

## City Policy on Children At Play Signs

Children at Play and similar signs are not recognized by the State or the Federal Highway Administration as official traffic control devices and, therefore, are not installed by the City on public streets.

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 speeds 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. Signs may encourage parents and children to believe they have an added degree of protection, which the signs do not and cannot provide.

Because of these serious considerations, Colorado law and Federal Standards do not recognize 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 travel ways.**

The sign has long been rejected since it is a direct and open suggestion that this behavior is acceptable.



**Public Works & Planning  
Division of Transportation Engineering**

333 West Ave, Bldg D  
Grand Junction, CO 81501-7216  
(970) 256-4110 | [www.gjcity.org](http://www.gjcity.org)



What  
You  
Need  
To Know  
About  
Children  
At Play



## Information About Children At Play Signs

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 near home is common, but these requests are misguided by widespread public faith in traffic signs to provide protection.

The City of Grand Junction receives many requests to install signs warning drivers of the possible presence of children at play. Concerned citizens fail to realize that these signs are deceiving and ineffective. Drivers already expect the presence of children in residential areas, especially at certain times, and studies show that devices attempting to warn motorists of normal conditions or conditions that are not always present fail to achieve the desired safety benefits.



## False Sense of Security

"Children at Play" signs also tend to create a false sense of security for parents and children who believe the signs provide an added degree of protection when motorists, particularly local ones, actually pay little attention to them.

The use of Children at Play and similar signs such as Slow or Slow - Entering Residential Area, has long been discouraged since these signs are a direct and open suggestion to small children that playing in or beside the roadway is acceptable.

While parents believe such signs may help reduce speeds, there is no evidence that these signs prevent accidents or reduce the speed of vehicles. If problems with speeding exist, stricter enforcement should be sought from the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

## Lower Speed Limits

Citizens frequently request speed limit signs lower than 20 mph on residential streets where children are playing. The unposted speed limit on a residential street is automatically 30 mph and can be enforced. The city of Grand Junction will post speed limits lower than 30 mph on residential streets when the physical alignment suggests a need for lower speeds. The City will not post limits lower than 20 mph, as studies in many residential areas have shown that residents will drive at the speed they feel is safe and comfortable. The Police Department will not enforce an unreasonably low speed.

## Addressing the Safety of Young Children

Unnecessary signs confuse and annoy drivers and foster a disrespect for all signs, but signs in accordance with the State of Colorado's Traffic Manual can and should be posted for school zones and pedestrian crossings where a need exists.

Most importantly, parents should teach children the dangers of playing in or near roadways and strongly discourage them from doing so. The City provides neighborhood parks where children can play safely with proper supervision. Safe playgrounds are also provided at many elementary school sites.

## Citizen Concern

The City takes our role in solving traffic problems very seriously, yet the ultimate burden of safety rests with you, the citizen in Grand Junction. We will respond after carefully evaluating your request. We appreciate your patience and understanding.



**If you have questions, requests or suggestions concerning traffic please call the Transportation Engineering Division at 256-4110**