**Midcoast CHILDREN’S ADVOCACY CENTER**

**Development Team**

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**I. MISSION STATEMENT- TBD**

**II. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

This agreement is made by and between the Midcoast County Children’s Advocacy Center MDT Work Group (MCAC Work Group) and the undersigned agencies/organizations. The MCAC Work Group will utilize a multidisciplinary approach committed to:

* Working collectively and collaboratively to develop a coordinated MDT response, using a CAC modeled approach, to child sexual abuse investigations in Midcoast County.
* Sharing resources, including training opportunities and expertise during the CAC development process.
* Collaborating and cooperating with the undersigned organizations and agencies on community based efforts to prevent child maltreatment in Midcoast County.

**III. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to provide and promote closer coordination, communication and collaboration among participating agencies in order to better serve children, their families and the community. Specifically, we agree to commit resources necessary to meet our common goal; to work to resolve any differences that might arise between or among agencies; to support the further development of the CAC program in Midcoast County; and to place the welfare of children at the center of our efforts.

**IV. INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT**

Recognizing the importance for a comprehensive and collaborative approach, we have come together to create a multidisciplinary team response to child sexual abuse investigations. We, the undersigned, agree to support the philosophy, principles and procedures outlined in this document so that we may better serve the needs of children and their families.

We agree to support the creation, development and implementation of a multidisciplinary approach to achieve the objectives outlined in Section II.

We agree to use the MCAC Work Group as the primary entity through which our joint efforts are combined to develop a response to reports of child sexual abuse.

Each agency has specific responsibilities imposed by law and policy and will continue to perform those functions. Each agency, however, agrees to work with the others to take agreed-upon actions to protect children, strengthen families, and support the development of a multidisciplinary team approach to child sexual abuse investigations.

Specifically, we agree to work towards:

* Developing, achieving and maintaining interagency and interdisciplinary cooperation and coordination in addressing cases of child sexual abuse;
* Providing a multidisciplinary team approach focused on the needs of the child victim and non-offending caregivers whose interests are consistent with the best interests of the child;
* Reducing the number of interviews and physical exams a child may experience during an investigation, which includes encouraging expert medical consultation;
* Using research and evidence based forensic interview techniques that use a child first, multidisciplinary team approach;
* Ensuring children and families have access to high quality, trauma informed, evidence based mental health services.
* Participating in monthly scheduled work group meetings and sharing pertinent information;
* Provide, at minimum, one representative from the agency to serve a (#) year term on the MCAC Work Group;
* Sharing training and education opportunities for the MCAC Work Group and other professionals and volunteers in the community who work with children who have been sexually abused;
* Serve as a source of information, education, and referral for the community on issues surrounding child sexual abuse; and
* Developing guidelines, policies, protocols and procedures for a CAC Program.

Individual agencies reserve the right to terminate their partnership with the MCAC Work Group.

**V. CONFIDENTIALITY**

The undersigned agencies and their representatives agree that information pertaining to children and families will be held in the strictest confidence. Each agency shall follow its own regulations, policies and procedures addressing confidentiality; this agreement does not alter or change those regulations, policies or procedures. Except for this limitation, the agencies are full members, whose participation and counsel is essential for protecting children and their supportive family members and for guiding the sound development of the CAC program in Midcoast County.

**The undersigned have the support of their Agency Directors to participate in the Midcoast County CAC Work Group:**