



2025 U12 VARA Racing

The U12 age level provides non-scored competition for 10 and 11-year-olds.

U12 racing comprises grassroots programming where councils have the autonomy to be creative with their scheduling with the guidance of the VARA Children's Development Committee.

Vermont State and National Governing Body Guidance (NGB): VARA competitions will operate under the guidance of US Ski and Snowboard, and VARA, participants, parents, and coaches are responsible for being familiar with these guidelines. All vara members must adhere to VARA, USS, and host site/venue guidance and code of conduct.

USS code of conduct. [Link](#)

USS Parent Code of Conduct [Link](#)

USS Safesport Resources - [Link](#)

Eastern Region Handbook - [Link](#)

For sanctioned race info, please see the [USS COMPETITION GUIDELINES](#)

Children's Development Committee- the CDC oversees rules and policies of U14 and younger racing in VT. This group works with the VARA Executive Director to create schedules, policies, qualifications, rules, and state guidelines for the U14 and younger age groups. Committee members include [Diann Roffe](#) (Chair), 3 Council chairs ([Peter Stokloza](#)/SVC, [Naga Kusumi](#)/NVC, [Lori McClallen](#)/MVC, [Dave Sklar](#)/SVC, [Ryan Sheredy](#)/NVC, and [Justin Lillie](#)/MVC).

Children's Development Sub - Committee

The Children's Development Sub Committee consists of the 3 Council Chairs from each of the three Councils and the CDC Chair – Diann Roffe/Chair (North-Naga Kusumi, Mid-Lori McClallen, and South-Peter Stokloza). The committee will work with the Executive Director regarding VARA U14 through U10 issues that arise at state championships and state-governed events.

The VARA CDC recommends that the U12 racers remain under the domain of the councils. Councils can be creative in developing their U12 curriculum. It is recommended that each council chair prepare a year-end summary for this age group for the VARA Children's Committee each spring. The report should be sent to VARA by April 15.

U12 Racing General Guidelines

The U12 age level provides non-scored competition for 10 and 11-year-olds.

1. VARA is the governing body of U12 racing in Vermont.

2. VARA will delegate to the three state Councils (North, Mid, and South) the authority to design and administer their respective races and council rules. VARA shall make recommendations to the Councils.
3. Competitions will not begin before January 10th.

RACE STARTS: Councils should follow US Ski & Snowboard Guidelines for U12 race starts. Councils should be racing Duals and Stubbie courses. And incorporate Kombis, paneled SL, if time and space allow. The race starts should not be more than the following - 2 SL- 2GS and 1-2 fundamental/development projects, which could include a SG/Kombi event.

1. VARA will schedule any U12 state events where councils combine.
2. The VARA CDC will resolve issues involving U12 VARA US Ski & Snowboard sponsored events.
3. Councils must also follow all US Ski & Snowboard and VARA procedures for running a fair and legal race.
4. A \$40 (plus applicable online processing fees) maximum entry fee for slalom (SL) and giant slalom (GS) events and \$45 (plus applicable online processing fees) for Super-G (SG) races and camps are recommended for U12 council races. (including ticket cost)
5. To compete in VARA U12 races, there are two membership requirements that must be met:
 - a) The athlete must have a current US Ski & Snowboard Competitors Membership
 - b) The athlete must have a current VARA membership.
6. VARA membership will be verified from the VARA website. On the [VARA Website](#) there is an option to print your VARA card. VARA does not issue a member ID #
7. Council racers MUST be VARA members before the first council race to receive points for standings. Standings may be used for project participation. It is the coaches' and parents' responsibility to ensure athletes are current with their VARA memberships.
8. Coaches must be VARA and US Ski & Snowboard members to access race venues as a coach.
9. U12 Council races must be US Ski & Snowboard sanctioned events. Sanctioned races must be held on homologated trails.
10. The councils are encouraged to present event award ceremonies in a timely manner.
11. Council host sites are encouraged to allow freeskiing and/or training options post-event.

Out of Council – Councils may accept out-of-council (not encouraged) Refer to the specific council for clarification. [MVC](#), [SVC](#), [NVC](#) (hyperlinks)

Out of Division /Region non-scored Racing:

Out-of-division racing is allowed if the event is open; otherwise, permission from VARA and the

hosting division, as well as from USSS Eastern Region, is required for participants to race out of division in a non-open event. Council races are not considered open events. Out-of-region racing is not allowed per USSS. (See USSS handbook)

Independent Racer- Independent racers for council and non-scored events in VARA are discouraged; each competitor should have a VARA club affiliation. Councils may determine if an independent entry is accepted. There will be no independent competitors in Tri-Council events. Refer to the specific council for clarification. [MVC](#), [SVC](#), [NVC](#) (hyperlinks).

Parent/Spectator Clause

Any issues parents or spectators may have involving VARA rules, The Race Organizing Committee (ROC), Alpine Officials, the Jury, the race site, or US Ski & Snowboard while at sanctioned council events such as VARA States or Tri-Council events must be handled by athletes' responsible coach before being brought to the Race Organizer, Alpine Officials/Jury, registration volunteers or VARA. The athlete's coach must represent the competitor regarding the issue, not his/her parents.

Coaching Tickets: General recommendation but NOT less than the following: 4 kids = 1 coach, > 8 Kids = 2, >12 Kids = 3, >18 Kids = 3, >20 kids = 4

Petitioning Athletes Skiing DOWN

All racers will follow established US Ski & Snowboard age classes except for approved petitioning athletes. U14 and under athletes may be approved within the council to ski down. (see council rules)

For a U16 athlete to be considered for skiing **down** an age class at the council level, the Program Director must submit a request to the Council Chair. If approved by their council, the Council Chair will submit the request to the VARA Children's Committee Chairperson and VARA Executive Director on or before Dec 15 for a CDC vote.

There are three guidelines for a ski-down athlete: Physical Maturity, mental maturity, and physical condition. For U16 athletes, the VARA CDC will review the request and respond to the council chair no later than January 1.

If the council or CDC approves an athlete, they will follow council and VARA rules for that age class. They must register for VARA and USS as their actual age group. Petitioned Athletes (PA) may qualify for states in the age class in which they compete. The following conditions apply:

1. PA will be considered and treated as any other participant in that age class.
2. PA may ski in the State Championships but will not advance to a US Ski & Snowboard post-season event.
3. PA will be seeded at states according to their council ranking.
4. PA will be presented with an award if so earned.
5. PA will be purged from results for selections to postseason US Ski & Snowboard Championship events.

6. PA must compete in the age class they were approved to compete for the season. Once VARA CDC approves, the athlete will race in the petitioned age class for the entire VARA Council Race season. There will be NO returning to the original age class. They will only compete in the State Championship for which they have been approved.
7. An athlete skiing down or up must register for VARA and USS **as their proper age class**. For example, U14 skiing down as a U12 would still register for VARA and USS as a U14.

Ski Up Process

For an athlete to be considered for skiing up an age class at the council level, the Program Director must submit the petition to the Council Chairperson. The Council Chairperson must first approve the petition. If approved at the council level, the request will be submitted to the VARA Children's Committee Chair and the VARA Executive Director. If the VARA Children's Committee approves, the VARA Executive Director will submit the request to the US Ski & Snowboard Eastern Regional Director, who will then submit the request to the US Ski & Snowboard National Office. Once approved by US Ski & Snowboard National, the athlete will race in the petitioned age class for the entire VARA Council Race season. There will be NO returning to the original age class.

The following conditions apply... [Ski Up Form](#) (hyperlink)

1. PA will be considered and treated as any other participant in that age class.
2. PA will be presented with an award if so earned.

SKILLSQUEST: VARA recommends that all U12s be introduced to the US Ski & Snowboard SkillsQuest Drills. U12s should ski the SkillsQuest drills within Council. Councils must plan to introduce US Ski & Snowboard Skills Quest into their council schedule. For example, councils may add a skill during competition race days (1 drill at a time per race).

OR, host a skills assessment day where numerous skills are assessed. **Skills info may be found on the US Ski & Snowboard site and the links below:** [SKILLSQUEST](#)

Also, see the USS East website: [EASTERN REGION LINK](#)

U12 Projects

TERRAIN: VARA recommends that all U12s be introduced to a U12 terrain element day. Athletes will use GS skis or longer and work on terrain, longer radius turn shape, gliding, and jumping. Councils should plan to incorporate a terrain day into their U12 council schedule.

VARA U12 GS/TERRAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

OKEMO MT. – February 10, 2025

Selection: By Councils

Approximately 105 athletes: This is a terrain-focused development project introducing a variety of elements to enhance adaptability, skills, and tactics. Participants will work in groups and with different VARA coaches. Participants will meet U12 VARA athletes from different councils. Registration will open for 24 hours for the second-year U12s and then open for the rest of the U12s. (3.1.22)

Quechee Skill Development Project

U12/10 Skill Development Project:

(Friday) **Jan 31, 2025**

Registration details TBD

U12 Tri-Council

one run sl one run gs - separate gender events
March 15 the Women, TBD - March 16, Men, Okemo

The Tri-Council race will allow all councils to compete together for U12 head-to-head competition within the state and provide a statewide year-end opportunity. The U12 Tri-Council will be one run of slalom and one run of GS combined into a two-run race. The VARA Children's Committee will provide specific course-setting expectations to Councils and Clubs in advance of the event.

Registration Process: Tri-Council open races will allow the second-year U12s a 24 -hour window to register before opening up to all U12's. It was felt it is important to provide a chance for second years to have access to an open year-end event where all the councils can compete together. Participants must have competed in at least 1 VARA council series race to be eligible to register for the Tri-Council event.

- Registration will open 2 weeks prior to race day, first to second-year U12s for a 24-hour period, and then include first-year U12s.
- The race fee is a max of **\$50**.
- Seeding –Random draw. Second Run – reverse order.
- Medals will be given to team captains for the top 10 per gender.

For issues that arise that are not addressed by VARA Rules, then the US Ski & Snowboard Comp Guide rules will be in effect, and then the Children's Racing FIS rules.

VARA Technical Statement

Purpose : VARA recognizes the importance of building strong technical foundations for the long-term success of VARA skiers. This document is a guide to assist VARA coaches and clubs in teaching the necessary skills that will help athletes reach their full potential. This technical statement is in alignment with US Ski & Snowboard athlete development principles.

Objective: The objective of the VARA Technical Statement is to promote consistency in athlete development through a shared platform of technical skill acquisition by providing member clubs and coaches a framework for programming that aligns with the technical principles of US Ski & Snowboard athlete development. The technical statement will guide member clubs in teaching technical skills that are consistent with the mission and goals of VARA.

[LINK](#) to VARA Technical Statement

There is a \$2 VARA Head Tax per racer per race at this age, but only for open races and any state event. This will be collected through ASR.

