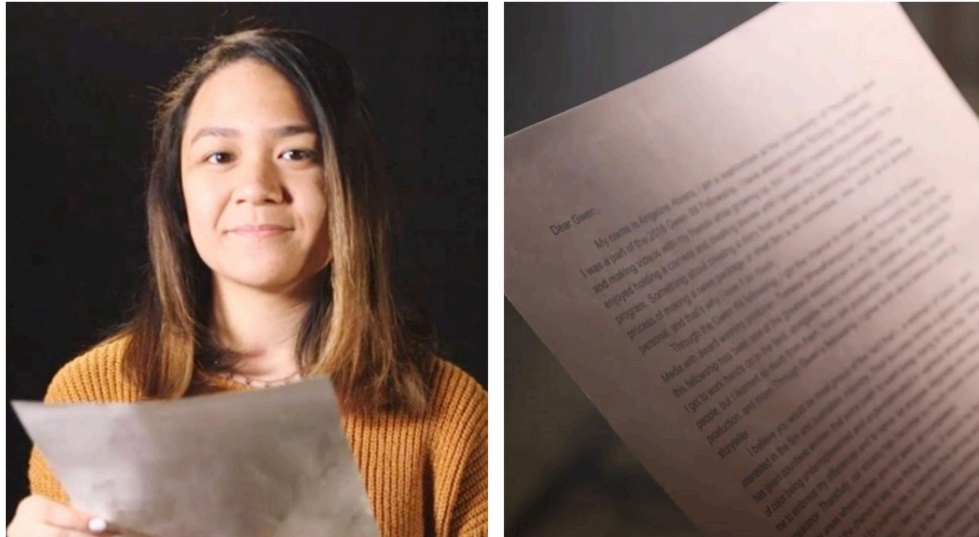


## STUDENT REPORTING LABS: SPECIAL CHALLENGE

*If you could go back in time, what would you say to your middle school self?*



Student Reporting Labs is looking for creative and thought-provoking “video letters” reflecting lessons you’ve learned about **MENTAL HEALTH** and **WELLNESS**.

First, get inspired! Watch this video of [young journalists reading letters they wrote to Gwen Ifill](#), former co-anchor of the PBS NewHour. Although this example is about a different topic and is highly produced, note how each student speaks from the heart.

Then, follow these simple steps:

1. Write a short letter to your Middle School self about what you wish you knew about mental health before high school. Include your thoughts about how schools and young people could better support teen mental health in general.

You might begin your letter:

Dear Middle School [YOUR NAME]

If I could go back in time, I would want you to know....

2. Film yourself reading the letter, but be sure to look into the camera as often as possible (extra points if you can memorize your letter and speak directly to

camera!). To film, you can use your phone, computer, or video camera. Make sure you are nicely lit and in a quiet room.

3. Edit your video-letter by adding photos and b-roll video. Be creative and create a mood. **Your video should be under 2 minutes.**
  - If you need a free editing program, try [WeVideo.com](http://WeVideo.com)
  - If you'd like to add music to your video, choose a track with a creative common license (like from the [YouTube Audio Library](http://YouTube Audio Library))
4. Use [this SUBMISSION FORM](#) to submit your video. Select "LETTER TO MY MIDDLE SCHOOL SELF" under prompt name.
5. If you are under 18 years of age, you and a parent/guardian need to sign an SRL Media Release Form. [Use this link](#). (You do not need to sign it if you already have this year.)
6. Keep all your footage - if you produced a winning video, an SRL producer will be in touch and may ask for a few final edits.

If you have questions, reach out to your Youth Media Producer or email [briget@reportinglabs.org](mailto:briget@reportinglabs.org)

BE CREATIVE, HAVE FUN, AND GOOD LUCK!