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Good evening. My name is Jamie Rosenthal and I'm a clinical social worker at CHC's school based health center at New Britain High School. Let me share with you the words of a SBHC patient.

"For the past year and a half I have been receiving behavioral health services at my middle school. There is a lot I have gone through and basically too much to share right now. But, basically I am 14 years old and in the 8th grade. I had a suicide attempt last June. After school began again in the fall I had another suicide attempt. This one a lot more serious. I ended up staying in the hospital for almost 3 weeks. Every week I could count on my school based therapist to call and check in on me. I asked her why she called and she said, "because I care and you are important." I nearly cried because my life has been hard, really hard. I don't have the obvious people caring about me. My mom and dad can't do it and I have to rely on the state to care for me. I came back from the hospital knowing that when I went back to school someone at my school really cared and took the time to call me and keep connected with me because she knew I needed to know she cared. I haven't tried to kill myself since that time and every time I go to a dark place I do think about my school based therapist calling me at the hospital. I go to school and talk with her weekly. We work on my trauma and I am getting better. I am getting better because I can see her when I need her, where I need her and because she cares."

Ghandi once said "the measure of a society is how they treat their weakest members." Keeping our students healthy and in school by keeping our school based health centers open, is one of the best ways to treat some of our weakest members.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.



Serving underserved and uninsured patients at Connecticut's largest network of community health centers.