



## For Immediate Release

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### **Three Local Police Departments Unite to Promote Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour** *Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour is a campaign developed by Norristown Area CTC that encourages parents to make the most of the time they spend with their children*

NORRISTOWN, PA, June 16, 2009 — Youth violence and drug use is a serious concern in many communities across the nation, and the Norristown area is no exception.

Common risk factors such as high rates of alcohol and marijuana use and high rates of juvenile crime and truancy were noted in a recent survey of Norristown area public and private school teenagers.

In this survey, 31.6 percent of Norristown area high school-aged teens reported regular use of alcohol in the past 30 days, while 19.1 percent of high school teens reported regular use of marijuana in the same time frame. Over 37 percent of youth reported that they had been threatened in the past year, while 17.2 percent of the youth surveyed reported being attacked or beaten up. Over 17 percent of the youth reported “attacking someone with the intent to harm,” while 5.6 percent of the older teens surveyed reported carrying a weapon.

In response to these community concerns, the police departments from Norristown, East Norriton and West Norriton have united to promote and support the *Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour* campaign, a social marketing campaign sponsored by Norristown Area Communities That Care for Youth (CTC). This campaign encourages parents to make the most of the time they spend with their children.

“Research shows that kids who are close with their parents are less likely to engage in risky behaviors,” said Angela Bell, community mobilizer, Norristown Area CTC. “The more involved parents are in their children’s lives, the more valued the kids feel and the more likely they’ll be to respond to their parents.”



According to the three local police chiefs, the *Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour* campaign also supports the crime prevention efforts in their respective municipalities.

“Preventing juvenile crime has been an area of focus for the Norristown Police Department since 2003 when the department joined forces with the CTC initiative,” said Norristown Police Department Chief Russell Bono. “We have focused much time, effort and manpower on identifying and intervening with juveniles before they progress into committing more serious offenses. The *Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour* campaign provides our department with an opportunity to solicit the assistance of parents in our crime prevention efforts.”

“Alcohol use and anti-social behavior continues to be a primary crime prevention target in West Norriton,” added West Norriton Police Chief Robert Adams. “Our efforts were enhanced this year with the addition of school resource officers in the Norristown Area School District’s middle schools and high school.”

“We are very pleased to partner with the other two municipalities on this campaign,” said East Norriton Police Chief John McGowan. “While the demographics of our communities may vary, the need to engage parents to help prevent youth drug use and violence is universal.”

In an effort to spread the *Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour* message to all Norristown area residents, Norristown Area CTC recently secured two billboards along Markley Street (near Elm Street). In addition, the three police departments placed *Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour* magnets on all their police units.

“CTC could not have made the impact on youth behavior that we have so far without the support and assistance of these three police departments,” added Bell. “Their knowledge, expertise and assistance have been instrumental in carrying out the CTC mission.”

For more information on the *Find Your 25<sup>th</sup> Hour Campaign*, please call 610-630-2111 ext. 236 or visit [www.findyour25thhour.org](http://www.findyour25thhour.org).

Norristown Area CTC brings together community residents and leaders to prevent substance abuse and violence in order to secure a more safe, caring and educated environment in which youth can live and grow to be productive members of our community. For more information on Norristown Area CTC, please call 610-630-2111 ext. 236 or visit [www.norristownctc.org](http://www.norristownctc.org).



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