



A MESSAGE FROM OUR COMMISSIONER OF BASEBALL, EDDIE ALBERT, AND DIVISION DIRECTOR, GILDA MOONEY-DUBE, ON REGISTRATION AND OUR POLICIES ABOUT OUTSIDE A CHILD'S AGE GROUP

Unlike basketball and flag football, where it is necessary for us to try to balance the teams so that the competition will be level, in baseball you can choose your teams. That is because there are so many teams in each age group, that we are able to balance competition at the team level by dividing the 9-10 and 11-12 age groups in subdivisions (East, West, North and South tiers).

When you register for baseball, you will be able to select a coach/team on which to play. If you don't have one in mind, select "no preference" and we will place your child on a team. If your child wants to play with friends, contact those parents before you register to coordinate the team you will all select when registering; moving kids around afterwards is difficult and sometimes impossible because teams fill up quickly. Please understand that we can never guarantee placement on a team but we try our best.

REQUESTING TO OUTSIDE YOUR CHILD'S APPROPRIATE AGE GROUP:

Below is an explanation of our policy for both situations.

In all cases, no request will be entertained, nor will your child be placed on a team, unless the child has been registered. Once registered, send an email to baseball@78pyc.org requesting the change, specifically noting the child's full name, date of birth, age on April 30 of the coming season, and the reason(s) for the request.

Final placement will occur at the team drafts although we may hold a tentative spot on the team you are requesting. If granted, we will manually make the change in the registration system.

It should be understood that 1/ placing a child outside his/her age group is solely within our discretion (and we may require a live evaluation before deciding) and 2/ children of the proper age will get placement preference over requests to play up or down. We cannot allow a child for whom there is a spot in an age appropriate division to take a slot in another division if it would result in excluding a child who registered on-time for his/her appropriate division.

REQUESTS TO PLAY UP TO AN OLDER AGE GROUP:

We generally discourage playing up to the next older age, the level of play increases significantly as the ages increase (the players are older and stronger, which is reflected in the rules and field dimensions). In addition, the earlier the players are on teams with others of their age, the sooner they will adjust and make new friends.

There is one situation, however, that we only allow in exceptional cases: when an 8 year old requests to play up in the Cub division (9- 10s). The difference in ability and size between 8 and 10 year olds is too much (by May some players may turn 11).

For those who are requesting to have their 7 year olds play up with the 8's because some friends or a coach is handling the 8 year old team, please consider two important things:

1/ The move from 7 to 8 is a big one - at 8 the players start pitching. That also means that players will be batting against other players not their coaches. That element of comfort and safety will be reduced; and

2/ The next year, when they are 8 and will want to continue with that team, they will remain in the Pony division with another team for the reasons noted above. We will only allow the player to move with the prior year's team if he/she is exceptionally skilled who we believe can handle playing with 10 year olds (which is extremely rare).

So in most cases (particularly for the 7 and 8 year olds), we believe that it will be better in the long run for your child to stay in his/her age group and meet new friends and coaches instead of having to face it a year later. Kids tend to be open to meeting new friends at a younger age. They will feel more comfortable having to hit player pitching if they are on an 8 year old team where they know some of the players and the coach.

It is for those reasons that we require that any 7 year old wishing to play up into the Pony/8 year old division be evaluated. The same rationale applies to even younger players whose parents want them to play up – eventually they will have a change teams, so why not ease the transition by making the decision earlier rather than when they are 8.

REQUESTS TO DOWN TO A YOUNGER AGE GROUP:

Playing down to a younger age group is generally not permitted because:

1/ of the potential danger it poses to the younger players; and

2/ once a player reaches 9 years old, games are played among the other organizations sharing the permits for the fields. The controlling body of that organization (the Prospect Park Baseball Association) requires that they give permission for all players requesting to play down. If they do, their rules prohibit the player from playing pitcher or catcher and require that he/she bat in the bottom half of the batting order. They are very stingy about giving permission and generally do so only in cases of a physical or mental disability.

However, we control the decision up through the 8 year olds because we play within our own organization up through that age group. For requests from 6 and 7 year olds to play down, we are more liberal. However, for 8 year olds requesting to play with the 7s, we require a valid reason and may request to see the 8 year old before making a final decision.

I hope that clarifies these issues for you. In any event, we will try our hardest to work out what is best for your child and the rest of the children in our organization.