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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

#### **Kids In The Middle Achieves National Accreditation through 2024**

*Non-profit organization delivers quality services to its clients*

**ST. LOUIS (April 13, 2020)** - Kids In The Middle (KITM) has achieved national accreditation through the New York-based Council on Accreditation (COA). KITM provides much-needed mental health counseling services for children and families transitioning to a new way of life before, during, after separation and divorce, utilizing a family systems approach. It took KITM 13 months to achieve accreditation. Organizations pursue accreditation to demonstrate the implementation of best-practice standards in the field of human services. COA evaluated all aspects of KITM's programs, services, management, and administration.

"COA accreditation has been a team effort by all but certainly would not have been possible without KITM's staff, the board of directors, and advisory council over the past 13 months," says Katy Walter, KITM CEO. "We are very proud of this achievement as it shows the exemplary work performed at the Agency every day."

COA accreditation is an objective, independent, and reliable validation of an agency's performance. The COA accreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of an organization's administration, management, and service delivery functions against international standards of best practice. The standards driving accreditation to ensure that services are well-coordinated, culturally competent, evidence-based, outcomes-oriented, and provided by a skilled and supported workforce. COA accreditation demonstrates accountability in the management of resources, sets standardized best practice thresholds for service and administration, and increases organizational capacity and accountability by creating a framework for ongoing quality improvement.

To achieve COA accreditation, KITM first provided written evidence of compliance with the COA standards. Thereafter, a group of specially trained volunteer Peer Reviewers confirmed adherence to these standards during a series of on-site interviews with trustees, staff, and clients.

Based on their findings, COA's volunteer-based Accreditation Commission voted that KITM had successfully met the criteria for accreditation.

"Reaccreditation is a tremendous achievement that demonstrates KITM is recognized as a provider that continues to successfully implement high-performance standards and is delivering the highest quality services to all of its stakeholders," says Jody Levison-Johnson, President and CEO of the COA.

An endorsement of COA and the value of its accreditation process is reflected in it being named by the US State Department as the sole national independent accrediting body under the Hague Convention on Intercountry

Adoption to accredit intercountry adoption service providers. In addition, COA is the only national accreditor designated by the U.S. Department of Defense to develop accreditation standards and processes for human service programs provided to military personnel and their families.

### **About COA**

Founded in 1977, COA is an independent, not-for-profit accreditor of the full continuum of community-based behavioral health care and social services organizations in the United States and Canada. Over 2,000 organizations — voluntary, public, and proprietary; local and statewide; large and small — have either successfully achieved COA accreditation or are currently engaged in the process. Presently, COA has a total of 47 service standards that are applicable to over 125 different types of programs. To learn more about COA, please visit [www.coanet.org](http://www.coanet.org)

### **About Kids In The Middle**

Kids In The Middle (KITM) helps children and families transition to a new way of life before, during and after separation and divorce, for the sake of creating healthier futures for all involved. Founded in 1977, KITM is a nationally accredited non-profit agency that provides comprehensive and confidential counseling, education and support services focused on the entire family. KITM is a proud member of the United Way of Greater St. Louis and receives funds from the St. Louis County Children's Service Fund. KITM is located at 2650 S. Hanley Rd. in St. Louis, Mo. For more information, visit [www.kidsinthemiddle.org](http://www.kidsinthemiddle.org).

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