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Ryan House is a nonprofit Pediatric Palliative Care organization whose mission is to provide essential care in a home-like setting where children with life-threatening conditions and their families come to for respite and, if needed, end-of-life care. Here, AFM interviews Julie Bank, the Executive Director of Ryan House.

AFM: Tell us a little bit more about Ryan House.

JB: Ryan House is a palliative and intensive care facility that takes in children with life-threatening illnesses, and their families, to provide comfort for them in their time of need. We not only address physical pain, but also emotional, spiritual, and social needs of the child and family. The time from diagnosis to the end of the child's life is critical and we are here to be 24-hour caregivers for the child while supporting the family.

AFM: How does Ryan House provide care for these children and their families?

JB: We act as around-the-clock caregivers for these children who only have a small window of time on this earth. Our support for them and their families in our facility includes respite care. We give relief to parents who may be neglecting other relationships with people in their lives such as their spouses, other children, friends, and family members because they are trying to be a non-stop caregiver. We dedicate our time to give them time to attend to those other parts of their lives.

AFM: How do you feel working for Ryan House?

JB: It is incredibly inspirational to work with Ryan House. I find myself coming to work and having connections with families here while I help them through a difficult time. But Ryan House is about celebrating life. We help surround these children with positive vibes. Being around them not only makes me a better person, but makes me a more attentive parent.

AFM: What makes Ryan House unique?

JB: There is no other organization like Ryan House in Arizona, and we are one of two facilities in the country like this. Our goals extend beyond simple caregivers because our whole facility is dedicated to being child-centric, and especially about celebrating life. We want children here to be able to express themselves and enjoy the time in life they do have, which is why we provide an art therapy room, a music therapy room, as well as playgrounds that are accessible for children in wheelchairs. Our indoor hydrotherapy pool allows kids who may never learn how to swim get to experience the weightless feeling of being immersed in water, something that also helps ease the pain on their joints. We want children and their families to feel surrounded by support, love, and resources at hand.

To learn more about Ryan House, click [here](#).