



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Casa Valentina Receives Funding From The Children's Trust

**MIAMI** (February 8, 2008) – Casa Valentina, a non-profit organization that provides safe, affordable housing and support services to young women who have aged out of foster care, has been awarded a contract from The Children's Trust. The funding will be used to support critical services and the life skills curriculum that Casa Valentina provides to their residents.

"To receive this level of funding from The Children's Trust speaks volumes about what we are doing at Casa Valentina," said Casa Valentina executive director, Chelsea Wilkerson. "The Children's Trust is a leading organization advocating for children and families in this community, and we are excited to have their support for our work to assist young women aging out of foster care."

Casa Valentina's support services program includes intensive staff support in individual and group settings and a comprehensive and experiential life skills curriculum on topics such as education, employment, nutrition, healthcare, relationships, self esteem and money management. Upon entry to Casa Valentina, residents work with staff to develop a personalized Life Plan with action steps toward achieving independent living. Community meetings are held once per week using an award-winning life skills curriculum designed for youth aging out of foster care. Supplemental life skills workshops are led by collaborative program partners from the community. Additionally, volunteers and community groups provide residents with community service projects and other extracurricular opportunities.

Casa Valentina was formed in 2004 by a group of concerned women who acknowledged the immense challenges faced by young women who age out of foster care without the life experience, financial stability and support they need to survive on their own. Facing numerous transitional challenges, these young women are vulnerable to prostitution, incarceration, pregnancy, domestic violence, sexual abuse and homelessness. Casa Valentina's mission is to provide young women in Miami-Dade County who age out of foster care at age 18 with safe, affordable housing and the support services they need to become successful, independent adults. Visit Casa Valentina online at [www.casavalentina.org](http://www.casavalentina.org).

Casa Valentina is funded by The Children's Trust. The Trust is a dedicated source of revenue established by voter referendum to improve the lives of children and families in Miami-Dade County.

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