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## **VALIC LAUNCHES FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS**

*After School Seminar Based on Popular Children's Book Teaches Basic Personal Finance Skills*

HOUSTON, November 15, 2012 —VALIC, a leading retirement plan provider for K-12 schools and school districts, as well as for healthcare, higher education, government and other not-for-profit institutions, has launched an interactive after school program to educate children in grades 3-5 about basic personal finance skills, as well as encourage parents to continue fostering wise financial habits throughout their child's development. The pilot program launched today at Woodward Mill Elementary School, part of the Gwinnett County Public Schools in Georgia, and will continue in schools within Greater Atlanta over the next few weeks. Based on the response from parents and students and the success of the program, the classes will be offered in schools nationwide.

"The need for financial literacy in our schools is a highly discussed topic, particularly in light of the recent financial crisis," said Bruce Abrams, President and CEO of VALIC. "As a leading retirement plan provider in the K-12 market, VALIC understands the importance of good spending and saving habits and how they can contribute to financial security and peace of mind. We are excited for this new facet of our educational services and hope that we can make a difference in the educational community."

The program was designed around *The Cash in the Hat*, a Dr. Seuss-esque children's book written by acclaimed financial services author and educator Mitch Anthony that illustrates the benefits of saving and the unfortunate consequences of overspending. The 45 minute, high-energy class, which features music, videos and games, is taught at each school campus by a VALIC financial advisor. The curriculum covers essential financial decision making skills, including prioritizing purchases, deferring purchases until they can be made with cash, and being wise about credit decisions. Students and parents also cover the proper use of credit and the importance of saving and resisting impulse purchases. Following the class, each student receives a copy of *The Cash in the Hat* to take home, and the parents receive a Parent Guidebook helping them to continue the conversation with their kids.

"It is imperative to reach students at this crucial age before they form destructive habits regarding purchasing decisions, as well as involve their parents in their children's development of good financial habits," says Mitch Anthony. "I am thrilled that VALIC is addressing this need in our educational community and am honored to be involved in the development of this program."

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Mitch Anthony is a professional speaker and communications consultant, coaching financial advisors about improving relational and communications skills. He is the writer and host of *The Daily Dose*, a syndicated radio program broadcasted on 150 stations, and the author of several books, including 2 children's books on financial literacy and the breakthrough book, *The New Retirementality*. Mitch began his financial literacy advocacy in his time as a career counselor for at-risk teens when he realized that poor financial decisions were often a component leading to depression. He has since developed his *Life Skills* curriculum used in over 40,000 schools world-wide.

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For more than half a century, VALIC has served as a leading retirement plan provider for K-12 schools and school districts, as well as for healthcare, higher education, government and other not-for-profit institutions. As of June 30, 2012 VALIC has more than \$67 billion in total assets under management and manages plans for nearly 25,000 groups serving nearly 2 million plan participants. VALIC represents The Variable Annuity Life Insurance Company and its subsidiaries, VALIC Financial Advisors, Inc. and VALIC Retirement Services Company.