



SumoKids Foundation

Ten years ago, football player Charles Bray discovered that teaching Sumo wrestling to troubled children dramatically improved their attitudes, behavior, and performance in school.

In 2005, Charles 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.

The SumoKids program teaches children 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.



SumoKids Mission Statement

SumoKids seeks to provide programs for schools and community organizations based upon the tenets of Sumo and personalized learning. SumoKids provides these programs at little or no cost to the child.

The program:

1. Encompasses a broad range of activities, not limited to sports.
2. Is responsive to local needs.
3. Involves any student and engages students' interests and requirements.
4. Is sensitive to school and community organization needs and requirements.

SumoKids Foundation Leadership

In August 2008, the SumoKids Foundation created a new Board of Directors to attract community and business leaders from the Buffalo area, and to prepare the SumoKids Foundation to expand its services throughout Western New York. The new Board of Directors includes:

Officers

Greg Emminger – President
Michael LaMancuso – VP
Paul McAfee – Secretary
Don Colby – Treasurer

Members

Dr. Ernie Diaz-Ordaz
Dr. Kenneth Lee
Michael Baumann
Robert Klingensmith
Peter McAskile
Charles Bray

Advisor

Tom Kerr



2009 SumoKids Coaches with Charles Bray at the Belle Center

SumoKids Background

During the summer of 2009, the SumoKids Foundation contracted to provide Sumo programs to Buffalo City children at the Belle Center on Maryland Street. The City of Buffalo provided funding for coaches. Charles is training these coaches at the Belle Center, with a goal of recruiting long-term coaches to work during the school year. With more paid, trained coaches, SumoKids can operate all year in more schools and community centers.

The SumoKids program covers middle school and high school children and is all-inclusive. The wrestling activity is low impact, with emphasis on balance and leverage. Wrestling is open to boys and girls. Children who prefer not to wrestle participate in other structured activities. For example, some girls prefer to organize a dance presentation, yet they still learn the principals of Sumo, and they obtain the same benefits as those who wrestle. Charles finds roles and activities for children with handicaps or who prefer not to participate in other ways. These alternatives include refereeing, or organizing an end-of-program pageant.

