

Young Theodore

Theodore Roosevelt, America's twenty-sixth president, was shy as a child. As an adult he became a powerful force in U.S. politics. Theodore was the second of four children born to Theodore and Martha Bulloch Roosevelt in New York City, on October 27, 1858. The Roosevelt family arrived in America from Holland in the 1600s. By the mid-1900s, the Roosevelts were among the richest families in New York. Theodore's grandfather and father became millionaires in the real estate business and as merchants of plate glass, which was used for storefronts.



Theodore had a happy childhood, but he suffered from asthma, a lung condition that can make breathing hard. The asthma made him weak and sickly. Theodore's father told his son that he had a good mind, but he also needed to build a strong body. Theodore took boxing lessons, and his father built a gym in the family's New York City home where Theodore lifted weights and hit punching bags.

