

TO TUTOR OR NOT TO TUTOR

Talk about a loose-lose situation. As the parent of teenagers, I just can't win. For their future success. I think it is absolutely essential for them to get into a first-class university; a degree from such an institution is the only guaranteed "employment license" we have. To be admitted they must compete against all of the brightest youngsters in the country on the entrance exams. Although my kids work hard at school, their teachers can only spend a limited amount of time giving them individual attention-- the classes are simply too large. But wealthy families have a lot of surplus money to spend on private tutors to give their kids the extra instruction they need, thus giving the children of affluence an unfair advantage at test-taking time. So this is the bind I'm in either spend a great deal of money now on a private tutoring to keep my kids competitive on the test, even though I really can't afford it, or use the money on other equally vital matters (such as health, insurance, housing, my aged parents) and thus risk my children's future. What can I do?

Vocabularies:

essential-Something necessary or indispensable

guaranteed-Something that assures a particular outcome or condition

affluence-A plentiful supply of material goods; wealth

surplus- An amount or a quantity in excess of what is needed.

competitive-Liking competition or inclined to compete

vital- Necessary to the continuation of life; life-sustaining

DISCUSSION POINTS:

- 1) Do you think tutoring is one of Korea's most serious social problems?
- 2) Should the government allow all kinds of tutoring or ban them altogether.
- 3) Do you think spending money on tutoring is efficient? Do the results justify the costs?
- 4) Would you force your child into being tutored if you knew he wasn't keeping up in school?