

TAKE ACTION TOUR

IAN HARRISON

— IGNITING INSPIRATION —

by Emily Zemler

Now on its seventh year, Hopeless/SubCity Records' Take Action Tour is working hard to make music something more than entertainment. With a lineup that includes Every Time I Die, From First To Last, The Bled, August Burns Red and The Human Abstract, the tour raises awareness and money for important charities. Ian Harrison, director of marketing at Hopeless/SubCity, discusses the tour's aims.

What is the primary goal of the Take Action Tour?

Our primary goal with the Take Action Tour is to create a better world, one voice and one action at a time. We are trying to get the message across to young people that they do have the power to make a positive impact.

Hopeless/Sub City Records is always looking for ways to make a positive impact on the world and the Take Action Tour is a way that we can take that message directly to fans.

What charities is it supporting, and do the bands have any input in selecting them?

We look to work with charities that have a similar mission to ours. The 2008 Tour and Volume 7 of the Compilation both benefit a not-for-profit organization called DoSomething.org. This year we also donated money from one show to CHC LEARNING CENTER (chcrainbow.com), a charity that Every Time I Die has connections with and feels passionate about. This is our first year working with DoSomething.org. Their mission is very much in line with ours and we feel they are a fantastic partner. They also have the support of all of the bands, which is very important in conveying the message to fans.

How has the tour changed since its first incarnation?

The tour has grown significantly since we started Take Action in 1999 along with the launch of our charity imprint label Sub City. Our first tour was made up of mostly Hopeless/Sub City bands like Against All Authority and Fifteen, and we were playing smaller clubs and benefiting lots

of local charities. Over the years we have expanded the tour's scope to increase the impact we can have, but the spirit and mission of the tour is the same as it has always been.

Why is music a good tool for raising awareness of social issues?

Bands and music have the ability to connect with young people in a way that parents, teachers, etc. just can't. Young people are pulled in a lot of directions, so it helps to have bands that they look up to and identify with giving them a positive message.

merch people and local DoSomething.org representatives, but the main way we are reaching and educating fans is by having the bands discuss the charity and mission on stage in their own way. More information is available at Takeactiontour.com and at DoSomething.org.

How would you encourage kids to get involved beyond supporting the tour and buying the compilation?

Fans attending the tour, and/or buying the compilation is not our end goal, rather our hope is that it is just the beginning. Take Action's message is a broad one. We aim to encourage young people to get involved with what they are passionate about and our benefiting charity

DoSomething.org has a very similar message. We are not here to preach to the crowd that they should care about certain issues because that is limiting. Our goal is that we are inspiring young people to get involved with causes that they are passionate about. We have information on Takeactiontour.com and DoSomething.org that helps fans get involved with a wide range of causes.

What would you say to encourage people to come to the show even if they aren't necessarily fans of the bands playing?

Even if people are not necessarily fans of the bands this year, hopefully some people will still want to come and participate in a community of activism. The Take Action mission is much larger than just the shows though. There is no way we can excite everyone with our lineup each year. While we are reaching an amazing amount of people in person at the shows, that is just the beginning of our outreach. Through our sponsors, advertising, publicity and word of mouth we hope to reach many more people than just the ones attending the shows. We certainly hope that everyone thinks this is an amazing lineup, because we do. But what is more important is that as many people as possible get inspired by the idea of taking action in their own lives.

Does it matter to you if kids come to the show purely for entertainment and not necessarily in support of the issues at hand?

We want as many people as possible to hear the message of Take Action, so for us, it is fine if people are attending just for the bands. Everyone who purchases a ticket is making a donation to DoSomething.org and we appreciate that for whatever reason it was made. It is our hope though that these people will be exposed to a positive message at the shows and come away with it having had a great time as well as inspiring them to take action in their own lives.

What sort of educational tools are available to the fans at the actual shows?

We try to keep the message at shows very simple. We have a large stage banner with information about DoSomething.org as well as information passed out by our



The Take Action Tour will be coming to New York's Fillmore @ Irving Plaza on March 23. For more info visit takeactiontour.com