



*For Immediate Release*

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**Valerie's House for Grieving Families opens Jan. 11, 2016**  
*Program enrolling children to help cope with death of family members*

**FORT MYERS, Fla.** (December 23, 2015) Valerie's House for Grieving Families, a new not-for-profit organization devoted to helping children and families work through grief following the death of a loved one is now enrolling children in its 2016 program. Support groups and activities begin Monday, Jan. 11 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Valerie's House located at 1618 Avalon Place in Fort Myers' historic Dean Park. Online participant pre-registration is now open at [www.valereshouseswfl.org/our-programs/](http://www.valereshouseswfl.org/our-programs/).

Valerie's House is a safe, comfortable place for families to share, grieve and heal together after a death in their family. Bi-weekly sessions begin with a potluck dinner, followed by small breakout groups, engaging children in age-appropriate activities to help them learn to talk about their grief, heal and bond with other children going through similar kinds of losses. Caregivers of the children also meet together. Activities include monthly family outings and group events to help participants support one another. Personal, one-on-one weekday support is also available, as needed.

Founded by Angela Melvin, Valerie's House is named after her mother, Valerie Melvin, a 31-year old nurse and mother of two daughters who was killed in a car accident in 1987 as she drove to pick up her girls from summer camp. Following her heart, Angela founded Valerie's House in Southwest Florida to help grieving children heal together and go on to lead fulfilling lives.

Valerie's House is fully supported through generous donations from the community.

"We estimate that we may serve as many as 200 family members over the upcoming year," said Melvin. "We are grateful for donations of any amount to help us meet that need."

Ongoing support and donations can be made online at [www.valereshouseswfl.org](http://www.valereshouseswfl.org) or send checks to Valerie's House, Inc., PO Box 1955, Fort Myers, FL 33902. For more information or to register for programs, submit a contact form at [www.valereshouseswfl.org/contact-us/](http://www.valereshouseswfl.org/contact-us/) or call 239-478-6734 or [angela@valereshouseswfl.org](mailto:angela@valereshouseswfl.org).