recording sheets for using on the day, write in the name, date and time of the clinic.

This will save time when you are with each car, and your team will thank you.

Tip Five

Combine your reports and share your results

It's easier together!

Find out who are also running checking clinics and talk about how you can share your information.

Checking clinic recording form

PRINT DOUBLE SIDED

Child Restraint Checking Clinic Recording Form

Technician Name _____ Recorder Initials _____ Date _____

Location _____ Clinic / Police Checkpoint (circle one)

| | Restraint type (tick/ circle) | Fault (tick/ circle) | Action/ Advice (tick/ circle) |
|--------------|--|--|---|
| Expiry date | <input type="checkbox"/> Baby capsule <input type="checkbox"/> Child seat – rear facing <input type="checkbox"/> Child seat – forward facing <input type="checkbox"/> Seat belt or Lap belt <input type="checkbox"/> Booster | <input type="checkbox"/> NO FAULTS <input type="checkbox"/> Seat out of date <input type="checkbox"/> Seat type unsuitable <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect position in car <input type="checkbox"/> Seatbelt loose or twisted <input type="checkbox"/> Harness loose or twisted <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect routing of seatbelt <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect routing of harness <input type="checkbox"/> Anchor bolt required <input type="checkbox"/> Tether strap not attached <input type="checkbox"/> Locking Clip required <input type="checkbox"/> Seatbelt not long enough Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> No action/advice needed <input type="checkbox"/> Advice given by technician <input type="checkbox"/> Issues corrected on site <input type="checkbox"/> Anchor Bolt installed <input type="checkbox"/> Police warning <input type="checkbox"/> Infringement notice <input type="checkbox"/> Antenatal advice/installation Other: |
| Make/ Brand | <input type="checkbox"/> Harness <input type="checkbox"/> NONE | | |
| Age of child | | | |
| Expiry date | <input type="checkbox"/> Baby capsule <input type="checkbox"/> Child seat – rear facing <input type="checkbox"/> Child seat – forward facing <input type="checkbox"/> Seat belt or Lap belt <input type="checkbox"/> Booster | <input type="checkbox"/> NO FAULTS <input type="checkbox"/> Seat out of date <input type="checkbox"/> Seat type unsuitable <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect position in car <input type="checkbox"/> Seatbelt loose or twisted <input type="checkbox"/> Harness loose or twisted <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect routing of seatbelt <input type="checkbox"/> Incorrect routing of harness <input type="checkbox"/> Anchor bolt required <input type="checkbox"/> Tether strap not attached <input type="checkbox"/> Locking Clip required <input type="checkbox"/> Seatbelt not long enough Other: | <input type="checkbox"/> No action/advice needed <input type="checkbox"/> Advice given by technician <input type="checkbox"/> Issues corrected on site <input type="checkbox"/> Anchor Bolt installed <input type="checkbox"/> Police warning <input type="checkbox"/> Infringement notice <input type="checkbox"/> Antenatal advice/installation Other: |
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| Make/ Brand | <input type="checkbox"/> Harness <input type="checkbox"/> NONE | | |
| Age of child | | | |

Use one form for every vehicle and one box per child/seat

Evaluation

At the very beginning of organising the checking clinic, plan your report and decide how and what you will evaluate

Checking clinics play a vital role helping us understand what needs to be done to provide the best information for families.

You may wish to create an evaluation sheet to give to families attending your clinic.

Take some photos of your event (be sure to obtain written permission from people you photograph, especially if you include children in any pictures)

Further information

Obtain as much information and as many posters and leaflets as you can from agencies able to provide it at little or no cost to you.

New Zealand sites include:

- Plunket www.Plunket.org.nz For information about Plunket car seat rental schemes and other links
- New Zealand Transport Agency www.nzta.govt.nz/resources
- Child Restraints www.childrestraints.co.nz for information about restraints
- Safekids New Zealand www.safekids.org.nz – Under Safety Topics check 'Motor vehicle passenger injury'

Tip Six Evaluation

In your checking clinic evaluation form, or competition entry form, consider asking how people heard about the clinic – this will help you when you advertise future clinics.



Photo courtesy of Plunket

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