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For Immediate Release**Family Pulls Together Amidst Tragedy
*\$100,000 Research Donation to Help Save Babies' Lives***

[Baltimore, MD – January, 2009] For Melissa and Jason Cherella, the tragic death of their daughter Marley Jaye to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) meant that the course of their lives would be forever changed. The future they had planned together would never be; their hopes and dreams were shattered in the blink of an eye. But, amidst their grief, they found the strength to make a commitment to Marley Jaye to do everything in their power to help ensure that no family need endure the sudden, unexpected death of a precious child. The Cherella's established a memorial fund at First Candle, the nation's leading organization dedicated to infant health and survival, and launched a campaign to raise funds in Marley's memory. As a result, more than \$100,000 will be donated to support ongoing research projects to help develop lifesaving strategies to prevent the more than 4,500 sudden, unexpected infant deaths (SUID) occurring each year in the United States.

Despite dramatic reductions in SIDS rates during the past decade, SIDS remains the leading cause of death for infants one month to one year of age. Statistics also show that the United States infant mortality rates recently dropped to 29th among developed nations. This means that 28 developed nations do a better job of keeping their babies healthy and safe during the first year of life than the United States, one of the wealthiest nations in the world.

"Like most people, we thought that SIDS is what happens to other people," said Melissa Cherella. "The fact that babies are still dying of SIDS every day is unacceptable. We were never able to celebrate Marley's first birthday, but we will honor her each year with a fundraising event until SIDS is a thing of the past."

The proceeds of the event will be split between two leading researchers: Dr. Henry Krous, Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego and Dr. Hannah Kinney, Children's Hospital Boston and Harvard Medical School. Dr. Kinney's ongoing research of the brainstems of SIDS victims has provided the strongest evidence yet that SIDS is not the "mystery" disease we once thought, but has a concrete biological basis. Dr. Krous is the first in the field to create a central repository for the clinical, epidemiological and pathological data collected on babies and children who die without warning. According to Dr. Kinney, Dr. Krous' project is critical to not only her research, but to research projects worldwide, as they work to find causes and identify preventive strategies to save as many lives as possible.

"On behalf of First Candle, Dr. Kinney and Dr. Krous, our sincere thanks to the Cherella family for their dedication to the elimination of SIDS and SUID," said Deborah Boyd, Executive Director of First Candle. "We know how committed the Cherella family is to raising even more funds in the coming years, and we are here to support them all the way."

The fundraising effort stretched from Boston to Los Angeles, with family, friends, co-workers and community groups all playing a role in its success. "Our entire family is deeply grateful to all of the volunteers and generous donors who played a role in making this happen," said Mike Mountain, Melissa Cherella's brother. "It is our sincere hope that this contribution in the memory of our darling niece Marley will make a lasting impact in the fight against SIDS."

For more information on the event please visit www.marleycherellafund.org. For more information on First Candle's efforts, or to make a donation, call 1.800.221.7437 or visit www.firstcandle.org.

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First Candle is a national, nonprofit health organization dedicated to promoting safe pregnancies and the survival of babies through the first years of life. With programs of research, education and advocacy we are working toward a future where all babies are provided the best possible chance to reach not only their first birthday, but many happy birthdays beyond. Until we reach this goal, we remain committed to providing compassionate grief support to all those affected by the death of a baby. For more information, to make a donation or to access local support services, please call 1.800.221.7437 or visit www.firstcandle.org.