

Hi Parents,

We want to share details about upcoming age group changes that will take effect this fall.

These changes are part of a nationwide update from U.S. Soccer, which is shifting how age groups are formed across the country. This is not a local league decision—organizations everywhere will be implementing the same structure.

Though this change will cause some disruption to our current teams and the team formation process next season, we believe that the changes will ultimately lead to an improved soccer experience with more kids being able to play with friends in their own grade.

**Age Group Change, Explained**

Until now, soccer age groups were determined by birth year.

Here is a chart that shows how soccer age groups were formed (by birth year) and how THEY will be formed now (with dates closer to school age). In Fall 2026, we will be using the column on the right to form teams:

AGE GROUP	2025-26 SEASONAL YEAR	2026-27 SEASONAL YEAR
U4	Born between Jan. 1, 2022 - Dec.31, 2022	Born between Aug. 1, 2022 - July 31, 2023
U5	Born between Jan. 1, 2021 - Dec. 31, 2021	Born between Aug. 1, 2021 - July 31, 2022
U6	Born between Jan. 1, 2020 - Dec. 31, 2020	Born between Aug. 1, 2020 - July 31, 2021
U7	Born between Jan. 1, 2019 - Dec. 31, 2019	Born between Aug. 1, 2019 - July 31, 2020
U8	Born between Jan. 1, 2018 - Dec. 31, 2018	Born between Aug. 1, 2018 - July 31, 2019
U9	Born between Jan. 1, 2017 - Dec. 31, 2017	Born between Aug. 1, 2017 - July 31, 2018
U10	Born between Jan. 1, 2016 - Dec. 31, 2016	Born between Aug. 1, 2016 - July 31, 2017
U11	Born between Jan. 1, 2015 - Dec. 31, 2015	Born between Aug. 1, 2015 - July 31, 2016
U12	Born between Jan. 1, 2014 - Dec. 31, 2014	Born between Aug. 1, 2014 - July 31, 2015
U13	Born between Jan. 1, 2013 - Dec. 31, 2013	Born between Aug. 1, 2013 - July 31, 2014
U14	Born between Jan. 1, 2012 - Dec. 31, 2012	Born between Aug. 1, 2012 - July 31, 2013
U15	Born between Jan. 1, 2011 - Dec. 31, 2011	Born between Aug. 1, 2011 - July 31, 2012
U16	Born between Jan. 1, 2010 - Dec. 31, 2010	Born between Aug. 1, 2010 - July 31, 2011
U17	Born between Jan. 1, 2009 - Dec. 31, 2009	Born between Aug. 1, 2009 - July 31, 2010
U18	Born between Jan. 1, 2008 - Dec. 31, 2008	Born between Aug. 1, 2008 - July 31, 2009
U19	Born between Jan. 1, 2007 - Dec. 31, 2007	Born between Aug. 1, 2007 - July 31, 2008

## **What will happen to my player?**

The most important factor in where your team will fall next season is **your child's birthdate**:

- If your player has a birthdate of **January 1 – July 31**:  
Your player will move up to the next age group in the fall just like they normally would.  
(Example: a current U6 player will be a U7 player in Fall 2026)
- If your player has a birthdate of **August 1 – December 31**:  
Your player will remain in the same age group  
(Example: a current U6 player will be a U6 player in Fall 2026)  
**EXCEPTION: U9+ only:** If your child is on a U9+ team and is returning to a team that is continuing in the next older age group, you may choose for your player to play up and remain with his or her team (as long as that team continues to exist).

Using the team formation policies described below, we will make every effort to keep as many returning players together as possible.

## **What does this mean by age group?**

### **U4–U8**

- Teams will be re-formed based strictly on the new age group divisions. •
- Play-up requests will generally not be permitted in U4–U8.
- Play-up requests will not be approved for the purpose of keeping teams together.
  - Players on the same team who remain in the same age group may continue to play together on the same team, as long as the team continues to exist.

### **U9+**

- Returning players may stay with their existing team as long as:
  - The team is continuing, and
  - The player is age-eligible (not too old).
- Play-up requests will be permitted (but not guaranteed) up to one year.
- If your player has a birthdate between August 1–December 31 and your team goes to the next age group (example: U12 to U13), your player will have the option to continue with their existing team OR play on a different team at their natural age group (remain at U12) and join a new team.

## **Office Hours**

We understand there will be questions; therefore, will be hosting a few sessions of \*virtual\* Office Hours where GSSA board members will be available to talk through any questions. Those sessions will be available for coaches and parents with questions. Dates/Times for these \*virtual\* Office Hours are as follows:

- Wednesday, April 29 - 9AM-10AM, 7PM-8PM
- Thursday, April 30 - 9AM-10AM, 7PM-8PM

Link to the Google Meet event - <https://meet.google.com/mxv-fhkk-ivz>

Thank you for your patience as we navigate these changes. Ultimately, we see it as an opportunity to bring more kids from the same grade together in sport, but we do apologize for the disruption.

GSSA Board of Directors

