



ESTABLISHED 1659  
CITY OF NORWICH  
CONNECTICUT

**NORWICH YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES**  
80 Broadway  
Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 823-3782  
Fax (860) 892-6031  
keyberse@cityofnorwich.org  
Website: <http://norwichct.org/yfs>  
...Norwich's municipal agent for youth

### **Testimony for March 6th 4:30 p.m. Appropriations Subcommittee on Health.**

Dear Senator Formica, Representative Ryan, and Representative McCarty and members of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health. My name is Kathryn Eyberse and I am the Coordinator of Norwich Youth and Family Services and the local Norwich Prevention Council.

I am very concerned about the drastic cuts to the Regional Action Councils and specifically ours, the Southeastern Regional Action Council, which serves the twenty towns in our region. The prevention funding cuts outlined in Governor Malloy's proposed budget would reduce the overall budget of the RAC's by \$775,000. This would significantly impact the resources, technical assistance and services they provide to our community as we focus on our prevention efforts.

The Norwich Prevention Council is a community based partnership consisting of state/town law enforcement, schools, religious leaders, youth serving organizations, social services, healthcare providers, and other community based organizations and residents. For 15 years we have been addressing local concerns, prevention, education, and advocacy in the areas of: substance abuse prevention, suicide prevention, and gambling awareness.

We feel that prevention is the most effective way to improving the quality of life for all our community members. In fact for every \$1 spent in prevention, Connecticut saves \$10 in intervention and treatment costs.

We work as a team, pooling resources and in partnership with SERAC to do our work.

The support provided by our Regional Action Council (SERAC) is critical to the success of the Norwich Prevention Council. We have worked in collaboration with SERAC on a variety of prevention initiatives at both the town and regional level. They are able to bring to us both the federal and state initiatives.

A few of the collaborations of which we are most proud include the following:

- Youth Programs (Youth Forum, ALLI, Educational Series, STEP)
- Parent education (Parent Training, forums)
- Community Wide Campaigns (billboards, posters)
- Rx Disposal Box/Take backs
- Teacher/Staff Training
- Train the trainer programs
- Suicide Prevention (QPR, MHFA)

This year Norwich is focusing on Liquor store compliance checks, Suicide Prevention Week at our 3 high schools, and Heroin and Opioid Awareness (Norwich has a high death rate due to overdose, including young people).

I believe it would be in the best interest of all CT residents, to fully restore the funding for Regional Action Councils.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn Eyberse  
Coordinator, NYFS and NPC