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**For immediate release:**

## **COASTAL KIDS PRESCHOOL Earns National NAEYC Accreditation**

*Program recognized among the top in the nation by earning accreditation*

**Damariscotta ME – Coastal Kids Preschool** has earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)—the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children.

NAEYC Accreditation is a rigorous and transformative quality-improvement system that uses a set of 10 research-based standards to collaborate with early education programs to recognize and drive quality-improvement in high-quality early learning environments. “We’re proud to have earned the mark of quality from NAEYC, and to be recognized for our commitment to reaching the highest professional standards” said Priscilla Congdon, Education Director of Coastal Kids. Congdon has been with the school since the non-profit organization began in 1995.

Coastal Kids Preschool’s mission is to provide a high quality, inclusive, developmentally appropriate program for preschool age children in Lincoln County. Approximately one-third of the 62 licensed slots are allocated for children with special needs. Coastal Kids also provides an afterschool program for children through age ten.

To earn NAEYC Accreditation, the Coastal Kids staff committed to an extensive self-study and quality-improvement process, followed by an on-site visit by NAEYC Assessors to verify and ensure that the program met each of the ten program standards, and hundreds of corresponding individual criteria.

In the 30 years since NAEYC Accreditation was established, it has become a widely-recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education. More than 7,000 programs are currently accredited by NAEYC—less than **10 percent** of all child care centers, preschools, and kindergartens nationally achieve this recognition. There are currently 53 accredited programs in the Maine and Coastal Kids is the only program in Lincoln County to have this distinction.

“NAEYC-Accredited programs bring our definitions of excellence for early childhood education to life each day,” said Kristen Johnson, senior director of Early Learning Program Accreditation at NAEYC. “Earning NAEYC Accreditation makes **Coastal Kids Preschool** an exemplar of good practice for families and the entire community.”

Coastal Kids serves children 18 months through ten years. For more information about the program see their website [www.coastalkidsme.org](http://www.coastalkidsme.org) or call the school at 563-5335.