

Leonard: An accessible playground for Malden

By **Mary Leonard**/ Sitting in
Friday, July 29, 2005

I think that Malden should build a park designed for kids with multiple disabilities; a park that is 100 percent wheelchair accessible. I think that this is important because it will make Malden one step closer to being a child-friendly city.

You may think that we do a lot for special needs kids, which we do, including yearly events such as the Special Olympics and a few other special events. But we don't have activities that special needs kids and their families can do every day.

There are Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines for building a handicapped accessible park, but these guidelines are not enough. For example, ADA guidelines allow stairs on a piece of playground equipment as a form of handicap access. ADA guidelines also allow things like panels that you just look at as an accessible activity. Here are some things that would be great in a park and would go beyond the ADA guidelines. Children with disabilities each have different physical skills such as walking, crawling, sliding or using their arms to pull themselves. An accessible playground should include:

- Double slides and triple slides (large and small)
- Everything accessible by ramp
- A barrier-free path from the slide to the ramp, exit, bench, etc.
- Slides with textures to make going down them more exhilarating
- Series of tunnels linked by gated platforms
- A small grassy area for benches and reading
- Crawling areas with multiple colors
- Swings with backs
- Parallel bars
- Low steps for walkers new to stairs
- Padded areas with things to hold on to for learning to walk
- Activity panels with chimes, drums, gears, etc.
- Ground made of rubber with some grass in the surrounding areas

This park would be designed for children to enjoy with their parents, friends and siblings. Some of the equipment would be for the child and a parent, friend or sibling to use together such as the double and triple slides.

The parents should be able to supervise and help with the play so there should be short tunnels and no tube slides. The children will enjoy sensory and social types of play also that is

Herald Interactive Tools



[Recent articles](#)



[E-mail article to a friend](#)



[View graphic version](#)



[Search site](#)



[Subscribe to Malden Observer](#)

where the panels and the colored crawl areas come in.

Since Malden is going to be building new parks and improving others over the next few years this presents an opportunity to do something very special with these new parks.

Mary Leonard is an eighth-grader in Malden. She can be reachd at wheelpark@aol.com. She has been volunteering with children with disabilities for the past four years and became aware of the need for more accessible playgrounds by talking with parents, accompanying children with disabilities and their parents to playgrounds. She has researched the issue by sending away for playground equipment catalogs and reading about ADA guidelines.

Ads by Google

[Liberty Swing](#)

A new concept playground swing for people with disabilities.
libertyswing.com.au






[Wheelchair & Scooter Ramp](#)

Find Our Wholesale Prices On All Modular, Portable, & Van Ramps.
www.PlanetMobility.com/

[playground](#)

commercial playground equipment cities, churches, developers
www.wowplaygrounds.com

Recent articles

-  [Editorial: Put HUD in the past](#)
-  [Editorial: Candidates must side with workers](#)
-  [Ask MVES: Dealing with an obstinate parent](#)
-  [Viglione: Invisible victims of the Iraq/Afghanistan conflict](#)
-  [May: Relaxing, reminiscing, reflecting](#)

Search the site

<input type="text" value="Enter Keywords"/>	<input type="button" value="all"/>	<input type="button" value="relevance"/>	<input style="background-color: #e69d00; color: white; border: none;" type="button" value="Go!"/>
---	------------------------------------	--	---

.....
[[contact us](#)] :: [[print advertising](#)] :: [[online advertising](#)] :: [[Browser Upgrade](#)] :: [[Jobs](#)] :: **[Click here for home delivery](#)** or call **1.800.982.4023**
.....

© Copyright of CNC and Herald Interactive Advertising Systems, Inc.
No portion of townonline.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)