

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Mercer County Children's Advocacy Center EARNS ACCREDITATION
FROM NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE**

***National Children's Alliance recognizes Mercer County Children's Advocacy Center for
its delivery of high quality and effective services to child abuse victims through
accreditation***

Mercer, PA (02/01/2023)– Mercer County Children's Advocacy Center (MCAC) has been awarded accreditation by National Children's Alliance following an extensive application and site review process. As the accrediting agency for Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC) across the country, National Children's Alliance awards various levels of accreditation and membership to centers responding to allegations of child abuse in ways that are effective and efficient, and put the needs of child victims of abuse first. Accreditation is the highest level of membership with National Children's Alliance and denotes excellence in service provision.

MCAC was established in 2015 as a joint venture supported by Mercer County Children and Youth Services, the Mercer County District Attorney's Office, Mercer County Chiefs of Police and the Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission. Since that time, MCAC has provided services for almost 1000 children here in Mercer County.

National Children's Alliance awards Accredited Membership based on a CAC's compliance with 10 national standards of accreditation to ensure effective, efficient and consistent delivery of services to child abuse victims. National Children's Alliance updated these standards in 2017 to reflect the most recent evidence-based practices in the field of child abuse intervention and prevention. According to these standards, Accredited Members must utilize a functioning and effective multidisciplinary team approach to work collaboratively in child abuse investigation, prosecution, and treatment. National Children's Alliance also considers standards regarding a center's cultural competency and diversity, forensic interviews, victim support and advocacy, medical evaluation, therapeutic intervention, and child-focused setting.

'We would like to thank our partner agency's, including the District Attorney's Office, Children and Youth Services, AWARE of Mercer County, Parkside Psychological Services as well as the different law enforcement agencies in the county, for all their assistance throughout this process and more importantly, for all of their hard work in keeping the children of Mercer County safe,' said MaryAnn Daniels, director of MCAC.

“Mercer County Children’s Advocacy Center is to be commended for its excellent work serving victims of child abuse. As the national association and accrediting body for Children’s Advocacy Centers across the country, our goal is to ensure that every victim of child abuse has access to high quality services that result from professional collaboration,” remarked Teresa Huizar, executive director of National Children’s Alliance.

For more information about Mercer County Children’s Advocacy Center, visit www.cacmercer.org.

The Mercer County Children’s Advocacy Center provides forensic interviews as part of the investigative process in response to allegations of child abuse in Mercer County, PA. The MCAC is committed to the protection and best interest of children of Mercer County, and will respond jointly and effectively to any allegations of sexual abuse towards children, serious physical abuse of children, children who witness violent crimes and child deaths in Mercer County. The utilization of law enforcement, child protection investigative agencies and prosecution strategies, as well as victim services, will work towards the common goal of attaining a more positive outcome for children. As an Accredited Member of National Children’s Alliance, MCAC is dedicated to providing comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate services to victims of child abuse.

National Children’s Alliance makes one big difference, one child and one voice at a time. As the nonprofit association and accrediting body providing comprehensive care through hundreds of Children’s Advocacy Centers nationwide, we unify and amplify our voices to command better outcomes. With a forward-thinking approach that stays at the forefront of every child’s future, we are the beginning of child abuse’s end. For more information, visit nationalchildrensalliance.org.