



GUIDE
TO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM
IN THE UNITED STATES

BY

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ISSS | International
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VOLUNTEERISM

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

In the United States, grades are not the only factor in evaluating school applicants and job candidates. From Rhodes Scholar selections to college applications, excellence in other areas such as leadership, volunteer activities, sports and arts is equally important. In American schools, students are encouraged to do volunteer work. So much so that many schools have guidelines for how much time students are expected to spend serving in the community. Children learn the value of giving from an early age. A five-year-old boy who participates in a walk-a-thon to raise money for cancer research, a ten-year-old girl who sells cookies to raise funds for a local children's center, and elementary school students who work as docents at a local art museums are examples of young volunteers.

Volunteer activities is one way Americans feel a part of things and share the goal of serving and contributing to build their communities. From neighborhood watch programs to environmental issues, Americans do not wait for the government to initiate action: they take action to bring about the changes they desire.

As in so many other endeavors, in volunteer work there is no class distinction. People with different backgrounds work together harmoniously to support whatever cause inspires them. Therefore, Americans view volunteer work as a way to teach children and young adults values such as cooperation and teamwork, dedication and work ethics, equality and social justice, leadership, generosity and compassion for others.