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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Valerie's House Appears On National Television**

***Pensacola, Fla. – December 2, 2022*** – Valerie's House, a Florida non-profit with a new location in Pensacola, was profiled nationally on "Live With Kelly Ripa and Ryan Seacrest" on WEAR-TV today.

The show's producers reached out to Valerie's House founder Angela Melvin after seeing a local story on the organization and its mission to help children and families grieving. The six-minute interview was done via Zoom from the Valerie's House location in Fort Myers.

"It was a great experience as I was able to tell the Valerie's House story to a national audience and spread the word about how to help children grieve the loss of a loved one," Melvin said after the interview. "It was wonderful to share about the different communities in Florida including Pensacola that are now able to help children grieving."

Valerie's House first opened its doors in 2016 in Fort Myers in a small cozy home, followed two years later with expansion into Naples and Charlotte Counties. The fourth chapter of this growing non-profit launched in 2020 in Pensacola. The Pensacola chapter immediately started making an impact in 2021 with the peer-to-peer support model thanks to community partners and Big Brothers Big Sisters donating space for the groups.

Pensacola resident and chapter founder, Crista Brandt, lost her mother when she was 11-years-old and spearheaded the Valerie's House expansion into the panhandle. The chapter has since served more than 125 children and their parents grieving in Escambia County.

"We couldn't be more excited to have been profiled on national television to bring awareness to our peer-to-peer support model and children's grief," Brandt said. "We are already getting several calls and emails from people who saw the segment and want to

help Valerie's House in Pensacola." There will two new groups starting in early 2023 to serve the growing demand in the community.

The interview came on the heels of National Children's Grief Awareness Month in November. One in seven children in Florida is predicted to lose a parent or sibling before the age of 25, according to the 2021 Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model. One in eleven are predicted to lose a parent or sibling in Escambia County by the time they are 18 and one in fourteen in Santa Rosa.

In addition to talking about the founding of Valerie's House, Melvin discussed the Pay It Forward vision of Valerie's House where teens who have gone through the program then come back and mentor other grieving children.

Ryan and Kelly also asked Melvin about Valerie's House expanding throughout the state and nationally. Melvin replied, "We know there are many places around the country that are without grief support services for children and if we can help other communities start something similar to Valerie's House, we will do so."

To see the segment: search segment title : [Good News: Angela Melvin Has Created a Save Haven for Grieving Children](#) on you tube

Valerie's House provides a safe, comfortable place for children and their families to heal together following the death of someone they love. Valerie's House Pensacola is a United Way partner agency and is fully supported by community donations. More information can be found at [www.valerieshouse.org](http://www.valerieshouse.org).