

Helping FirstLight to Support Suddenly Bereaved Families across Ireland



Demand for FirstLight's services has increased very substantially since 2019, with 373 families supported in 2022, compared to 207 in 2021 and 147 in 2020. Donations and fundraising events have been a very important source of income to FirstLight and have supported the provision of free professional counselling services to families around the country whose child has died suddenly.

With continuing support, FirstLight can provide timely professional crisis intervention and counselling services to families at this most challenging time.

Often, when we want to help, we just don't know where to start. This is why FirstLight has put together a fundraising guide, which we hope will inspire and assist anyone who wishes to support our services.

How to Fundraise on Behalf of FirstLight?

While no two fundraising events will be the same, we have some suggestions you may find helpful in putting together your event. However, remember, FirstLight is here to help every step of the way if you need it. We can supply fundraising materials such as flyers, collection buckets, posters, and t-shirts.

- **Decide on the purpose of the event and how you will raise funds**
 - Choose an event you will enjoy, and that will be popular with others. We have several suggestions below as to the type of events you can organise, or you may wish to come up with a new idea of your own.
 - Is your event solely to raise funds, or will it also be to remember loved ones or to bring people together for support? Figuring out the details for your event will depend on knowing what goals you are trying to achieve.
- **Make a plan**
 - Planning is key to any successful fundraising activity.
 - Plan your event well in advance of the date.
 - Be aware of any legal requirements – do you need insurance, a permit etc.?
 - Estimate how many people will turn up, keep a tight budget, and choose a date that doesn't clash with any other popular events in your area.
 - Make a timeline to complete each of the necessary tasks and ask some friends for help!
 - You could even have your event sponsored by a local business.
 - Prepare a way to register everyone who comes – try to get their name, email, amount donated, etc. and always ensure it is GDPR compliant.
 - Bring a cash box and store money in a safe space.
 - Have signs prepared to hang up so people know they are in the right spot.
 - Know the ins and outs of the location – the parking, the toilets, emergency evacuation, etc.
 - Create a backup plan if the event is reliant on good weather.



- **Tell the world what you're doing.**
 - Shouting about your fundraising is the best way to make sure it's a success, so tell everyone you know – and then get them to tell everyone they know too!
 - Send it through the grapevine. Use social media, leaflets, posters, emails, PR, and phone calls.
 - Contact FirstLight so we can promote your event on our social media pages.
 - Start raising money before the event through sites such as GoFundMe, Facebook fundraising pages, or iDonate. Promote these pages through social media.

- **Engage.**
 - During the event, register and greet everyone who comes; thank them for coming.
 - Create a positive atmosphere by getting people talking and looking out for those who appear to be lonely/lost/confused.
 - Take photos and send them to FirstLight to be put on social media.
 - Remember to enjoy the event yourself too!
 - If you're in a public venue, be sure to clean up well after yourselves.

- **Give everyone a round of applause.**
 - Afterwards, thank everyone who helped with the fundraising and donated or showed their support.
 - Don't forget to give yourself a big pat on the back!

Where to send your much-needed donations?

By bank transfer to:

- Bank: AIB
- Branch: Capel Street, Dublin 1
- Account Name: Irish Sudden Infant Death Association t/a FirstLight
- Bank Account Number: 26806095
- Sort Code: 93 11 01
- IBAN: IE62 AIBK 9311 0126 8060 95
- BIC: AIBKIE2D

FirstLight Website Donation: If you have the funds in a bank account, you can directly donate through the FirstLight website.

Online Fundraising Platforms: If you don't want to handle cash donations, you can also use Facebook, GoFundMe or iDonate. Each platform will transfer funds directly to FirstLight via bank transfer.



Attending or hosting an event in your community is a great way to get involved with and raise money for FirstLight.

Community Fundraising Ideas

Mile in Memory Walk.

The Mile in Memory Walk is a very special remembrance event where parents, families, friends and colleagues come together as a community in memory of a child or young person. Walk in memory, listen to parents' stories, light a remembrance candle, and experience the power of healing through community. FirstLight's 2023 Mile in Memory Remembrance Walk will take place on Father's Day, Sunday, June 18th. However, you may choose to host a mile in memory walk at any time.

Barn Dance

A Barn Dance is a country-themed event filled with music, dance, food, and fun. Put on your cowboy hat and flannel and enjoy this well-deserved entertaining night with your local community.

Bake it for Children (Bake Sale)

Bake tasty treats, share laughs, and remember loved ones. You can hold your bake sale at work, at school, at home, or in your local community. Whether your bakes are sweet or savoury, simple or show-stopping, the money you raise will greatly help bereaved parents and families.

FirstLight Quiz Night

Quiz nights are a fun-filled competitive evening filled with a plethora of weird and wonderful facts. Gather your brainiest friends together to enjoy this exciting night and try to take home first place.

Pyjama Day / Non-Uniform Day

Why not host a pyjama day or non-uniform day at your school, creche or workplace? Ask everyone to donate to participate, and you can all spend the day in a comfy outfit of your choosing. Host this event at any time or tie it in with National Pyjama Day on November 18th.

Car Wash / Dog Wash

Every dog owner wants a clean pooch, but groomers are expensive, and sometimes it's challenging to bathe a dog at home. This is where you come in! You need to find a location that has enough room and hot water for the task. If you're going to go outside, do it on a nice warm day so the dogs won't get cold. Remember to use specialist dog shampoo. The same goes for cars (though at least cars can't feel the cold!). Find a suitable public space where cars can safely park up to avail of your services. Again, use specialised cleaning products which won't damage anyone's vehicle.



Running

We all know that exercise can be just as important for our mental health as physical health, so why not try a fundraising event that will make you feel good while you do good. For the seasoned runner, there are a number of marathons held around the country each year, such as The Great Limerick Run, Sunday 30th April, The Cork City Marathon, Sunday 4th June and Irish Life Dublin Marathon Sunday, October 29th. There is also the ever-popular VHI Women's Mini Marathon Sunday 4th, June. However, there are also lots of smaller events nationwide, including 5k, 10k, and half marathons. Why not check out www.runningcalendar.ie for running events local to you.

Charity Dip or Cold-Water Challenge

Take the plunge and organise a charity dip or cold-water swimming event! It can be a great way to connect with nature and with others. If you are organising a charity swim event, you have a responsibility to ensure adequate water safety measures are in place, to reduce the possible risks to attendees. It is appropriate to inform local Gardaí about the event. An application to the local authority may be required for permission to access the location. Water Safety Ireland provides guidelines for several charity swim types, including charity dips, swims up to 3km and swims over 4km.

Alternatively, you could undertake a sponsored cold-water challenge, such as immersing yourself in cold water (cold shower, ice bath etc.) every day for a month. It won't be easy, but it will leave you feeling good in mind and body – and the money you raise will do good too.

10,000 Step Challenge

Similar to the cold-water challenge, how about taking on a personal challenge and receiving sponsorship for your efforts. Committing to 10,000 steps a day for a month can be a great way to keep healthy and raise funds. Keep your supporters up to date on your progress and remind them to donate by posting updates to your social media.

Golf (Or Other Sport) Tournament

Play a full 18-hole PGA-style tournament, or simply make it a putting or a miniature golf tournament for a kid-friendly affair. Charge green fees as donations. Book in with a public course or ask the captain or president of your local golf course to host your event. If golf isn't your sport, a similar format could be applied to a football, rugby, tennis, dodgeball, baseball or cricket tournament. Pitfalls of an event like this can be the weather, so keep an eye on the forecast and have alternative dates lined up – ensure you have contact information for participants in case you have to reschedule.

Online Fundraising Ideas

These days, it can be hard to get everyone together in the same place, and online events can be just as fun and engaging as in-person ones.

Some ideas for online events include; Quiz Night, Race Night, Raffles / Auction, Virtual Runathon/Bikeathon/Danceathon.



Corporate Partnerships

FirstLight always welcomes the opportunity to develop new corporate relationships. Choosing to support FirstLight will provide a fantastic opportunity to engage your customers and employees whilst enabling us to continue our vital work in providing support to suddenly bereaved parents and families.

We work with companies who believe in our values and want to make a difference in their community. By partnering with FirstLight, you will be aligning with an incredibly well-loved and inspiring charity and our cause will motivate and unite your staff.

If your employer supports a charity and employees have the opportunity to nominate the charity that will receive support, please nominate FirstLight and ask your co-workers to support the nomination.

Interested? [Please reach out to our General Manager at andrew@firstlight.ie](mailto:andrew@firstlight.ie).

Company Donations

FirstLight welcomes donations from company trusts, foundations and charity committees. You can choose to fund a specific project (e.g. the development of further counselling centres nationally) or sponsor an event (e.g. Mile in Memory Walk). From small donations to large, we appreciate it all.

Gifts in Kind

We are always looking for products, services, and professional advice to enable us to continue to grow as a charity and allocate our resources efficiently. We can provide many opportunities for your generous support to be acknowledged and showcased to your customers and clients.

Staff Fundraising Events

Choose from the many ideas listed above and host an event in aid of FirstLight at your workplace. It is a great way to boost morale and improve internal communications. It's also a fantastic opportunity to get your customers, clients and suppliers involved.

Awareness Events

You may wish to tie your event in with other, larger events such as Baby Loss Awareness Week (October 9th – 15th) and Bereaved Children's Awareness week (13th – 17th November). For more information on these events, visit www.babyloss-awareness.org and www.childhoodbereavement.ie.

If you would like to discuss any of the above, please call our Head Office on 01-8732711 or email andrew@firstlight.ie



The Great Limerick Run, Sunday 30th April 2023

- The Great Limerick Run is back on Sunday, 30th April 2023, with a distance for everybody. It is the biggest mass participation sporting event outside Dublin. Choose from a marathon, a marathon relay, a half marathon or a 6-mile event. For further details: www.greatlimerickrun.com

Cork City Marathon, Sunday 4th June 2023

- The Cork City Marathon is back on Sunday, 4th June 2023 with a Marathon, Half Marathon, and 10k event. The course takes you through the beautiful and unique streetscapes of Cork City and its suburbs. For further details: www.corkcitymarathon.ie

VHI Women's Mini Marathon, Sunday 4th June 2023

- The VHI Women's Mini Marathon, an annual 10k charity road race, occurs each June bank holiday weekend in Dublin and is the largest women's event of its kind in the world. For further details: www.vhiwomensminimarathon.ie

Mile in Memory Walk 2022, Father's Day Sunday 18th June 2023

- FirstLight's annual Mile in Memory Remembrance Walk will take place on Father's Day Sunday, June 18th, nationwide. If you would like to host a walk in your area [please email andrew@firstlight.ie](mailto:andrew@firstlight.ie) or [phone 01-8732711](tel:01-8732711)

Baby Loss Awareness Week, 9th to 15th October 2023

- An annual collaboration between more than 60 charities across the UK and Ireland, Baby Loss Awareness Week aims to raise awareness about the key issues affecting those who have experienced a sudden loss of a child. For further details: www.babyloss-awareness.org

Global Wave of Light, Sunday, October 15th 2023, 7:00 pm

- Please join FirstLight for the Global Wave of Light Sunday, October 15th at 7 pm. Baby Loss Awareness Week finishes each year on October 15th with the Global Wave of Light'. October 15th is also International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day and is recognised across the world we would like to invite you to join with other families across the world and take part in the Global Wave of Light'. For further details: www.babyloss-awareness.org

Irish Life Dublin Marathon, Sunday, October 29th 2023

- The Irish Life Dublin Marathon is the fourth-largest marathon in Europe. More than 20,000 runners from over 60 countries will take to Dublin city centre course on October 29th 2023. The race takes in many of Dublin's historic landmarks and finishes in the heart of the city. For further details visit: www.irishlifedublinmarathon.ie

Bereaved Children's Awareness Week, 13th - 17th November 2023

- Bereaved Children's Awareness Week takes place each year in November to highlight bereaved children's needs and to provide a voice for them to be heard. For further details: www.childhoodbereavement.ie

Submit Referrals @ www.firstlight.ie

Carmichael Centre, 4 North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7

Phone: 01-8732711: Website: www.firstlight.ie: Charity No. CHY7716

If you have a newsletter query or a story for inclusion in the newsletter please email info@firstlight.ie