



Traffic
Information
Program
Series

CHILDREN AT PLAY

WHY WON'T THEY PUT UP CHILDREN AT PLAY SIGNS?

An often heard neighborhood request concerns the posting of generalized warning signs with SLOW-CHILDREN AT PLAY or other similar messages. Parental concern for the safety of children in the street near home, and a misplaced but wide-spread public faith in traffic signs to provide protection often prompt these requests.

Although some other states have posted such signs widely in residential areas, no factual evidence has been presented to document their success in reducing pedestrian accidents, operating speed or legal liability. Studies have shown that many types of signs attempting to warn of normal conditions in residential areas have failed to achieve the desired safety benefits. If signs encourage parents and children to believe they have an added degree of protection, which the signs do not and cannot provide, a great disservice results.

Because of the serious considerations, California law does not recognize, and Federal Standards discourage, use of Children at Play signs. Specific warnings for schools, playgrounds, parks and other recreational facilities are available for use where clearly justified.

Children should not be encouraged to play within the street travelways. The sign has long been rejected since it is a direct and open suggestion that this behavior is acceptable.

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