7/15/25 

**Hockey Committee Standardized Play-Up Policy Recommendation**

**MCHC Play-Up Policy Updated 7/16/25**

1. Definition- the term “Playing-Up” refers to a player playing up from his/her NDAHA age classification.

2. The decision to allow a player to play for an “up” team will be made by the Hockey Director with input from the Hockey Committee and approved by the MCHC BOD.

3. Factors to be considered to Play-Up:

a. Players will be allowed to play “up” with their grade in school. ﻿A two-year move-up will not be allowed. It is recommended that each player plays two years at each level except for high school.

i. Third graders are eligible to play up to squirts, granted they are within 1 year of NDAHA age classification (see below).

b. The decision is in the best interests of the player.

i. Players moving up should be “elite” or advanced.

ii. If they are not good enough to make the “A” level team at the next level, they should stay at their assigned level.

iii. Is the player mature enough physically to compete with and mentally to fraternize with older players?

iv. Does the player have a summer birthday which puts them in the gray area? Birthday will become a deciding factor if factors a and b above do not eliminate them for consideration.

v. Does the grade based play-up request match the players ability? Development is non-linear and a recommendation to play within a players age classification rather than grade may be made to support player development.

c. The best interests of the Watford City Youth Hockey program as a whole.

i. The Director and Committee may make recommendations for player movement with the intent of satisfying organizational needs such as balancing roster numbers or filling positional holes.

4. Process to be considered for Playing-Up

a. Requests to move up must be submitted in writing to the MCHC or Hockey Director, prior to October 1st. (Players matching grade level are exempt from this criteria.)

b. Register the athlete within the desired playing classification.

c. All players wishing to play out of age classification must attend evaluations. (If it is a skill based play-up request, the athlete must attend their assigned playing classification level evaluations and the level they are requesting to move into.)

d. In the event an athlete is needed to play outside of their playing classification to fulfill organizational needs, the athlete's parents will be approached by the Hockey Director or a member of the BOD with more details.

For individual player age participation level refer to the NDAHA website at [www.ndaha.org](http://www.ndaha.org).

**Additional Resources Considered**

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| **NDAHA 2025-26 Season Age Classifications** | | | |
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| Youth Teams | | Girls Teams | |
| **Jr Gold** | 6/1/06-5/31/10 | **Highschool** | 6/1/06-5/31/09 |
| **Bantam** | 6/1/10-5/31/12 | **15U** | 6/1/09-5/31/12 |
| **Peewee** | 6/1/12-5/31/14 | **12U** | 6/1/12-5/31/14 |
| **Squirt** | 6/1/14-5/31/16 | **10U** | 6/1/14-5/31/16 |
| **Mite** | 6/1/16-5/31/18 | **8U** | 6/1/16-5/31/18 |
| **Mini-Mite** | 6/1/18-Under | **6U** | 6/1/18-Under |