



Grief Support Toolkit | *Tip sheet*

# Living with Grief after a Military Loss

Losing a loved one who served in the military is tough for a family. Grief can feel overwhelming, but support is available.

## The Impact of Military Loss

More than 7,000 U.S. military members have died in conflicts after 9/11 (The Watson School of International and Public Affairs). Four times as many have died by suicide. This has left thousands of spouses, children and parents grieving. This grief can cause anger, guilt and confusion. It can also impact sleep, appetite and focus. Military loss is different because it often comes suddenly. Families may feel more deeply because of their loved one's sacrifice.

## Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

The VA offers survivor benefits to help families after a service member passes away. Here are a few:

**Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC):** A monthly payment to spouses, children or parents.

**Survivors' Pension:** Financial support for surviving spouses and children with low income.

**Education Benefits:** The Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance (DEA) program helps with tuition and career training.

**Burial and Memorial Benefits:** Coverage for burial in a VA national cemetery, headstones and memorial services.

## National Support Resources

**TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors):** Free grief counseling, peer support and events.

**Gold Star Families:** Community and support groups for families who have lost a loved one in service.

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**Military OneSource:** 24/7 confidential counseling and resources for military families.

**NAMI Homefront:** Peer-led mental health groups and education.

## Coping Tips

If you are a survivor, these steps can help with your loss:

**Reach out:** Talk to others who understand your situation.

**Accept help:** Find counseling and survivor benefits to lessen stress.

**Honor their service:** Find ways to celebrate your loved one's life.

**Take small steps:** Try journaling, exercise or activities in your faith to help you heal .

## #GrowThroughGrief #GriefSupport

If you or someone you know is struggling with a loss and needs support, you can find more resources at [Good Grief](#).