

Pass It On®...

The Big Brother Behind Adam Sandler.

All of us start somewhere. For Adam Sandler, the confidence to stand up in front of an audience came from years of sharing a bedroom, and a life, with his older brother.

The best material for a comedian starts at home. Funny observations of life and relationships are often the comic's way of coping with stress or nervousness. Insecurities and vulnerabilities disappear when you can make somebody laugh. All that's needed is an audience.

As a boy, Adam Sandler shared a bedroom with his older brother. That's where the schtick began. It was there that he gained confidence.

"My older brother was always nice to me. He would tell me I'm funny all the time and that I was great on the guitar and that I could sing as good as Steven Tyler," Adam Sandler said in his acceptance speech for the 2023 Mark Twain Prize for American Humor at the Kennedy Center. "When it came time to pick my college major, my brother was the one who said I should be an actor. 'You're as funny as Rodney Dangerfield and Eddie Murphy.' I never thought of that, but he just made me feel like I was. He's the one who brought me to Boston when I was 17 years old. I was a senior in high school, and he brought me to do stand-up comedy at Stitches Comedy Club. I went up there and I was terrible. I don't even know what I said. I was like in a fog, I was just babbling. I remember one guy's screaming out 'He still has a retainer!' On the way home my brother made me feel like I had the best set of any comedian that night. 'They loved you.'"

Sandler's confidence began to grow. He showed up at more amateur nights. He brought his guitar to help focus his nervousness and he sang those iconic silly songs. And people loved it. When this goofy boy in a man's body who made us all laugh at our own imperfections and foibles was discovered by the producers of Saturday Night Live, he jumped in with both feet, writing and acting in skits, always treating others the way his brother treated him: collaborative, encouraging, and above all else, kind.

"My parents did everything they could to give me crazy confidence," Sandler says. That confidence

led him to his own style of funny. He created and starred in quirky movies like "Billy Madison," "The Wedding Singer," "Happy Gilmore" and "The Waterboy." Through it all, he maintained his kindness and respect for others. His reputation is one of collaboration, not ego. He makes friends for life and is famous for delivering elaborate gifts to co-actors.

Sandler has been in 27 films, most of which he helped write and create, and most of which make us laugh. But perhaps even more impressive are his dramatic roles, like switching from a loveable comedy role in "50 First Dates" to the deeply flawed yet charismatic New York City jeweler who is spiraling out of control in "Uncut Gems."

Doing comedy relies on finding something inside yourself that can be observed and expressed in a funny way. Drama requires stepping outside yourself, even becoming the opposite of who you are. It's this range that makes Sandler so impressive. To reach that acclaim and still be the nice guy on set is wonderful to see. It all began with an older brother who believed in him.

Confidence... [PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

The Foundation for a Better Life® promotes positive values to live by and pass along to others.

Copyright © 2026 | The Foundation for a Better Life®
All rights reserved. | www.passiton.com

Available under a Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 License (international):
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>