



**GUIDE**  
**TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM**  
**IN THE UNITED STATES**

BY

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## EXPOSING CHILDREN TO WORK ETHICS

From the book "The Yin and Yang of American Culture" pp. 82-90, Eun Y. Kim,

"One Saturday morning I went to a picnic at a big ranch outside Austin, Texas. When I wanted to ride a paddleboat in a little pond, two young attendants were eager to help my family and other customers. Impressed with their professionalism, I asked one what grade he was in. He told me that he was a high school freshman; in fact, most of the ranch staff were high school students, and the whole place ran very smoothly.

Young people in America begin learning the importance of work from an early age. They not only help around the house, but also take such paid jobs such as baby sitting, lawn mowing, house-cleaning, working at restaurants, or doing summer internships. Even in affluent families, children take part-time jobs for granted and do not complain about it; for example, a doctor's son may work at a hotel as a doorman, or an executive's daughter may be a cashier at a grocery store. It is common for high school students to work for pay during the summer, and many do community service without pay.

Many schools and communities have programs to expose young children to real-life experiences. In an elementary school in New York, children run kids' cafes through an entrepreneurial program. They conduct market research, set prices, and decide what items to feature on the menu. Young people with impressive computer skills are hired as contractors by computer shops to complete sophisticated programming assignments. Children are hired to serve as consultants to toy companies or video-game developers, and they are taken seriously for their ability to contribute to the business world...Through early work experiences, American youth learn the value of self-reliance, gain an understanding of people from different backgrounds, test their entrepreneurial talent, and even become rich...The U.S. Trust survey of the wealthiest 1 percent of Americans...found that on average they had their first jobs at age 10, typically delivering newspapers or baby-sitting. They started full time work at eighteen and became business owners at twenty-nine. Many of them did not do so out of necessity...they were encouraged early on to learn the value of hard work and independence."