***Playing Up/Playing Down Policy***

Players are placed into divisions based upon the National AYSO guidelines and Age Determination Chart. These guidelines can be found on the National AYSO site [*here*](https://www.aysovolunteers.org/age-guide/). We do not normally deviate from these guidelines.
<https://www.aysovolunteers.org/age-guide/>

Before anything else, the initial considerations to any special request to playing up or playing down are:

* Safety of all players
* No ill effect to the division that player would normally be in. For example, moving a player from one division would mean that there would not be enough players in that division
* Another player being blocked from participating in the other division. For example, moving a player to an older division would mean that another player is not allowed to participate (the division is full)

Playing Up

Occasionally, a parent may request that a child play-up to the next higher level. We generally follow the AYSO National Guidelines, but allow for some exceptions:

* Combining divisions - for some divisions (normally 16U and above), we may not have enough players to form complete teams in two consecutive age divisions. In this case, we may combine the players from the two age divisions and form one team. This team would need to compete at the older age division. For example, if 16U players are combined with 18U players to form one team, the combined team will play in the 18U division.
* Need for players in an age division - if an age division needs players to be able to form a team, and the next-lower age division has an abundance of players, then some of the older players in the lower age division ***may***be given the opportunity to play up. For example, if the 10U-B division needs players to be able to form an even-number of teams, then some of the older 8U-B players may be identified as candidates to play up if it does not affect the formation of the 8U-B teams
* Too many players in an age division - if an age division has too many players and the next higher division has room, then some players ***may***be given the opportunity to play up.

In the cases of either a division needing players or a division having too many players, the opportunity to play up will be awarded based on ability and age. Only players that would be moving to the older age division in the next Fall season AND that qualify based on skill level will be eligible. From this subset of players, each player will be asked in order of their birth date, with the older players being asked first. The order IS NOT based on skill level.

Each exception will be considered case by case, and year by year. Playing up one year does not mean playing up every year. The parents of players being given the opportunity to play up will be consulted, as will coaches. The parents must agree, and the player must also want to play up. Players are never forced to play up.

Parents wanting their child to play up need to contact the Board in writing per email during open registration. Simply texting or verbally stating the desire to have a child play up is not sufficient. After registration and teams are formed, it is much more difficult to accommodate such requests.

**Some other things to consider:**

* **Playing up is not automatic**