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**GENERATIONS UNITED ANNOUNCES EDUCATION INITIATIVE
FOR ADVOCATES OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND GRANDFAMILIES TO
STRENGTHEN SOCIAL SECURITY**

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) National nonprofit Generations United announced today a new initiative to strengthen Social Security by promoting greater understanding of how the program protects children, youth and grandfamilies.

Through an award from the National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI) as part of its “Innovative Projects to Strengthen Social Security for Vulnerable Populations” project, Generations United will engage advocates for children, youth, and grandfamilies through “The Stake of Children, Youth and Grandfamilies in Social Security,” an initiative to raise awareness of Social Security’s vital income protections for families of all generations.

Social Security pays more benefits to children than any other federal program and keeps 1.3 million children from sinking into poverty. As dependents of deceased, disabled or retired workers, 3.1 million children younger than 18 receive Social Security benefits. While not receiving benefits themselves, 3.4 million children younger than 18 live in households in which at least one relative receives Social Security benefits.

More than six million children live in families headed by grandparents or other relatives, and 2.4 million are being raised solely by their grandparents or other relatives. Even with Social Security benefits, 22 percent of grandparent-headed families are poor. Without these benefits, the ir poverty rate would approach 60 percent.

As legislators, policymakers, and opinion leaders discuss Social Security reforms, the program is often exclusively framed as a retirement program for older adults.

“Social Security provides vital protections for children and youth, as well as their parents and grandparents,” said Donna Butts, Executive Director of Generations United. “Any adjustments to Social Security must take into account the children, youth and families who need this program for their very security.”

“It is more important than ever – in light of job losses, declining asset values, and rising out-of-pocket medical costs – that groups most reliant on Social Security have their voices heard in policy debates about its future,” said Virginia Reno, Vice President for Income Security at NASI. “These educational efforts will prepare contributors to Social Security to better engage in the public debate on its reform.” This NASI project is funded by the Ford Foundation.

As part of its outreach efforts, Generations United is conducting interviews with beneficiaries of the Social Security survivors benefits program, as well as others who

have relied on Social Security in challenging economic times. If you or someone you know would like to share their story, contact Carol Scott at cscott@gu.org.

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About Generations United: Formed in 1986, Generations United is the national membership organization focused solely on improving the lives of children, youth, and older people through intergenerational strategies, programs, and public policies. Representing more than 100 national, state, and local organizations and individuals representing more than 70 million Americans, Generations United serves as a resource for educating policymakers and the public about the economic, social, and personal imperatives of intergenerational cooperation. For more information, visit www.gu.org.

About The National Academy of Social Insurance: The National Academy of Social Insurance (NASI) is a non-profit, nonpartisan organization made up of the nation's leading experts on social insurance. Its mission is to promote understanding of how social insurance contributes to economic security and a vibrant economy. For more information, visit www.nasi.org.