

# The Bereaved Family Self-Care Toolkit

(<https://www.cstsonline.org/bereaved-family-selfcare-toolkit/welcome>)

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## BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Bereavement of a loved one can lead to a range of responses, including grief, depression, anxiety, social isolation, substance misuse, and suicidal ideation.

The Bereaved Family Self-Care Toolkit was developed to support bereaved military family members who need assistance and resources as they grieve.

## TOOLKIT FEATURES

The toolkit was modeled as a house with eight rooms and spaces, each of which is related to a different theme relevant to grief adaptation.

**Rooms:** Brief overview, survivor stories (i.e., videos of bereaved individuals sharing their experiences), and videos of subject-matter experts discussing topics relevant to the room’s theme.

**Resource section:** Access other online sources to help them in their grief journeys.

**“My Self-Care Journey”:** Add, save, and download notes related to personal grief journey. Notes can be shared with health professionals, grief counselors, and peer mentors to facilitate communication and promote effective care.

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**Figure 1.** The toolkit, modeled as a house with eight rooms and spaces relating to grief adaptation.



**Figure 2.** The front porch, focusing on privacy, security, and safety with tabs to direct users to the room’s Overview, Survivor Stories, Resources, Hear from a Professional, and the My Journey pages.



## EXPECTED BENEFITS

It is anticipated that using the Bereaved Family Self-Care Toolkit will encourage users to reflect on their emotions and experiences, allowing for self-exploration and greater sense of agency and understanding. Utilization metrics are being collected to examine participant engagement patterns, including which rooms are most frequently visited, and the degree to which notes in “My Self-Care Journey” are employed.

The Bereaved Family Self-Care Toolkit offers a safe, private space for users to process their feelings at their own pace. The Bereaved Family Self-Care Toolkit provides resources and personal and professional videos The “My Self-Care Journey” section allows individuals to share their experiences with healthcare professionals through meaningful conversations, potentially enhancing the quality of care and support offered.