



School Zones and Children's Crossings Program FAQs.



Key Message

- The School Zones and Children's Crossings Program is a four-year initiative to implement safe speed limits at children's crossings located outside school zones during school hours across the state. This will be achieved by utilising Electronic Speed Limit Signs (ESLS) or static signs, depending on the posted speed of the road.
- This program is funded through the Road Safety Commission's Road Trauma Trust Account, in conjunction with Main Roads, who will deliver the program.
- This program aims to enhance the safety of children walking, wheeling or cycling to and from school, supporting the Department of Transport's Active Travel to School Roadmap 2023-2030.

What is the purpose of this program?

The Improvement Program aims to ensure that all children's crossings throughout Western Australia are situated within speed zones of 40 km/h or less during school hours by 2028. This initiative aims to enhance the safety of both students and traffic wardens and to encourage active travel to schools by lowering speed limits in areas surrounding school crossings.

Why is the program being delivered?

The program is being delivered based on the following problem statements:

1. **High number of incidents** - Data collected between 2017 and 2021 reveals 1,500 pedestrian-vehicle interactions at or near warden-controlled children's crossings during school hours.
2. **Limited number of traffic wardens** - Western Australia is also suffering from a limited number of trained wardens currently available to cover the existing number of approved crossings as well as a lack of safety (both in real and perceived terms) around the role wardens have to fulfil on higher speed roads. Because of this shortage, students are sometimes left to navigate their way across multi-laned roads and/or high-speed road environments without regulatory protection and pedestrian priority provided by the presence of Traffic Wardens. This situation significantly increases the risks to their safety in higher-speed environments.
3. **Improving the rate of active travel to schools** - The national rate of active travel to school has dropped from 75% to 25% over the past 40 years, while in Perth, the rate of students riding or walking to school is at 20%.

What treatments are included in this program?

The program will implement speed changes based on the following criteria:

- Implement 40 km/hr variable speed zones using electronic speed limit signs (ESLS) for crossings located outside of school zones on 60km/hr and 70km/hr roads.
- Implement 40 km/hr variable speed zones using static signage for crossings located outside of school zones on 50km/hr roads.
- Implement 40 km/hr variable speed zones by extending existing school zones to include school crossings located in proximity.
- No change to the children's crossings located on 40km/hr and lower roads.

The 40km/h speed limit would align with existing school zone periods—7.30 am to 9 am and 2.30 pm to 4 pm during school terms. The hours may vary in regions. The changes will mean all warden-controlled school crossings in WA will be located within 40km/h speed zones during school pick-up and drop-off.

As additional Children's Crossings are installed throughout Western Australia, 40km/h speed zones will continue to be implemented at all locations.

What is the timeline for the program?

The program will be delivered over four years, from Financial Year (FY) 2024/25 to 2027/28.

How are sites prioritised within the program?

The first sites to be implemented have been prioritised based on factors such as higher-speed environments, carriageway types, school types, historical incidences, the number of lanes, and the location of the crossings.

What work will be done in the first year of the program?

In Year 1 (FY24/25), the program will focus on:

- Electronic Speed Limit signs (ESLS) will be deployed to implement children's crossing zones at 21 designated locations on roads with speed limits of 60 km/h or higher.
- Static signs will be deployed to implement children's crossing zones at all children's crossings across the state on roads with speed limits of 50 km/h or higher, excluding the above 21 sites.

Note: Static signs on roads with speed limits of 60 km/h or higher will be progressively replaced with electronic speed limit signs (ESLS) by the end of the 2027-28 financial year.

How will the program impact the community?

By lowering speed limits around children's crossings, the program will reduce the risk of accidents and create a safer environment for children walking, wheeling or cycling to and from school. The use of ESLS and static signs will also enhance driver awareness during school times, contributing to road safety.

How will these speed changes be enforced?

- The speed changes will be enforced in the same way as other speed and regulatory devices.
- Laws and penalties are already in place to provide WA Police the ability to enforce the rules around both traffic signals and speed zones.
- Road users are required to and expected to drive in accordance with posted speed limits and all other road rules on any road.

Where can I find more information?

For further information, please contact the Congestion Management Services Branch under the Network Operations Directorate. They manage the program's implementation and can provide updates on progress, upcoming work, and any related inquiries.