

Revised September 2009

First Candle is a national health organization uniting parents, caregivers and researchers nationwide with government, business and community service groups to advance infant health and survival. Together with our national network of members and partners, we are working to ensure that every baby is given the best possible chance to reach not only his or her first birthday, but many happy birthdays beyond.

Our mission is to promote safe pregnancies and the survival of babies through the first years of life. With programs of research, education and advocacy, our goal is to continue to have a significant impact on our nation's high stillbirth and infant mortality rates. Working toward this mission, we remain committed to providing compassionate grief support to all those affected by the death of a baby.

Following is an overview of First Candle's programs and services:

- **Research:** Our national research program funds projects that meet the highest standards of scientific merit and medical significance in furthering the understanding of SIDS, stillbirth, and other causes of sudden infant deaths. Over the past two decades, we have provided over \$4 million to fund cutting-edge research projects at medical institutions throughout the U.S.
- **Education and Training:** We supply comprehensive, quality-assured information on infant health and survival to new and expectant parents, grandparents and the general public through a toll-free information hotline and our website. We also provide technical assistance and risk reduction/bereavement support education and training to health professionals and community organizations interested in infant health. Last year alone, we distributed more than 200,000 brochures and fact sheets and conducted train-the-trainer workshops for more than 800 health professionals.
- **Advocacy:** First Candle helps guide national and local political action to ensure that SIDS, stillbirth and other infant health programs receive adequate funding. First Candle has ensured that Federal funding for SIDS research has increased from \$500,000 in 1985 to its current level of \$17 million. Working through the National Institutes of Health and its Stillbirth Collaborative Research Network, we have helped increase Federal funding for stillbirth research from \$0 to its current level of \$3 million. Most recently, First Candle convened a congressional briefing to introduce the National Caucus for Infant Health and Safety.
- **Family Support:** First Candle provides grief support services to help families through the difficult time after the loss of a baby. Through the distribution of grief packets, peer support training, conferences, referrals to local support services and our web site, we help families connect and share experiences. Bilingual crisis counselors are also available 24-hours per day, seven days per week through our toll-free crisis hotline. Each year, First Candle reaches more than 13,000 people affected by the devastating death of a baby.

*Recently ranked as a four-star charity by Charity Navigator, America's premier independent charity evaluator, First Candle also meets all guidelines as set forth by the Better Business Bureau and is listed in its Wise Giving Guide. We are proud of our ongoing record of maintaining administrative costs below the industry standard of 25 percent.*