**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Valerie’s House Pensacola Partners with the City of Pensacola to Expand Grief Support Groups in October 2022**

Pensacola, Fla. – September 7, 2022 – Valerie’s House Pensacola, a Southwest Florida-founded nonprofit organization with the sole mission of helping children grieve, will begin offering peer grief support groups at the E.S. Cobb Resource Center next month, in partnership with the City of Pensacola.

Group meetings are offered at no cost to families and will be held at 601 East Mallory Street, Pensacola, FL 32503. During each bimonthly meeting, children and their caregivers will separate into peer groups to participate in healing activities to discuss their losses. The curriculum relies on art and play to help youth identify, express, and process their grief. Learn more about peer grief support groups at [valerieshouse.org/childrens-peer-groups](https://valerieshouse.org/childrens-peer-groups).

“Every time I listen to and support a grieving child, I am healing, too,” said Crista Brandt O’Keefe, Valerie’s House Pensacola Advisory Committee Chair.  Crista lost her mom to cancer when she was 11 years old. As an adult, she found herself drawn to helping grieving children like she once was, which is how she began spearheading Valerie’s House’s Pensacola chapter.

Ten-year old Charles has been with Valerie’s House since April 2021. He lost his dad to cancer in 2020 and he reflected that “it helps me to know that I’m not the only one grieving.”

Valerie’s House Pensacola is currently enrolling families. To enroll, call the Valerie’s House Pensacola Program Manager, Jennifer Elzweig at (850) 582-8255, or email her at jennifer.elzweig@valerieshouse.org. To refer a child who is grieving, visit [valerieshouse.org](http://valerieshouse.org/) and see the Contact & Referrals tab.

**About Valerie’s House**

Valerie’s House opened in January 2016 and has served over 2,000 children and their families from Charlotte, Sarasota, Glades, Lee, Hendry, and Collier Counties as well as the Florida Panhandle. Valerie’s House provides a safe, comfortable place for children and families to heal together following the death of someone they love. Valerie’s House expanded its services to Pensacola in April 2021. Valerie’s House is a United Way partner agency and is fully supported by community donations.

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