



This paper's intent is to clarify the age changes adopted by the FIS for 2012-13 and communicate the Eastern Region's related responses to the age change so that programs and states may have a better understanding of how to adapt calendars and athlete management in regards to the new age groupings.

The below chart is taken directly from the spring F.I.S. approved changes.

**New Ages Group (up from the season 12/13)**

<b>607.3</b>	<b>Classification at International Competitions</b>			
	<b>Admitted years of birth</b>			
	<b>FIS Competition Year</b>	<b>12/13</b>	<b>13/14</b>	<b><u>14/15</u></b>
	<b><u>U 14 (K1)</u></b>	2000 1999	2001 2000	2002 2001
	<b><u>U16 (K2)</u></b>	1998 1997	1999 1998	2000 1999
	<b><u>U18 (Juniors I)<sup>1)</sup></u></b>	1996 1995	1997 1996	1998 1997
	<b><u>U21 (Juniors II)</u></b>	1994 1993 1992	1995 1994 1993	1996 1995 1994
	<b>Licensed</b>	1996 and earlier	1997 and earlier	1998 and earlier

This age change will occur during the 2012-2013 season. The names of the categories have also changed, i.e.: J3 is now a U16. These age groups are two year groupings. F.I.S. adopted these changes to provide more time for education, decrease injuries, and allow more time for physical maturation prior to the more aggressive racing and course demands at the FIS age level.

Within the Eastern Region our strategic focus at the U16 level and younger should be on developing great skiers with the foundation for future success through becoming superior technical skiers, three event development, quality free skiing and gate training. At the recently completed women's World Cup of soccer it was cited how the foundation of the Japanese team's success was an emphasis on skill development and tactics up through age twelve with a reduction in competition. We recognize the importance of the different stages in physical maturation (please refer to the Alpine Training Systems matrix). The new age change will allow athletes more time for physical maturation, to acquire a higher level of technical skill development, and allow for a higher ratio of time spent training relative to competition. It is critical to capitalize on skill acquisition during pre-puberty and pubescence. It is during this period that it is easiest to learn and ingrain movement and skill. The Eastern Children's Committee in conjunction with the Eastern Development Committee has been implementing age appropriate programs for our young ski racers with the above considerations as the basis. The skills assessment Eastern Region has implemented at our youth programs is one effective tool for introducing the importance of these skills to our young skiers. This past season athletes participated in the skills

assessments at both the J3 and J4 Fundamentals projects as well as the J4 Eastern Championships. This coming year the skills assessment will also be part of the J4 Can-Am curriculum. Ontario and Quebec are extremely excited about this addition having heard how positive the experience has been for the athletes.

Another area where the newly adopted age change affects the East is the concept of the U16 category participating in scored USSA races and earning USSA points. The following is a proposal from the Eastern Children's committee to the EACC and is pending their vote.

"To allow the newly adopted U16 age group to enter scored races, keeping in mind the recommended number of starts for this group is 14-16 and that our focus is on building a skill based foundation. An athlete's USSA point profile will not be used for selection, advancement or seeding to USSA international, regional or national events. It is our recommendation to individual states that when making selections for ERS, J3 Regional Championships and J3 Finals USSA Points are not used for selection, advancement or seeding."

In addition to the USSA ATS (Alpine Training System which I am also including and is posted on our website [www.ussaeast.com](http://www.ussaeast.com)) this should serve as a guideline as you structure and manage programs. Our common goal is to develop better skiers. Good technical skiers equal more versatile ski racers. The new age change provides an opportunity to focus on this goal and come together as the EASTERN REGION.

I welcome any questions you may have. Please email [akrebs@ussa.org](mailto:akrebs@ussa.org) there will also be a question and answer page on our website which I encourage you to use, your questions will help others.

Respectfully submitted,  
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