

How about a "CHILDREN AT PLAY" warning sign???



The Traffic Engineering Division frequently receives requests from parents and neighborhood organizations for "CHILDREN AT PLAY" signs in residential areas. These requests stem from parents' concern for the safety of their children in the street or near their homes. Unfortunately, these requests are based on a widespread false belief that all traffic signs provide protection. Concerned citizens fail to realize that these signs are deceiving and ineffective.

"Children at Play" signs create a false sense of security for parents and children. Parents think the signs provide added protection, when motorists often pay little attention to them. Playing in the street is unsafe and illegal. "Children at Play" signs are direct and open suggestions to small children that the street is an acceptable place to play. If posting signs gives parents and children a false sense of security a great disservice has been done. Studies made in cities around the nation where such signs were widely posted in residential areas show no evidence of having reduced pedestrian crashes, vehicle speed or legal liability. Since there are children on virtually every city block in Troy, signs would have to be posted on every block. Otherwise, it would suggest that there are no children in areas where signs are not posted. Parents also believe such signs greatly reduce speeding. Studies in City of Troy have also shown very low effectiveness of the sign and therefore have not installed them in the past several years. Before and after studies showed no reduction in speeds.

Federal Standards discourage the use of "Children at Play" signs. Unnecessary signs may confuse and irritate drivers leading to disrespect for all traffic signs. However, specific warnings are posted where needed for pedestrian crossings, schools, playgrounds, and other recreational areas.

It is important that parents teach their children about the dangers of playing near or in the street. Furthermore, they should discourage them from doing so.

Citizen Concerns: The City takes its role in solving traffic problems very seriously, yet the ultimate burden of safety rests on you, the motorist in the City of Troy. We will respond to every traffic concern you have. Since we receive over 400 citizen concerns per year, we may not be able to investigate your request as quickly as we would like to. We appreciate your patience and understanding in this matter.

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