



## **ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE**

# **CANDLELIGHT FOUNDATION**

**FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

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# HISTORY/ BACKGROUND

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Children with special needs include those with physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional disabilities. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 16% of the world's population lives with some form of disability, and a significant portion are children.

These children often face numerous challenges, including limited access to education, healthcare, and social services. They might also encounter societal stigma and discrimination, which can hinder their development and integration into society.

Owing to this, the Candlelight Foundation for Children with Special Needs was conceived, with a deep-rooted commitment to bring about a profound and lasting impact in the lives of children grappling with special needs.

It was established in 2022 with the vision to create a society where every child, irrespective of their unique challenges or exceptionalities, is recognized, celebrated, and provided with the opportunities and resources they need to succeed.

However, it officially commenced operations in January 2024, with a dedicated team of staff and individuals who desire to create a world where exceptionalities are not seen as barriers, but as stepping-stones to success.

# WHO WE ARE



We are a non-profit organization committed to making a meaningful difference in the lives of children with special needs, as well as their parents and caregivers. We understand the unique challenges faced by these children and their families, and we are dedicated to providing comprehensive support for their overall well-being.

At the helm of the Candlelight Foundation is our esteemed Founder and Executive Director, Emmanuella Ojinnaka, a Board Certified Cognitive Specialist (IBCCES), a Registered Behavior Technician (BACB), and a Certified Naturopathy Health Practitioner.

With extensive professional and personal experience over the years, Emmanuella - together with her team of professionals - is uniquely prepared to understand and address the needs of children with special needs and their families.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is a world where every child, regardless of their exceptionalities, is recognized, celebrated, and provided with the opportunities and resources they need to succeed. We aspire to be a guiding light on their journey to fulfilling lives.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to empower and support children with special needs, especially children with Autism, ADHD, and Dyslexia, along with their parents and caregivers. We aim to create a nurturing environment that fosters the individual potential of these children, allowing them to shine and thrive.

# MEET THE TEAM

Teamwork has been instrumental to our successes. Our team is a tight-knit, brilliant, and talented group of individuals with a shared vision of delivering consistently great results and ensuring that the organization is a fun, inclusive, and challenging place to work.

We give special regard to our country manager, legal consultant, core operations team, therapists, support staff, and volunteers. Their hard work and dedication have been immense. They are a unique group of individuals who are united by the core values that guide all our operations within the organization.

Each of our employees and dozens of volunteers is amazing in their own right, but together they are the driving force of all our services and operations.



# OUR CORE INTERVENTIONS

## SPECIALIZED THERAPIES

### **Behavioural Therapy**

Our behavioral interventions are designed to help children improve their social skills and manage their behavior. Using evidence-based approaches like Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), we aim to encourage positive behavior and mitigate the challenges associated with Autism and ADHD.

### **Speech Therapy**

Our speech therapists work closely with children who have speech dyslexia, focusing on enhancing their speech and language skills. We offer personalized therapy sessions to improve articulation, fluency, and voice regulation, thus enabling better communication.

### **Feeding Therapy**

For children who struggle with eating and feeding, we offer specialized feeding therapy. Our therapists work with children to address issues related to food textures, tastes, and swallowing, aiming to develop a positive relationship with food and promote safe eating habits.

### **Cognitive Therapy**

We offer cognitive therapy to children with Autism and ADHD, recognizing the potential cognitive challenges they may face. Our therapists engage children in activities and exercises designed to stimulate and improve cognitive functions like attention, memory, and problem-solving skills.



## SPECIALIZED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

We offer individualized educational programs tailored specifically to meet each child's unique needs. These programs support children's learning and development, considering their strengths and areas that need improvement.

### **Parent & Caregiver Training**

In addition to supporting the children, we offer comprehensive training programs to equip parents and caregivers with the knowledge, skills, and resources they need to better provide support for their children. This is part of our #WeTSR project (We TRAIN, SUPPORT, and REWARD). The trainings include:

- Workshops on understanding the specific exceptionalities, such as Autism, ADHD, and Dyslexia.
- Strategies for effective communication and interaction with children with special needs.
- Guidance on creating a supportive and inclusive home environment.
- Emotional and psychological support of parents and caregivers, helping them navigate the unique challenges they may face

### **Supportive Resources & Services**

We provide a range of supportive resources and services to enhance the overall development of children with Autism, ADHD, and Speech Dyslexia.



# OUR IMPACT PROGRAMS



Noteworthy of our impact is the **#WeTSR** (*We Train, Support, Reward*) program - an ongoing initiative that provides free, high-quality therapeutic services and wholesome care to over 80 special needs children, as well as their parents and caregivers.

This program also involves:

- Providing educators, caregivers, and parents with hands-on training, educational webinars, and therapy workshops, equipping them with the knowledge and skills needed to identify, support, and accommodate neurodivergent children. To date, over 1,000 individuals have benefited from these capacity-building programs.
- Providing financial assistance, food supplies, educational materials, and scholarships to support beneficiary children and their families. So far, we have awarded various degrees of scholarships to over 100 beneficiaries and have directly and indirectly impacted over 3,000 children.
- Rewarding parents for their dedication as caregivers, ensuring that the weight of responsibility does not become overwhelming. A testament to this commitment was our 2024 **Relax and Recharge Program**, where about 70 parents and caregivers were given free spa sessions and financial support to acknowledge their resilience and tireless efforts.

Since inception till date, we have invested over N300 million in therapy services, dietary supplements, school fees, family support, field outreaches, orphanage visitations, awareness campaigns, and other essential initiatives. These projects have had a profound impact on our beneficiary children, their parents, and caregivers.

## **Spark The Flame**

This program raises awareness of low-spectrum neurodivergence in mainstream schools, equipping educators to identify early signs and apply intervention strategies. It assesses inclusivity, promotes peer sensitization, strengthens referral systems, and supports collaboration to create more inclusive learning environments. It provides schools with practical tools for early identification and intervention, fosters supportive classroom environments, reduces stigma through peer sensitization, and strengthens referral pathways to ensure improved educational and social outcomes for neurodivergent learners.

## **Autism Awareness Campaign**

This program drives nationwide advocacy and acceptance by mobilizing communities through awareness walks, outreaches, workshops, media engagement, and strategic partnerships, while building the capacity of caregivers, educators, healthcare professionals, and policymakers with practical strategies for early intervention, inclusive education, and long-term support for children with autism.

## **Candlelight Reach**

The Candlelight Reach Program aims to promote equitable access to therapy, caregiver education, and developmental support for children with special needs by strengthening caregivers' ability to engage in digital health and support services. It expands access to therapy, caregiver education, and developmental support by equipping caregivers with smartphones and tablets to engage in virtual services. It strengthens caregiving knowledge and confidence, promotes consistent participation in therapy, and advances inclusive care practices while addressing barriers faced by underserved families through sustainable, tech-driven support systems.

## **Building Bridges, Filling Plates**

This is an annual initiative designed to provide essential food support to families of children with special needs, easing the financial strain of balancing medical and daily living expenses. Its objectives are to support 100 families with basic food items to promote food security, ensure equitable and transparent distribution through a coordinated system, and foster a sense of inclusion and care within the special needs community. Beyond meeting nutritional needs, the program aimed to strengthen community bonds, demonstrate empathy, and reinforce the Foundation's commitment to supporting vulnerable households.

## **Monthly Webinars & Workshops**

Our webinars and workshops build the capacity of caregivers, educators, and stakeholders to support neurodivergent children through increased awareness, practical training, and inclusive education strategies. They promote understanding, equip participants with evidence-based approaches, encourage early intervention, and foster collaborative communities that enhance developmental and social outcomes.

# CLSN SUPPORT RESIDENCE

Candlelight Foundation Support Residence is located in the Ajah area of Eti-Osa, Lagos, around the Badore/Westwood Estate, and operates as a structured care environment rather than a conventional office space.

The residence serves as a safe and supportive living facility for children with special needs, providing consistent and highly professional hands-on care for those who require more intensive support. It caters to children who need full-time or semi-residential care, especially those whose families may not have the capacity to provide specialized daily attention, and those who benefit from a routine-driven and supervised environment.

Within the residence, children receive daily living support such as assistance with feeding, hygiene, and routines, alongside therapeutic care that may include behavioral, occupational, and speech support. The environment also incorporates structured learning activities and focuses on emotional and social development, while offering respite for families.

Overall, the residence is designed to create a stable and nurturing setting where children can thrive, using trained caregivers and intentional systems to improve developmental outcomes and well-being. It also plays a broader role in supporting the foundation's mission by complementing its awareness campaigns, therapy programs, and community outreach efforts.

# CONTACT

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## SOCIALS :



*CandlelightFoundationForChildrenWithSpecialNeeds*



*CandlelightFSN*



*candlelight\_specialneeds*

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