

NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

Hollyoaks stars get some Action in Manchester

National charity, **Action for Blind People**, has roped in the stars of Hollyoaks to take part in a weekend-long fundraising abseil down the 100ft high Printworks building in Manchester. The Hollyoaks actors including Ashley Slanina-Davies, who plays Amy Barnes, hope their participation on Sunday 18 June will encourage 300 more volunteers to get involved.

*****PHOTOCALL*****

WHO: Hollyoaks' **Hollie-Jay Bowes** (plays Michaela Jones), **Emma Rigby** (plays Hannah Ashworth), **Sam Darbyshire** (plays Fletch), **Sonny Flood** (plays Josh Ashworth), **Tony Hirst** (plays Mike Barnes) and **Ashley Slanina-Davies** (plays Amy Barnes).

WHAT: The actors will be abseiling down the 100ft high Printworks for national visual impairment charity, Action for Blind People.

WHEN: Sunday 18 June 2006, 2.30pm onwards.

WHERE: The Printworks, Withy Grove, Manchester M4 2BS.

Hollyoaks' Ashley Slanina-Davies comments:

"I'm pretty nervous and I certainly won't be looking down when I get to the top, but it's all for a great cause. My mum's partially sighted and that's why I felt it was so important to do the abseil for Action for Blind People.

"The charity needs 300 volunteers to abseil over the weekend and all you have to do is raise £100 to abseil for free! We've already got many of the cast and crew of Hollyoaks sponsoring us."

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Action for Blind People works to enable blind and partially sighted people to live independent lives and Manchester is home to the Manchester Actionnaires; a sports club run by Action for Blind People for visually impaired children. Over the coming months Action will be expanding its services in Manchester to include an employment service for visually impaired people.

Action's abseil weekend takes place on Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 June 2006. People who are interested in taking part should contact Natalie Elais on Tel: 0207 635 4888, email events@actionforblindpeople.org.uk or visit www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk

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For further media information please contact Zoë Patel, PR Officer, on Tel: 020 7635 4898 or email zoe.patel@actionforblindpeople.org.uk. Outside working hours please call Debbie Flatley, Press Officer on Mobile: 07739819954.

Notes to editors:

- The Printworks has generously allowed Action for Blind People to use the building free of charge.
- In 2003 The Department of Health reported that 1,945 people in Manchester were registered blind and 1,710 had registered as partially sighted. However, not every visually impaired person registers their sight loss so the figure is likely to be higher.
- Action for Blind People supports over 20,000 blind and partially sighted people in the UK every year. Action for Blind People's National Freephone Helpline is 0800 915 4666.
- Action works to inspire change and create opportunities to enable blind and partially sighted people to have equal voice and equal choice and to live a full and valuable life.
- Action provides visually impaired people with opportunities through employment, housing, leisure and information and support.