



Coding prodigy swapping GCSEs for Silicon Valley



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As a toddler, Toby Brown first began tinkering with padlocks. Then he started kitting his house out with alarms made out of bits of paper and wires. By the time he was in primary school, he had coded timetable games and was selling them back to his teachers in Twickenham, west London. The schoolboy later joined Hack Club, a global hackers' community for teenagers, where he became their youngest employee at age 13.

Now at 16, Toby has secured a \$1m deal with Silicon Valley investors for an AI platform he has built, Beem. Toby has postponed taking his GCSEs and instead is jetting off to build up his business in sunny California.

He said: "This amount of money is going to be so helpful. I actually got the phone call on my birthday, so it was a great birthday gift. My friends were quite shocked by it. I made the mistake of not telling them early enough, and it got to the last week of school, and the news came out, and suddenly everyone was like, 'Ah, Toby, can I have a tenner?'"

"It was such a massive part of life. I'd wake up early in the morning to work on it, and I'd come home from school and start coding, it was all I was doing, all I was working on, and it was hard sometimes not being able to tell everyone what I was up to. As for what Beem actually does, Toby explains: "It's essentially a computer that brings files to you; it can bring your calendar to you, and it's scaleable to do anything, really."

"An example I really like is if you imagine you're going on holiday and you're going with your family, you've booked an Airbnb and it [Beem] realises you've not booked your flights yet. Beem knows you; it knows your price, and it knows what airline you like to fly with."