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CHILDREN AND FAMILIES HAVE A STAKE IN SOCIAL SECURITY

New Generations United Fact Sheet

Illuminates Social Security's Intergenerational Benefits

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) As public concern about the national debt grows, lawmakers and policy experts are debating reforms to Social Security and other federal programs. Generations United, a national membership organization that works to improve the lives of children, youth and older adults through intergenerational partnerships and solutions, released a new Fact Sheet today highlighting Social Security's critical protections for children and families, and its importance to all generations.

"Social Security pays more benefits to children than any other federal program," said Generations United Executive Director Donna Butts. "It serves as an intergenerational safety net, protecting our country's most vulnerable children and families, yet Social Security and the benefits it provides are often seen as a retirement plan for older adults."

The Fact Sheet, titled "Children and Families Have a Stake in Social Security," includes the latest research on the children and families who benefit from Social Security and urges policymakers to weigh the impact of all proposed reforms on vulnerable groups.

Key findings about Social Security include:

- The survivors benefits program protects 98 percent of U.S. children in the event of the loss of a parent.
- 6.5 million American children receive assistance from Social Security's survivors benefits program.
- 3.1 million children younger than 18 receive Social Security benefits as dependents of deceased, disabled or retired workers.
- 3.4 million children younger than 18 live in households in which at least one relative receives Social Security benefits.
- Social Security keeps 1.3 million children from falling into poverty and supports more children than the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.

People of all ages have a stake in the outcome of debates about reforming Social Security. Generations United – which counts AARP, Zero To Three, The National Council on Aging and Children’s Defense Fund among its members – recommends strengthening, not weakening, this vital policy. As the dialogue about how to achieve long-term solvency for Social Security continues, policymakers must consider how changes will affect vulnerable children, people with disabilities, spouses of deceased workers, retirees – and families as a whole.

The full Fact Sheet is online at: <http://www.gu.org/socialsecurity.asp>.

For additional resources or to schedule an interview with an expert at Generations United, contact Carol Scott, Communications Coordinator, at (202) 777-0113 or cscott@gu.org.

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.

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