

Dr ben carson



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Benjamin S. Carson is an internationally acclaimed neurosurgeon best known for leading a surgical team in a successful operation to separate Siamese twins. He is also recognized for his expertise in performing hemispherectomies, where half the brain is removed to stop seizures. He is the director of pediatric neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins University Hospital as well as assistant professor of neurosurgery, oncology, and pediatrics at the School of Medicine.

Born on September 18, 1951, Benjamin Solomon Carson came from a poor family in Detroit. He was the second son of Robert Solomon Carson, a Baptist minister, and Sonya Copeland Carson. His father was twenty-eight when he married, but his mother was only thirteen; she married in order to escape a difficult home situation. When Carson was only eight years old and his brother, Curtis, was ten, their parents divorced and his mother took them to live with relatives in a Boston tenement, while she rented out their house in Detroit. Working as many as three domestic jobs at a time, she earned enough money to move her family back to Detroit two years later.

Both Carson and his brother had a difficult time in school, and their low grades fanned the racial prejudice against them. But their mother took charge of their education, even though she herself had not gone past the third grade. By limiting the television they could watch and insisting they both read two books a week and report on them, she helped them raise their grades considerably. Carson discovered he enjoyed learning, and by the time he reached junior high school he had risen from the bottom to the top of his class.

But even then he continued to face racial prejudice; in the eighth grade, he listened to a teacher scold his class for allowing him, a black student, to win an achievement award. These early difficulties left Carson with a violent temper as a young man. He was often in fights: "I would fly off the handle," he told People contributors Linda Kramer and Joe Treen. Once he almost killed a friend in an argument. Carson tried to stab him in the stomach with a knife, but luckily the boy was wearing a heavy belt buckle, which stopped the blade. Only fourteen at the time, Carson was shocked at what he had almost done, and he saw the direction his life could have taken. This experience drove him more deeply into his religion--he is still a Seventh-Day Adventist--and his faith in God helped him control his temper.

He studied hard and did so well during high school that he won a scholarship to Yale University. He received his bachelor's degree from Yale in 1973. He had always dreamed of becoming a doctor and was very interested in psychiatry, but once in medical school at the University of Michigan, he realized he was good with his hands and set his sights on neurosurgery. After completing medical school in 1977, he was one of the few graduates and the first black accepted into the residency program at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. In 1983 because of a shortage of neurosurgeons in Australia, Carson was offered a chief neurosurgical residency at Queen Elizabeth II Medical Center in Perth, where he gained a great deal of operating experience. He returned to Johns Hopkins in 1984, and after a year he was promoted to director of pediatric neurosurgery, becoming one of the youngest doctors in the country to head such a division.