



### Children at Play and Hidden Drive Signs

Over the years, the Ohio Department of Transportation has occasionally received questions about “Hidden Drive” signs and “Children at Play” signs. The following text is from ODOT’s *Traffic Engineering Manual* (TEM), which is a compilation of ODOT policies and practices.

#### **Children at Play Signs**

Signs intended to alert drivers that children may be present in an area, such as CHILDREN AT PLAY or WATCH FOR CHILDREN, have not been shown to have a discernable benefit to traffic safety but still remain popular with the public. No factual evidence has been presented to document the success of this type of signing 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, or conditions that are not always present, have failed to achieve the desired safety benefits.

Children should not be encouraged to play in the roadway. If signs encourage parents and children to believe they have an added degree of protection, which the signs do not and cannot provide, this can result in a disservice. This type of signing has long been rejected since it is a direct and open suggestion that this behavior is acceptable.

For these reasons, **ODOT** does not provide CHILDREN AT PLAY or similar signing. This type of signing is not recommended for use on any roadway at any time. [\*Traffic Engineering Manual \(ODOT\) – Section 202-2\*](#)

#### **Hidden Drive Signs**

The use of this sign was discontinued on **ODOT**-maintained highways in 1970 when traffic observations and experience disclosed that drivers on the through roadway were ignoring the sign message. The signs had little or no effect in alerting drivers or in reducing their speed.

The use of HIDDEN DRIVE signs could create a false sense of security for the driveway user. The driveway traffic should be fully aware of the hazard of entering the through roadway, and should not be misled into thinking that the through traffic will be prepared to yield or stop.

For these reasons, **ODOT** does not provide HIDDEN DRIVE or similar signing. [\*Traffic Engineering Manual \(ODOT\) – Section 202-3\*](#)

The TEM is available online at:

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Engineering/Roadway/DesignStandards/traffic/TEM/Pages/default.aspx>

**DISCLAIMER:** This RON update is being provided only as an informational update. This is not a primary technical or legal authority, and should not be relied upon as such.