



# Policies and Procedures

Adopted: 21 April 2010

## Playing Up in Age Group

*This policy replaces in their entirety the policies adopted on 9 March 1993, 28 March 2002 and 12 May 2004.*

It is the intent of the MSC Board to encourage player development by remaining flexible in allowing players to play up in age group in cases of hardship or extraordinary prowess.

The leadership and playing strength exhibited by the better players entering the second year of a two-year age group are important if we are to maintain continuity and improve the caliber of the team as a unit and the club as a whole. There will always be cases where a young player is capable of moving up to the next age group and where coach/player interactions will reinforce the wish to move up.

Given the other opportunities for advanced competition (such as classic and olympic development programs) and the opportunity for leadership in his/her peer age group, requests for playing up shall be strongly resisted. The occasional player losses will be more than compensated for by the consistency and strengthening of the team and the overall club program.

In-house players shall be strongly discouraged from playing up; for travel players, playing up will be the exception. In some circumstances, which may include

- 1) The desire to remain in an age group with the child's classmates (carrying the most weight for a U12 who will be playing on the middle school soccer team),
- 2) The demonstrated inability of the parent or guardian and child to participate in the age group's games or practices (highly unlikely for in-house players) or
- 3) Demonstrated physical prowess that would be enhanced by playing up, but only in the second year of the two-year age group,

the MSC Board at its sole discretion may consider action to advance a player to an older age group. The approval would only be made for that one playing season but does not guarantee placement on a team in an older age group.

Because of recommendations by PA West and the US Youth Soccer Association, procedures differ for play-up requests for players U12 and below versus those U13 and

above. For players U12 and below, the following procedures must be followed and conditions met in order for the Board to consider a play-up request:

- 1) The parent or guardian shall meet with the player's current coach to jointly submit a letter to the Age Group (or Travel) Coordinator and MSC Board requesting permission for the child to play up and indicating the name of the current coach and team, the birth date of the child and the specific reasons for this request.
- 2) Upon request of the Board, the parent or guardian, coach and/or Coordinators shall appear at a regularly scheduled Board meeting during the off-season months of December, January, February, July or August. Once teams are formed, no age group movement shall occur.
- 3) If agreement among all parties cannot be reached, the request shall be automatically denied. Even if these parties agree, the Board must approve the movement.
- 4) Under no circumstance will a player be permitted to play up if it leaves the current team (or age group) with an inadequate number of players or would displace a player in the new age group.
- 5) The Board will approve movement of the player only if it is in the best interest of the club as a whole.
- 6) Upon the player's placement on a team in an older age group, the parent or guardian must complete the play-up permission form as specified by the Board. The form must be notarized if so required by PA West regulations.
- 7) The Board may initiate a play-up request (to facilitate team formation, for example). In this case, item 6) is still required should the parent or guardian give permission for the play-up.

National guidelines recommend that players U13 and above be placed on teams according to their skill level and/or desired level of competition. Approval of the Board is not necessary for play in a higher age group, but item 4) above applies and a permission form must be completed for a U13 player placed on a U16 or higher team or a U14 player placed on a U17 or higher team.