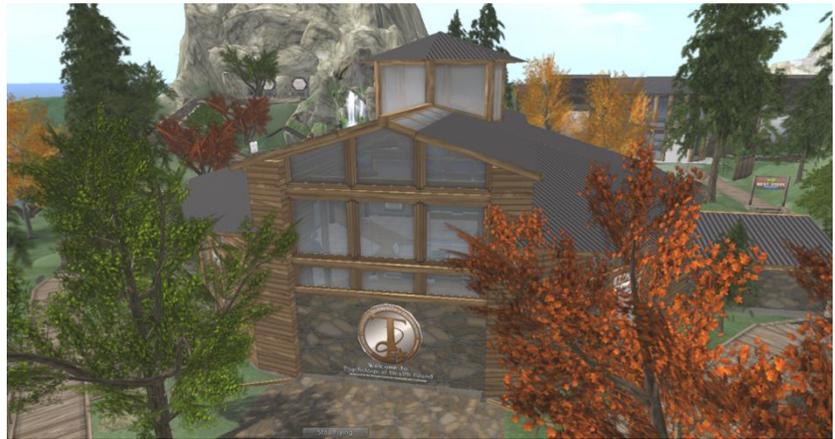




# T2 Virtual PTSD Experience

The National Center for Telehealth and Technology (T2) Virtual Worlds program has developed a virtual world experience to help visitors understand the effects of combat deployments. It is a virtual space on the Web for service members, veterans, families and friends, to anonymously learn about post-traumatic stress, understand its causes, recognize symptoms and find resources for care. A virtual world is a three-dimensional, persistent, computer-based simulation environment in which visitors interact with objects, scripts, and other visitors in the shared virtual space. The **T2 Virtual PTSD Experience**, based in the Second Life® virtual world platform, is designed to be an interactive, immersive tool in a unique and engaging environment. Visitors have “24/7” convenience to explore the many places in T2’s region of Second Life.



Research shows that a significant portion of service members, almost 50 percent, who screen positive for psychological health issues after a combat deployment do not ask for care or use available services. The many reasons for their reluctance include perceived stigma and barriers in getting help. Because visitors can share experiences and information anonymously, the T2 Virtual PTSD Experience is a unique way to learn reliable and credible information about PTSD from the privacy of their homes. T2’s virtual space was created through a collaboration of psychologists, and virtual worlds developers and artists. The result is a one-of-a-kind place for PTSD that invites visitors to learn by doing, go beyond information available on traditional 2D websites and connect with other visitors in a personal way.



T2 has been exploring virtual worlds technology since 2008. The **T2 Virtual PTSD Experience** opened in January 2011. Visitors can enter our space after setting up a basic (free) Second Life avatar account at [www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com). To see a video describing the project, go to [www.t2health.org/vwproj/](http://www.t2health.org/vwproj/). Other T2 virtual worlds projects include the development of additional educational resources on psychological health issues, exploring ways to improve provider training and consultation, and delivering evidence-based psychological health treatments in a virtual world. T2 continues to lead in the exploration of virtual worlds to improve psychological health care and outreach.



The National Center for Telehealth and Technology (T2) is the primary Department of Defense office for cutting-edge approaches to the use of technology in the areas of psychological health and traumatic brain injury. T2 is a component center of the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE).