

Connecticut Technology Transfer

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Why Children at Play Signs are Not Recommended

By Andrew Morgan, West Virginia Local Technical Assistance Program

Traffic signs are a key part of our transportation network. They provide information to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists about the rules of the road such as where drivers must stop and the permitted speed limit. Street name and directional signs help us find our desired destination. When a hazard is present in or near the road, warning signs are there to caution us. Without good signage we might find ourselves lost, in a ditch, or stopped by law enforcement.

Proper signage also helps make communities more liveable and streets safer, something most residents tend to want. Sometimes residents view the street in front of their homes as more than just a place for cars. They may use the road as a walking path, a place to stop and chat with neighbors, or an extension of their front yard where they allow their children to play. Often, residents make requests to road agencies for additional signs which they believe will make their community safer.

One request that many road agencies receive is for "CHILDREN AT PLAY", "SLOW CHILDREN AT PLAY", or "SLOW CHILDREN" signs. Residents often argue that children play in or near the road, and there needs to be some warning given to drivers. Without these signs, some feel, children are at risk. Based on these arguments alone, it may seem logical that "CHILDREN AT PLAY" signs should be installed. However, there are other issues that need to be considered.



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