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Buffalo's Non-Profit SumoKids Foundation Will Help Teenagers Apply for Acting Roles in New ABC Family TV Series

The SumoKids Foundation will produce free 3-minute personality videos of Buffalo teenagers who want to apply for acting roles in a TV series based on the popular teen novel, "Huge" by Sasha Paley.

Buffalo, NY – January 30, 2010 – The SumoKids Foundation will assist Buffalo teenagers in producing 3-minute personality videos to submit for acting roles in a new ABC Family TV series. The TV series is based on the popular teen novel, "Huge," by Sasha Paley. This is a funny, emotional series about learning to accept yourself – no matter what your size. The SumoKids Foundation is a Buffalo-based 501 (c)(3) non-profit serving Western New York.

The SumoKids program teaches children and teenagers valuable life skills and morals in an environment that is entertaining, physically challenging, and educational. Important components include teaching respect for others, and how to solve conflicts in a non-violent manner. The SumoKids program serves all children and teenagers, including handicapped children, and regardless of weight or other circumstances.

ABC Family TV is casting roles for a new scripted TV series. Casting is open to actors and non-actors or newcomers. ABC Family TV seeks talented plus-sized teenagers to play 15 – 16 year-olds. Applicants may be older but must be believable as 15 – 16 year-olds.

Paul McAfee, a member of the SumoKids Foundation Board of Directors, will be at two Buffalo locations to create the 3-minute personality videos, and to collect the required release forms. There is no cost to applicants. Mr. McAfee then will submit these videos and release forms to ABC Family TV.

Teenagers, accompanied by a parent or legal guardian if they are under 18-years-old, can come to one of these two locations to complete their release forms and have their videos created:

1. Belle Center, on Thursday, February 11, from 3:00 pm until 6:00 pm, at 104 Maryland Street, in Buffalo.
2. Broadway Market, on Saturday, February 13, from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm, at 999 Broadway, in Buffalo.

Application Information Follows

What to prepare:

From ABC Family TV to its applicants:

“Your tape should be all about YOU—what makes you unique and what makes you, YOU. You should be sure to state your name, age, and hometown on the video, but the rest is up to you. Tell us a funny or touching story about yourself, describe your most interesting moment, highlight what makes you stand out against a crowd, etc. The most important thing is to be yourself and let your true personality shine through.”

Who can apply?

From ABC Family TV to its applicants:

“We are accepting tapes from plus sized actors and non-actor/newcomers aged 14-24 to play high school aged characters. Talent can come from anywhere in the United States. Actors must be believable as 15-16 year olds. For more information, please check out the storyline and character descriptions on our website. If you are under 18, please make sure to have a parent or guardian sign your release.”

About The SumoKids Foundation

Charles Bray, the creator of the non-profit SumoKids Foundation, teaches children the tenets of Sumo wrestling at schools and community centers in Buffalo, New York. Sumo wrestling is a Japanese form of wrestling in which a fighter loses if forced from the ring or if any part of his body except the soles of his feet touches the ground.

In 2005, Mr. Bray incorporated the SumoKids Foundation as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Since then, he has offered free after-school Sumo programs to schools and community centers in Buffalo, NY. The response, from the participating children, their parents, and their teachers, has been overwhelmingly positive.

Visit www.SumoKidsFoundation.org for more information about the SumoKids Foundation and its programs.

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Additional Background Information Follows.

About the Proposed New ABC Family TV Series

ABC Family TV is casting for a new project. If you are a plus-size teen actor, you might be just right for one of the roles. The character breakdown follows.

Untitled Project

- Based on the popular teen novel, Huge by Sasha Paley.
- A funny, emotional series about learning to accept yourself - no matter what your size.
- Casting roles for a new scripted project from ABC Family TV.
- Casting is open to actors AND non-actor/newcomers.
- Talent can come from anywhere in the United States.
- Looking for talented plus-sized kids to play 15 – 16 year olds.
- Actors may be older but must be believable as 15 – 16 year olds.

There Are Two Ways to Submit:

1. Online.
2. Mail-in submission.

Either way, you'll need to fill out a Release/Application Form. Complete the form, and send it in with your stuff. For online submissions, sign and fax the form to: 818-480-3292.

Mr. Paul McAfee, of the SumoKids Foundation, will submit the form and video for you, if you participate at one of the two Buffalo, New York, sessions mentioned in the preceding press release.

ABC Family TV will not be able to review any submission (online or mailed in) without a release form.

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN:

[WILL] Significantly overweight. Age 16, a rebel. Intelligent, gutsy, funny and opinionated. She hides her vulnerability behind her humor and brash attitude. Dresses in a tomboy-ish, punk style. Doesn't let people get too close, and is definitely not thrilled when her rich parents send her to a fat camp for the summer. **MUST SING WELL.**

[AMBER] Age 16. A beautiful size 12 – (or thereabouts -- could be a 14 or even 16 depending on the person). The skinniest and hottest girl at fat camp, this teen is curvy, but in her own warped view, she considers herself very heavy. Amber comes off as superficial, obsessed with weight and appearance -- but she's incredibly vulnerable underneath.

[IAN] Overweight. Age 16. A cute, sensitive indie musician with glasses. Open and friendly, with a charmingly self-deprecating sense of humor. He feels an immediate bond with Will, but he wastes most of their summer together pining after Amber. However, when he finally does get a chance with Amber, he realizes that it's actually Will he really wants. **MUST PLAY GUITAR, PIANO or DRUMS.**

[BECCA] Overweight. Age 15 or 16. Her style is Goth/Renaissance Faire. A shy bookworm, Becca expresses herself through LARPing (Live Action Role Play.) Becca instantly admires Will, and the two become partners in pranking Amber, whom they mutually dislike. Later, however, when Will befriends Amber, Becca feels rejected and betrayed.

[**ALISTAIR**] Very heavy – the heaviest kid at camp (or in the running.) Age 15, Alistair’s sweet, super friendly, a little needy. Also obsessed with sex and giving advice. A severe asthmatic, he has trouble completing the rigorous exercise regiment at the camp -- but he keeps plugging away, undaunted and unfazed.

[**CHLOE**] This camper is the leader among the thinner girls at fat camp. Cool and confident (despite her slight overweight.) She hides some dark secrets beneath her confident exterior.

STORY LINE: A reluctant participant at a summer camp for plus sized kids, defiantly overweight Will clashes with Amber, the size 12 hottie who lords it over the bigger girls. But during the course of the summer, the two sworn enemies begin to realize they have more in common than they ever realized.