



CONTACT:
Barbara Gross
Outreach Coordinator
Council Rock Coalition for Healthy Youth
215-944-1006
CRCHY@crsd.org

**Council Rock Named One of the
100 Best Communities for Young People
by America's Promise Alliance and ING U.S.**

*Annual Competition Recognizes Communities that Prioritize
Youth Education and Well-Being*

Newtown, PA—On September 12th, Council Rock was named one of America's Promise Alliance's *100 Best Communities for Young People* presented by ING. The national award was given to Council Rock to recognize its exceptional and innovative programs and services that make it an outstanding place for youth to live, learn, and grow.

As first-time winner of *100 Best*, the Council Rock School District created many programs that address the academic and social needs of area youth. One community collaboration, the [Council Rock Coalition for Healthy Youth](#) (CRCHY), mobilized the community to reduce risky behaviors. As a result of this collaboration, Council Rock School District has implemented prevention programs in the schools that teach skills related to positive decision making, problem solving, goal setting, anger management, peer pressure, and more.

The Council Rock Parenting Academy was created to offer free, evidence-based parent programs to all parents in the Council Rock Communities. Parent programs are facilitated at CRSD, pre-schools, faith-based organizations, and local businesses.

CRCHY Youth Leaders partner with other youth organizations such as SADD, faith-based youth groups, scouts, and national youth initiatives to promote leadership and share resources.

For initiatives such as Project Sticker Shock, students placed labels on beer cases at beer distributors to warn customers that it is unlawful to buy or serve minors. To deter drug abuse, CRCHY placed medication collection boxes in police stations to safely dispose unused or expired medications, provided educational materials at local health fairs and expos to educate the public on the dangers of Rx and over-the-counter misuse. Teens are participating in "Above the Influence" National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign in numerous locations. CRCHY programs and projects are supported in part by a Drug-Free Communities grant.

"Being named one of America's Promise Alliance's *100 Best* is significant and meaningful to the entire community," said Francine Block, President of CRCHY. "So many dedicated people and programs contributed to this win and it further reinforces our belief that a focus on youth pays dividends to the entire community."

“As young people across the country go back to school, it is especially timely to recognize communities like Council Rock that have come together to make supporting young people a top priority and that are committed to helping young Americans reach their full potential,” said [John Gomperts](#), America’s Promise Alliance president and CEO. “The *100 Best* winners are doing outstanding work delivering the Five Promises that create the conditions for all young people to have the best chance for success. We hope the example set by these communities provides inspiration for others to take action.”

At noon EST on Sept. 12, Gomperts joined America’s Promise Alliance Chair Alma Powell, ING Foundation President Rhonda Mims, and representatives from Council Rock at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., to officially announce the 100 winning communities during a live [webcast](#).

“The increase we have seen in graduation rates over the past few years is due, in large part, to the hard work communities such as Council Rock have done to make sure their youth have access to an outstanding education and support services,” said Rhonda Mims, president of the ING Foundation and head of the ING U.S. Office of Corporate Responsibility. “It is also important for ING to partner with organizations such as America’s Promise Alliance so we can share these best practices and play a role in improving student achievement and the nation’s economy.”

All communities entering the *100 Best* competition completed a rigorous application where they provided details on how their existing programs and initiatives help deliver the Five Promises—resources identified by America’s Promise as being critical to the development of healthy, successful children: caring adults; safe places; a healthy start; effective education; and opportunities to help others. Applicants also were asked to describe how different sectors of their community work together to help children and families overcome challenges. Most importantly, communities were judged on the strength and innovation of their efforts and programs to help young people graduate from high school prepared for college and the 21st century workforce.

A list of all 2012 winners can be found at AmericasPromise.org/100Best. The webcast can be viewed at AmericasPromise.org/100Bestwebcast.

About America’s Promise Alliance

America’s Promise Alliance is the nation’s largest partnership dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth. We bring together more than 400 national organizations representing nonprofit groups, businesses, communities, educators and policymakers. Through our Grad Nation campaign, we mobilize Americans to end the high school dropout crisis and prepare young people for college and the 21st century workforce. Building on the legacy of our Founding Chairman General Colin Powell, America’s Promise believes the success of young people is grounded in the Five Promises—Caring Adults, Safe Places, A Healthy Start, Effective Education, and Opportunities to Help Others. For more information, visit AmericasPromise.org.

About ING U.S.

ING U.S. constitutes the U.S.-based retirement, investment management and insurance operations of Dutch-based ING Groep N.V. (NYSE: ING). In the U.S., the ING family of companies offers a comprehensive array of financial services to retail and institutional clients, which includes life insurance, retirement plans, mutual funds, managed accounts, alternative investments, institutional investment management, annuities, employee benefits and financial planning. ING U.S. holds top-tier rankings in key U.S. markets and serves approximately 13 million customers across the nation. For more information, visit <http://ing.us>.

About the ING Foundation

The ING Foundation’s mission is to improve the quality of life in communities where ING operates and its employees and customers live. Through charitable giving and employee volunteerism, the Foundation focuses on programs in the areas of financial education, children’s education and physical education. For more information, visit <http://www.ing-usafoundation.com> or connect with us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/act2impact>) and Twitter ([@INGact2impact](https://twitter.com/INGact2impact)).

#