

Meet Barack Obama's Family

Barack Obama is married to Michelle Robinson Obama. Michelle is a lawyer who grew up on Chicago's South Side. Her father worked for the city water plant, and her mother was a secretary for a department store. Michelle earned a college degree from Princeton University and a law degree from Harvard Law School. Barack and Michelle met while she was working for a Chicago law firm where he was hired as a summer associate.

Michelle later held positions in Chicago's city government and then became the director of an organization that



encouraged young people to become involved in social issues. She developed a center at the University of Chicago that provides students with opportunities for leadership and community service. Since 2002, she has held positions at the University of Chicago Hospitals and led programs that foster a strong relationship with the community.

The Obamas have two daughters, Malia, 10, and Sasha, 7. They live in Chicago.

Meet Joe Biden Democratic Candidate for Vice President

Joe Biden has been a U.S. senator since 1972. He is an expert on foreign policy and an important voice on issues ranging from terrorism and crime to women's rights, drug

policy, and help for working families. Joe Biden and Jill Jacobs Biden, who married in 1977, have three children and five grandchildren.



Meet Barack Obama

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Democratic Candidate for President

Barack Obama was born in 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii, to a mother from Kansas and a father from Kenya, East Africa. His parents met as students while attending the University of Hawaii, separating when Barack was two and divorcing when he was four.

Barack's mother later married an Indonesian man. When Barack was six, the family moved to Indonesia, where his half-sister was born. At age ten, Barack moved back to Honolulu, where he received a better education. He lived with his grandparents until he graduated from high school in 1979.

Barack went to college in Los Angeles for two years before



moving to New York City to attend Columbia University. He studied political science, focusing on international relations. Two years after earning a college degree in 1983, he became the director of an organization in Chicago that helped people in poor neighborhoods. This work fed his passion for helping to create opportunities for poor Americans. Yet over time he concluded that becoming involved in politics and changing laws were more

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effective ways to better the lives of the people he sought to help.

Barack entered Harvard Law School in 1988. He earned a law degree in 1991, graduating with honors. At Harvard, Barack became the first African American president of the Harvard Law Review, a student organization that publishes a highly respected law journal.

Following graduation, he moved to Chicago, where he met and later married Michelle Robinson. Barack practiced as a civil rights lawyer and taught at the University of Chicago's Law

School. In 1996, he was elected to represent Chicago's South Side in the Illinois State Senate, and he served for six years.

In 2004, Barack was elected to the United States Senate by a landslide. After he spoke at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, he became known as an inspiring leader within the Democratic Party.

Senator Obama launched his presidential campaign in early 2007. In August 2008, he made history as the first African American in U.S. history to become the presidential candidate of a major political party.

Do You Know?

Before attending law school, Obama was the director of a Chicago organization that set up a job-training program for poor African Americans who lost their jobs when steel plants closed. The organization also started a tutoring program for young people in poor neighborhoods who wanted to attend college.



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What does Barack Obama mean by these words?

"If the people cannot trust their government to do the job for which it exists—to protect them and to promote their common welfare—all else is lost."



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✓ On Education

Obama believes in preschool education to prepare children for kindergarten. He supports expanding math and science education and after-school and summer programs. He favors encouraging more people to become teachers, making sure teachers receive a solid education, and helping them succeed so they continue to teach for many years. He supports a tax credit to make college affordable for every American.

✓ On Health Care

Obama believes that all Americans should have health insurance and favors mandatory health-care coverage for all children. He supports a new national plan, available to and affordable for all,

similar to the one currently available to members of Congress. He supports improving the quality of medical care that Americans receive, as well as researching new treatments and fighting AIDS.

✓ On the War in Iraq

Obama has been opposed to the war in Iraq from the start. He does not believe that the war can be won or that it is making the world any safer. He favors the withdrawal of U.S. troops in phases and bringing in the United Nations to help resolve Iraq's internal conflict. Obama also believes that the war in Iraq prevents the U.S. military from focusing on Afghanistan and stopping the forces responsible for the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

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