SELF-ADVOCACY TOOLKIT USER GUIDE

This toolkit is designed to provide support people (mental health family and friends) with tools, tips, and further resources as they need them, when they need them.

One day a support person may need information about **Navigating the System** (pages 53-56), the next day a reminder about healthy ways to set **Boundaries** (Page 58) is better suited to that day's scenario.

The entire **70+ page toolkit** is available in **print** and **digital** format. For a print copy, please get in touch with our office. For the entire digital version, please see it as full document, complete with hyperlinks on our website here, or navigate to sectioned pdfs. More detail about this next.

How to use the self-advocacy toolkit if you're a support person (a mental health family or friend)

If you're a support person, there's a range of ways to read and use this toolkit. In both the digital and print versions there are six parts. They are:

1. **Words you might come across in your support role** – start here if you've just started your support role and need to understand the jargon (or language) that's often used when talking about mental health and alcohol and other drugs.
2. **About this Toolkit** – take a look if you'd like a description of the toolkit, what self-advocacy is why it's important for support people, and contact details for further reading for specific mental ill health conditions and diagnoses
3. **How to use this Toolkit** – describes what you'll find in the toolkit and outlines each of the 10 tools
4. **1. Recognising Feelings & Emotions** – this is all about you! This section is an opportunity to check in with how you're feeling, to learn to be kinder to yourself and to identify the various stages of the Support Continuum (page 16)
5. **2. The Self-Advocate's Toolkit** – this section outlines each of the 10 tools. But first, (on page 19), you're asked to identify three skills you already have (see table below for more information about the 10 tools).
6. **3. Directory of Contacts** – check out this table (Tab 3, pages 69-73) for a list of useful services across the state.

DIGITAL VERSION:

If you'd prefer to read the digital version of the Self-Advocacy Toolkit, below are suggestions of how to use it.

1. You could start at the **Contents** page of the toolkit (on page 3), look at the headings that interest you, then navigate to that section. You can find the entire digital version here.
2. If you're new to the support role, a good place to start is the **Intro and How to Use TOOLKIT**. This section is **10 pages** long and provides the **Contents**, **Words you might come across in your support role** (great for understanding mental health jargon), **About this Toolkit** (A comment about the words we use and understanding mental ill health and AOD) and **How to use this toolkit** (with an outline of the 10 Tools within).

3. Or you might like to read the toolkit according to what's relevant to you at the time it's most useful. In that case, you'll want to access pdf sections of the toolkit, so we've provided pdf sections of the Toolkit. They are:

1	**Intro and How to Use the Toolkit**	(10 pages)
2	**Main Toolkit**	The entire digital toolkit (74 pages)
4	1. **Recognising Feelings & Emotions**	Section 1 – 8 pages
5	2. **The Self-Advocate's Toolkit** **NOTE:** For a comprehensive directory of information about policies and laws, check out the 2.1 Knowing your rights section. You'll find a table in the print version (pages 24-27), and a digital version here.	• Section 2.1 – Knowing your rights (12 pages) • Section 2.2 - Looking after yourself (4 pages) • Section 2.3 - Trauma and triggers (8 pages) • Section 2.4 - Emotional Resilience (4 pages) • Section 2.5 - Effective communication (10 pages) • Section 2.6 - Being organised (4 pages) • Section 2.7 - Financial impacts (4 pages) • Section 2.8 - Navigating the system (6 pages) • Section 2.9 - Managing expectations and boundaries (3 pages) • Section 2.10 - Crisis management
6	3. **Directory of Contacts**	A table of contact information of mental health & community services and supports

PRINT VERSION:

The print version of the toolkit is laid out similar to the main digital document of the toolkit, however the print version provides, handy, easy-to-use, cut-out tabbed sections for each of the 10 tools.

These tools were designed *by* support people *for* support people. Support people with lived experience were asked by MHFFTas their major challenges in their support role, what they wish they'd known sooner, what resources most helped them, the advice they'd give to other support people and if what information and resource they'd like to see in a toolkit. This is how the 10 specific tools within the toolkit were created. The 10 self-advocacy tools in the toolkit are:

1. **Knowing your rights - (Tab 2.1)**
2. **Looking after yourself - (Tab 2.2)**
3. **Emotional Resilience - (Tab 2.3)**

4. **Trauma and triggers - (Tab 2.4)**
5. **Effective communication - (Tab 2.5)**
6. **Being organised - (Tab 2.6)**
7. **Financial Impacts - (Tab 2.7)**
8. **Navigating the system - (Tab 2.8)**
9. **Managing expectations - (Tab 2.9)**
10. **Crisis Management - (Tab 2.10)**

OTHER USEFUL ELEMENTS WITHIN THIS TOOLKIT ARE:

- The Emotion Wheel (page 12) was created by psychologist Rober Plutchik. It's a visual description that shows the complexity and range of emotions
- The **Support Continuum** (page 16) which describes some stages of the support role, including Crisis, Can't Cope, Big Feelings, Relief, Coping, Flow and Resilience
- A comprehensive **directory** of online websites that provide support people with further information about mental health policies and laws (pages 24-27)
- A template for how to **write a complaint letter** (page 28)
- An illustration of how trauma and triggers show up in our body (page 35)
- The **Emotional Resilience** quiz (page 40), which asks participants to take stock of their own stressors and supports
- An example of Assertive, Passive and Aggressive Communicators (page 42)
- More information about the Partnership Standards (page 56) designed to improve outcome for people who interact with mental health services
- A table that prompts readers to reflect on their expectations (page 57)
- An Emergency Plan template (pages 62-63)
- An example for problem solving with four steps (page 66): What's the problem; Possible solutions; Decide on a plan, and Review.

How to use the self-advocacy toolkit if you're a professional or service provider

If you're looking at this toolkit on behalf of a supporter in order to provide them with resources and information, please refer the support person to our online version of the toolkit.

You might also like to inform the support person that they're welcome to join us at the self-advocacy workshops that we'll deliver across the state in September 2022. The workshops go further into each of the tools within the kit.

You can find a list of the workshop dates and venues here.

If you'd like to talk with Mental Health Families and Friends about using the toolkit as a resource, please get in touch.