

Adopting CHANGE

Rest on her laurels? Never! Women of Style award winner **Deborra-lee Furness** updates us on her latest projects.



Furness with husband Hugh Jackman and kids, Ava and Oscar.



Furness (right) with Worldwide Orphans founder Dr. Jane Aronson.

Want to know more?

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"I AM THE MOST IMPATIENT PERSON; I WANT CHANGE TO HAPPEN NOW," says actress and campaigner Deborra-lee Furness. "My lesson in life is to have patience." If ever you were to cut a person slack for not embracing this virtue, Furness puts forward a good case. Her dogged determination is helping to change adoption—how we view it and put it into action—while also "assisting those children who *aren't* going to be adopted".

This May saw New York-based Furness triumph in the Charity/Community category at the second annual *InStyle* and Audi Women of Style Awards, for her unwavering dedication. "I was really chuffed," she says of her win. "You hope you're making a difference, so when you're acknowledged, you're like the kid who gets a gold star!" But Furness, who with husband Hugh Jackman is an adoptive parent to Oscar, 10, and Ava, five, isn't stopping at this recognition. Instead, she's ramping up efforts, as Ambassador for World Vision, serving on the board of Worldwide Orphans, and as founding member of National Adoption Awareness

Week, which, from November 8 to 14, celebrates its third year. In the short time since it began, Furness has seen progress. "There was a stigma [around adoption]. Our first year of NAAW was, 'Let's talk about adoption.' I met all these adults who were thrilled that they finally could."

Furness, who'll make a film in Australia next year with *Jindabyne* director Ray Lawrence, is also helping facilitate such openness for adopted children, too, having filmed a US community service announcement with *Sesame Street*'s Elmo—"It's their [version of] a rock star talking about their journey; it gives the kids cred." Then there's the adoption summit taking place in NY this month—Furness is a driving force behind the convention that will bring together experts in the field.

Ultimately, Furness knows that bettering adoption services is "going to be a long process". But, she adds, "I'm an eternal optimist."

LOOK OUT FOR THE NOMINEES IN THE THIRD ANNUAL *INSTYLE* AND AUDI WOMEN OF STYLE AWARDS IN OUR APRIL 2011 ISSUE!

