

Star Light, Star Bright...

Lights, camera ... celebs take action for charities

The stars are falling from the celebrity sky on a weekly basis it seems. Mel Gibson is out of control, Lindsay Lohan is a train wreck, and the list of rappers and athletes who have gotten into trouble seems endless. Some politicians and fat cat CEOs appear to be no better. These celestial burnouts may be prime water cooler fodder, but there are plenty of bright lights in the galaxy of stars.



KEVIN O'NEILL
InSites

The website www.looktothestars.org features over 2,000 celebrities who support various worthy causes with their time, talent and money. From Adam Sandler to ZZ Top, actors, athletes, musicians, politicians and other well-knowns champion over 1,500 charities. The causes range from abuse, addiction and AIDS to water, weapons and women.

The site is cleanly designed with simple navigation and good organization of the content. The home page has celebrity charity news, a featured celebrity, a featured charity, interviews, videos, celebrity Tweets, featured products and more.

Besides the home page, there are seven other main sections to the site:

Celebrities

Stars are listed here alphabetically by their first names. There's also a search

Top star charities

1. **Children (511 charities)**
2. **Health (381)**
3. **Education (217)**
4. **At-risk youths (183)**
5. **Poverty (163)**
6. **Environment (145)**
7. **Cancer (141)**
8. **AIDS (138)**
9. **Miscellaneous (123)**
10. **Human rights (118)**

function so you can type in a name without scrolling down the long list.

When you click on a star's name it takes you to a page with his or her picture, a short "charity biography," lists of supported causes and charities, a link to contact him or her, a list of other celebrities that support the same causes and more.

Click on Aerosmith for instance, and you'll find that Amnesty International is one of the causes the band members support. They're in good company, too, as Al Pacino, Alice Cooper, Annie Lennox, Pete Townshend and others are also listed as supporters.

Charities

This section has an alphabetical list, as well as a search function, of all the charities supported by the various celebrities. Clicking on a charity's name brings you to a page with a summary of its mission. There's also a link to the charity's website and links to related charities and causes.

There are photos of stars who support the charity with links to their pages. Click on Autism Speaks and you'll see 27 stars, including Amy Poehler, Jerry Seinfeld and Tina Fey, that are supporters. In addition there are news items related to the charity.

Causes

Various broad categories are listed here, such as, "addiction" or "homelessness." Under each cause heading there's a prominent charity and celebrity devoted to supporting the cause. Under the "abuse" heading you'll find Save the Children and 68 other charities, as well as Salma Hayek and 334 other supporters.

Clicking on the heading, charity or star will bring you to various pages with more detailed information and complete lists of charities, supporters, related causes and news items.

News, videos, partners

These next three sections are just what they say. The "news" section has stories of celebrities helping out with various causes or charities, such as Betty White posing with naked studs for a Morris Animal Foundation calendar.

The "videos" section has hundreds of videos and public service announcements featuring stars making a pitch for support. You can watch Christina Aguilera sing happy birthday to Haitian children or Dick Van Dyke talking to kids about saving tigers.

The "partners" section features other organizations that work with Look to the Stars. There are summaries of their missions and links to their Websites.

About the site

A summary of the sites mission and a brief history of its origin are included here. There's a list of the team that produces the site with links to short biographies of each of them. There's also a pitch looking for advertisers with a social conscience, and, finally, contact information for the site.

Overall, Look to the Stars is a well-done site. The writing is good, even if it does tend to fawn over the stars a bit. It's informative, introducing you to hundreds of charities and causes. It's inspiring to see stars who have so much shine their light on those who have so little.

KEVIN O'NEILL is a graphic artist for The Times-Tribune. Contact him at koneill@timeshamrock.com with links to your favorite websites.

KEVIN O'NEILL / STAFF ARTIST

