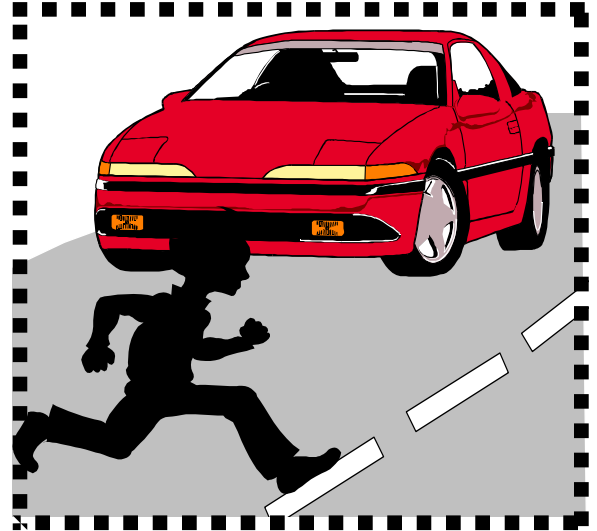




TRANSPORTATION SECTION
CITY OF OCEANSIDE

What You Need
To Know About
CHILDREN AT PLAY



Citizen Concerns

The City takes our role in solving traffic problems very seriously, yet the ultimate burden of safety rests with you, the citizen in Oceanside.

If you have questions,

*requests or suggestions concerning traffic, please call the Transportation Section
at (760) 435-5099*

Safety Factors Relating to Children at Play

The City of Oceanside often receives 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.

Parents also seem to 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.

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.

Lower Speed Limits

Citizens frequently request 10 mph speed limit signs on residential streets where children are playing. The unposted speed limit on a residential street is automatically 25 mph and can be enforced. The City cannot post 10 mph speed limits because the posting of such signs by a local government agency is considered a speed trap and therefore makes enforcement of such limits illegal.

Prohibiting Trucks in Residential Areas

To help make residential streets safer for children to play on, citizens also frequently request signs that say:

Whenever such signs are installed, not all vehicles over 10,000 lbs. are prohibited from using these posted streets. Exemptions to posted weight restrictions include: emergency vehicles; vehicles used in transporting passengers such as buses; vehicles used in conjunction with building construction or delivery; vehicles used for local pick-up or delivery; vehicles

used by local businesses to gain access to and from the business. It requires a City council resolution to establish weight restrictions on a street and high visibility enforcement to make such signs affective. Therefore the City posts such signs only on streets where there is a documented large volume of heavy traffic that does not have a legitimate reason to use such streets.

Addressing the Safety of Your Children

Unnecessary signs confuse and annoy drivers and foster a disrespect for all signs, but signs in accordance with the State of California's Manual on Traffic Control Devices can and should be posted for school zones and pedestrian crossings as well as play grounds and other recreational areas where a need exists.

Most importantly, parent 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!