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MEDIA RELEASE

**LA RABIDA CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER EARNS RE-ACCREDITATION
FROM NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE**

***National Children's Alliance recognizes LA RABIDA CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER
for its ongoing delivery of high quality and effective services to child abuse victims through
accreditation***

PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS – La Rabida Children's Advocacy Center has been awarded re-accreditation by National Children's Alliance following an extensive application and site review process. As the accrediting agency for Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) 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.

Accredited CACs must undergo a re-accreditation process every five years to ensure the use of best practices. With accreditation standards being updated in 2010, re-accreditation this year reflects La Rabida Children's Advocacy Center's commitment to providing evidence-based methods of practice and the highest quality care possible.

La Rabida has been a Charter Member of the National Children's Alliance for 27 years and has been an Accredited Member since 1995. The La Rabida CAC has been serving the 6th Municipal District of Cook County throughout this time by coordinating with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Cook County State's Attorney's Office and 36 police jurisdictions in our district. The La Rabida CAC serves children exposed to various types of trauma and violent crime including child sexual abuse, severe physical abuse (including burns), witnesses to community and domestic violence, homicides, abductions and home invasions. All services are

provided to children and their families at no cost. As an Accredited Member of National Children's Alliance, the La Rabida CAC is dedicated to providing comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate services to victims of child abuse.

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. 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.

"As an organization/team of individuals dedicated to responding to child abuse, we recognize the importance of maintaining Accredited status from National Children's Alliance. Re-accreditation not only validates our organization's dedication to proven effective approaches of child abuse intervention and prevention, but also contributes to consistency across the child advocacy center movement as a whole," said Myra D. West, Psy.D., CAC Program Director, La Rabida Children's Advocacy Center.

"La Rabida Children's Advocacy Center is to be commended for its continued commitment to effectively serve 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. By requiring Accredited Centers to undergo re-Accreditation every five years, we ensure that evidence-based practices are being implemented and the highest quality of service is being provided," remarked Teresa Huizar, Executive Director of National Children's Alliance.

For more information about La Rabida Children's Advocacy Center, visit www.larabida.org/page-cac.

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La Rabida Children's Advocacy Center's mission is to ensure that children's advocacy center services are available to all alleged child sexual and severe physical abuse victims and child witnesses to violent crime in the Sixth Municipal District of Cook County. These services include working with our partner agencies to coordinate multidisciplinary team investigations and provide comprehensive, coordinated, and compassionate services to children in the southern suburbs of Cook County, who may have been exposed to these type of potentially traumatic events. Our multidisciplinary approach includes investigative, advocacy, case management and therapeutic support services in a child-friendly, developmentally-appropriate environment at no cost to children and families.

National Children's Alliance is the national association and accrediting body for the over 750 children's advocacy centers serving each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Dedicated to helping local communities respond to allegations of child abuse in ways that are effective and efficient, and put the needs of child victims of abuse first, National Children's Alliance provides support and advocacy to its accredited membership, as well as numerous developing centers, multidisciplinary teams and child abuse professionals around the country, and the world. As the national authority on multidisciplinary approaches to supporting child victims of abuse, the purpose of National Children's Alliance is to empower local communities to provide comprehensive, coordinated and compassionate services to victims of child abuse. Founded in 1998, National Children's Alliance provides accreditation opportunities, financial assistance, training, technical assistance, research and education to communities, child abuse professionals and children's advocacy centers throughout the United States in support of child abuse intervention, advocacy and prevention. www.nationalchildrensalliance.org

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