

# my son's after-school job /2/ child labor rules

He could **still** make a fortune out of his cooking **skills** - but **not unless** an **enterprising** television **executive** is prepared to finance a new **series called** Comedy Cookery. He was **the first to admit**, however, that until his unusual talent **was spotted**, he **was unlikely to** make much money out of his bread.

He was still **in no way discouraged from looking for a job, though. Next, he set off** on a tour of all the local shops, **offering** his services as a **shelf-stacker, floor-mopper** or newspaper-delivery boy. I am not sure where he **gets it** from, this desperate **anxiety to be employed**. On my side of the family, at least, the work ethic **has not come up** for generations. But this boy **has always been** willing to help **around the house**. He **is constantly offering** to cook supper for his parents ("No, no, really, we're not hungry") and bringing us cups of tea and coffee that we politely **pretend to** drink and then secretly **pour** down the sink **once** he's **out of sight**.

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He also has a highly developed commercial sense. **Unlike** most children, he is **aware of** the price of everything, from a pound of butter to a bottle of Scotch. When he discovered that wine **was** much cheaper in Spain than **it** is here, he **insisted on spending** his pocket money **buying** three bottles **of it**. This was not because he wanted to drink it, but because he **simply** couldn't **pass up such a bargain**. He now **intends to** sell it **at a decent profit** - and I **get the feeling** I know who the first buyer will be.

**At any rate**, all **this clearly should be encouraged**. I **share** the boy's **joy** that comes from **finally having landed** a job. Child **labor** is an **excellent** idea for **both** parents and children. It gives the young **an interest** and gets them out of the house. **Moneywise**, it is a **relief** for the parents as well. And it **may very well turn out to be** the beginning of a successful career for the kid.

I **consider** it a great **achievement to have** two of my four sons **working for pay** - while both of them are still **at school**. If you **happen to** know of any jobs for a seven-year-old and a nine-year-old boy, **feel free to give me a call**.