

Statement from the Age Group Committee regarding the 14 and under time standards and the Age Group Championship meets:

The Age Group Committee spent many hours working through our process and coming up with these cuts. We are trying the single age cuts for this year and will evaluate at the end of the season to determine if we will continue in this manner. The meets will continue to run in the same format they have always been run; athletes will compete in 10 and under, 11-12, 13-14 age groups. Relays will be run as they have always been run as well. Swimmers will swim in their appropriate age group regardless of their times- this is a USA Swimming rule and always applies to swimmers in USA swimming meets.

We are coordinating and establishing the cuts based on power points. Power points help explain the 11 year old performance versus the 12 year old performance- and the other age groups as well... for example an 11 yr. old female 200 yard free cut of 2:18.50 has a power point total of 500 points and a 12 year old time of 2:12.69 has the same power point value (500 pts.). One of the reasons we have decided to try the single age cuts is that we see it as a way to encourage swimmers in the "bottom year" of each age group. We hope that by encouraging the athletes at age 9, 11, 13 who show more dedication and potential we will increase the participation and interest of quality athletes which will make us both more competitive as an LSC and also more attractive than the other sports that are seeking the attention of these athletes. In essence, we are trying to even the playing field so swimmers in each age group, regardless of whether or not they just aged up, have an equal opportunity to compete in championships every year which should encourage them to swim more or to ultimately pick swimming as their sport.

We are trying to establish fair and responsible cuts for all age groups and both sexes. One of our hopes is that this will encourage boys, in general, as well as challenge all of the swimmers in the New England LSC. Based on the data that we have collected we are actually projecting MORE heats in most events and larger meets overall.

Change is frustrating and challenging. We know that this format will be difficult for many people but we are hopeful that in the end this will be a positive move for our LSC. Over the course of history swimmers have always risen to the challenge of new and faster cuts and we feel that this will be what we experience in New England Swimming.