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# Adolescents, Athletes & Role Models

A research paper written at

Lynn University

and submitted to

Lynn University School Of Graduate Studies

in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
degree of

Master Of Professional Studies in Sports Administration

by

Mark A. McNerney

November 14, 1999

Lynn University Library
3601 North Military Trail
Boca Raton, FL 33431

Approved by
Dr. Richard A. Young, Phd.
November 1, 1999



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**Abstract**:

Athletes as Role Models for Adolescents:

This study examines the reasons adolescents turn to athletes as role models. It is clear that children need role models in their life but why not choose a parent, teacher or coach. Why not a figurehead who plays a role in the child's life, who has direct contact with the child. Is it because they want to one day become professional athletes themselves, is it the amount of money they make or is it because it is a desirable profession? These are all contributing factors to why children look up to athletes. Although some athletes say they are not role models, the fact is they are. It is up to the athlete to choose to be a good role model or a bad role model.

This study was broken down into two sections. Surveys were the first section of the study. The survey's aim was to discover the mindset of the children toward athletes. Observations were the second section of the study. These observations studied at influences in the children's behavior. The surveys and observations took place in the Pompano Beach area and were done to explore the premise that children mimic athletes in hopes to be like them on the playing surface.

The study expected to reveal, to a greater extent, how the children mimicked the athlete, from posing after shots, taunting, to arguing with coaches and officials. What was revealed in this study through the surveys, was that children do look to athletes as role models. However, as far as observing the children, the only discernible imitation that took place by these young children was posing after shooting a basketball or hitting golf balls; not taunting or arguing. The children seemed to play sports for the pure enjoyment of the game, not for the business of the sport.

# Chapter One

**Statement of Problem:**

Children need role models, someone they can look up to or aspire to be like, who gives them direction. The term role model can be defined as someone a person admires and tries to emulate or imitate. Role models inspire. Role models are not to be confused with mentors who offer advice. To be considered a role model one must only be looked up to.[1] A role model is an individual who is perceived as exemplary or worthy of imitation and does not require personal contact.[2] They can be either living or dead. They can be teachers, parents, siblings, neighbors or entertainers.[3] Often young children choose entertainers to be role models, with many selecting athletes. Choosing an athlete per se is not a bad thing; however, choosing the right athlete creates potential problems.

An athlete like Hall of Famer Joe Morgan, who played baseball in the 1970's and 1980's, can be a positive role model. On the field Joe Morgan played by the rules and off the field he has lived his life clean of scandal.

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[1] Arenofsky, Janice. (1998). What mentors & role models can do for you. Career World. p. 7.

[2] Yancey, Antonette K. (1998). Building positive self-image in adolescents in foster care: The use of role models in an interactive group approach. Adolescence. p. 255.

[3] Chuansheng, Ellen Greenberger. (1998). The role of "very important" non-parental adults development. Journal of Youth and Adolescence. p. 321.

Morgan has made a smooth transition into life outside of sports. On the other hand there are players like Lawrence Taylor who have been negative role models. Lawrence Taylor, "LT", played hard and by the rules on the field, but his life off the field has been fouled with poor judgement. He has been arrested for drug use and sent to rehabilitation programs only to digress back to a life of drugs. With all of these problems he has recently been selected to the NFL Hall of Fame where he will forever be immortalized. The Hall of Fame is a place where thousands and thousands of children visit and see the games' greats. They may ask their father what kind of man was Lawrence Taylor? How is the father to answer?

Another disappointing image is that "LT" went around to schools talking to children about the dangers of drug use. These children look up to people like Lawrence Taylor for guidance in their life and are left disappointed after seeing reports of illegal conduct by the athletes. The children become confused.

This study examined the affects athletes have on today's youths between the ages of 8 and 12 years of age along with affects such as whether the children dress like the athletes or wear their favorite player's team apparel.

Do young children emulate the player by talking or acting like him or her and do they imitate or mimic the athlete? Children are very impressionable and will often imitate what they see.

Data generated through qualitative analysis using observations and quantitative analysis using surveys could provide substantial evidence that athletes are indeed role models to children between the ages of 8 and 12. In a study conducted by Judith Irvin (1996), developmental tasks of early adolescence and how adult awareness can reduce at risk behavior was examined. Irvin's premise was that young adolescent's positive experiences in the developmental stages of their life, along with adult interaction might reduce the tendency for children to engage in at risk behavior. Irvin defines at risk behavior to be alcohol and drug abuse and early sexual experiences beginning during early teenage years. The study examined the physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth and development of 10 to 14 years olds. At this age children tend to exhibit obnoxious behavior.[4] This behavior may derive from their peers, people they see on television or from just trying to express themselves. The way adults react to the obnoxious behavior can trigger a smooth or rocky transition into adulthood. These at risk behaviors can diminish with a positive role model, a person the children can look up to for support and understanding.

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[4] Irvin, Judith L. (1996). Developmental task of early adolescence: How adult awareness can reduce at risk behavior. The Clearing House. p. 225.

These young children are at the age where they form ideas of being self-respected and career minded.[5] Young adolescents acquire a value system with or without help of parents and teachers; so this is a critical age to steer the children down the right path and provide a positive role model image for them to follow. However, inevitably it is the choice of the child which path to follow.

The significance of this study is to measure the influence athletes as role models have on these children and to understand why they choose athletes as their inspiration. The purpose of selecting the sample, 8-12 year olds, is children any younger may not comprehend the significance of a role model. Children of middle school age are under a great deal of peer pressure and they are at the point in their lives where they are becoming rebellious towards their parents and other adult figures so they were excluded. High school students and older subjects were considered too old to determine why children select athletes as role models and by then they may have outgrown the need to look up to athletes. They begin to look toward parents and teachers as role models. However, these high school students are a good source of information since many of them may have chosen an athlete as a role model when they were younger.

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[5] Ibid., p. 242.

Chapter Two

**Literature Review:**

Researchers such as Yancy, Wright and Arenofsky (1998) agree that athletes have become role models but believe they should not be. Bill Reynolds, a columnist for the Providence Journal-Bulletin, believes athletes should be appreciated for their talents, performances and nothing more.[6] Parents, teachers, coaches and others who have a direct influence on the child's life should be the role models. These people are the ones who exemplify qualities like fairness, sportsmanship, honesty and determination that are found in everyday life. These adult figures have the capability to take these qualities and be the role model for young children, to help mold them into adulthood. These are the people who actually are in the children's lives, not the athletes who fill a fantasy or illusion.

So why do children look up to these athletes? Athletes are role models for the simple reason that children look up to them. They have become what society has deemed important; they are young, strong and very rich not to mention their exposure on all media outlets with the main outlet being television.[7]

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[6] Reynolds, Bill. "Role models fill fantasy needs". The Providence Journal-Bulletin. 13 Jan, 1998. p. 1D.

[7] Ibid., p. 1D.

According to Sheila Globus, author of Athletes as Role Models, television exposure, the absurd salary athletes make and that they are highly visible or image oriented attracts children to view athletes as role models.[8] Children are at an impressionable age where they want to be one of the guys or girls. According to Steven Sylven Jr. children see athletes' every move. From kicking the cameras to throwing towels at their coaches, they will imitate that action. Why? Because they see the athletes get away with it and they think it is cool.[9]

If a commercial theme is " I want to be like Mike" children are going to mimic the notion and act like Michael Jordan. That is not necessarily a bad thing as long as the children are aware of reality and do not get caught up in their fantasy. Remember that athletes are viewed more by myth than by the actual person. For example, there are more stories about Babe Ruth that have never been founded on fact but are accepted as truth because it makes for a great story and forever immortalizes "the Babe".

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[8] Globus, Sheila. Athletes as role models. Current Health 2. February 1998 p. 25.

[9] Sylven, Steven Jr. "Sportsmanship,adults wheter they realize it or not, athletes are role models". The Providence Journal-Bulletin. 4 Mar, 1997. 4D.

Scott Wright also agrees role models are important in the lives of children. He goes on to say those role models can have a strong impact on the behavior children learn as well as the choices they make in their early years.[10] Arenofsky believes that everyone benefits from having a role model. Many people choose their role model because of some shared interest.[11]

According to Cheryl Miller, Olympic Gold Medallist and coach of the Women's Basketball Associations Phoenix Mercury (WNBA), believes when an athlete reaches a certain level of visibility, they are a role model whether they want to be one or not. They can be a role model for how to be or a role model for how not to be.[12]

Antonette Yancey (1998) believes role models are necessary for children especially in promoting self-image in ethnic youths. In Yancy's study she looked at children in foster care. She noted that self-image enhancement approaches through the use of role models have been successfully used with at risk African American, Asian American and Latino children. Yancy used a pilot program in New York City to test her hypothesis.

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[10] Wright, Scott M. (1998). "Attributes of excellent attending physician role models". The New England Journal of Medicine. p. 1987.

[11] Arenofsky. p. 7.

12 Anonomous. "Cheryl Miller on athletes and responsibility". Current Health 2. Feb. 1998. p. 27.

The program she tested was called PRIDE. Pride is an acronym for Personal and Racial/Ethnic Identity Development and Enhancement. The program was designed for foster care children because they need parental figures to help promote a positive self-image. Yancey stated that children need to have a role model of the same ethnicity and gender in order to provide positive guidance because the children will have someone that can relate to them.

The role models were drawn from a pool of volunteers made up of African Americans, Asian Americans and Latinos, professionals as well as trades people. These role models spent 3-4 hours of their time every 4-6 weeks. Although it was a pilot program in the early stages it seems to have a great impact on the children. It created excitement in the children's demeanor and gave something positive for them to look forward to in the future.[13] Yancey's study created interaction between the professionals and the children. This interaction provided personal contact and had a positive affect on the children. It gave the children someone to talk to and ask for advice. It gave them inspiration.

Another study focused on forces that contribute to children's learning and development from ages 3 to 10 years old.

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[13] Yancey, p. 259.

Between the ages of 3 and 10 children make great leaps in their intellectual prowess, social skills and ability to manage the emotional ups and downs that are a part of every day life.[14] A group of twenty-three members of the Carnegie Task Force made up of business and political leaders, scientists, educators, researchers and practitioners were selected to head the panel for the study. Formal and informal discussions were used with parents, teachers, administrators and community leaders to determine such forces. The findings in the study were that all children are born ready and willing to learn. However, for most children long-term success of their learning and development depends to a great extent on what happens to them in the years 3- 10. Many of the children are not achieving as much or as well as they could in or out of school. Approximately one third of American children today enter kindergarten already in need of additional support to keep up with their peers.[15] Between the ages of 3-10 is the time to begin making significant progress at improving the education of every child. Schools by themselves can not accomplish these goals. This is where role models can positively influence young adolescents by encouraging the youngsters, guiding them and supporting the children's efforts.

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[14] Anonymous. (1996). "Primary needs of primary students". Education Digest. p. 32.

[15] Ibid., p. 30.

The children need support of family, community, and media because this is where children learn a great deal. They often act out what they see on television, at home or in public. The task force recommended promoting children's learning in the family and community. The community should expand and improve their in-and-out of school programs so their activities are linked to children's learning. Their proactive approach and guidance of a role model creates the foundation for development into adulthood. Studies like this makes it self evident that children often learn and act upon what they see.

Sheila Globus has some insight as to what athletes teach children. She states that athletes teach more than how to swing a bat and how to catch a ball. They teach that success in life takes dedication, confidence and hard work. Globus goes on to say that because an athlete has a perfect swing it does not mean they make a perfect parent, friend or spokesman. They make mistakes and when they make mistakes it leaves people disappointed.[16] An example of this is Mickey Mantle. He was an idol to many young children in his playing days with the New York Yankees. However, alcohol consumed his life and Mantle knew this. He would tell young children to "play like me but do not be like me".

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[16] Globus. p. 25.

A point that needs to be addressed here is that there is a major difference between athletes as role models and those individuals closer to the children who are role models such as parents, teachers, and coaches. Athletes tend to become role models for their athletic ability. They have limited or no direct contact with the child but fill a fantasy or illusion of a role model. On the other hand those who have direct contact with children have a great deal of influence on the child and can impact the development of the child.

Chapter Three

## Methodology

*Measurements:*

The independent variable in this study was the athletes' influence as role models and the dependent variable was the impact the athletes have on children, whether it is positive or negative. Positive and negative impacts were measured by the actions of the children on the playgrounds and during sporting events. Observations of children were conducted to see if they expressed sportsmanship toward their teammates and opponents, if they listen to their coaches and officials and whether they were playing by the rules. Negative impacts were measured by observing indifferent behavior among the children. Do these children display poor sportsmanship, ignore the coaches and officials, and play selfish where they have to be the center of the team and not worried about their teammates. The premise of this research was that athletes influence the behavior of children. Obviously athletes are not the only influences on adolescents. Other influences that should not be overlooked include the influences of parents, teachers, coaches, and the children's own peers. These individuals have direct interaction with the adolescents and have a great deal to do with the molding of children. Where as the athlete, for the most part, has no direct interaction with adolescents but through the power of the media do have a great deal of influence on children.

According to the PIAA, Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association, sportsmanship can be defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others, while abiding by the rules of a contest, accepting winning and losing graciously.[17]

It has been agreed upon that children have role models but the question arises why children choose athletes as their role models. This exploratory study examined why children are drawn to athletes. It has shown athletes' influence on the children through behavioral actions such as the way they walk and talk, their attitudes and the way they act and treat other children as well as adults. This study also looked into why the children wish to be like their role model. Do they want to be sports stars; if so why? Could it be for the money, fame, or do the children want to become sports stars so they can help under privileged children. These questions were answered through surveys and observations of the children.

*Data Collection:*

To measure the question of why athletes are role models, surveys were conducted through a cooperative effort between parents and guardians of the young children (exhibit 1).

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[17] PIAA. (1999). What is sportsmanship? Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association. p. 1.

The surveys were administered at local elementary schools in the greater Pompano Beach area and at Pine Tree Day Camp in Boca Raton.

Observations were also conducted (exhibit 2). The observations transpired on playgrounds and in parks in the greater Pompano Beach area. Observation provided a look into the appearance of the child as well as the actions of the child. These observations included the way the subjects wore their clothing. Such as; was the clothing baggy or tucked in, the type of garments worn, whether they wore their favorite player's jersey or team's shirt, as well as the way they acted on the playing surface. The observations also provided answers about children mimicking athlete's demeanors on the playground or field such as; copying a batting stance of a baseball player, posing after shooting a basket, or taunting opponents during the game.

*Analysis:*

This study expected to find a correlation between the influence of athletes as role models and the behavior in children and the way they dress. Children who emulate athletes will wear the athletic apparel, and brands that their sports hero wears and endorses. They will also emulate the player's action and demeanor on the playing surface in both positive and negative ways.

In a negative way the children will be outspoken in such a way they taunt other players and pose after a play to show some sort of gamesmanship. On the other hand athletes will positively influence the children and it will be evident in the way the adolescents demonstrate good sportsmanship by respecting their teammates, coaches and officials as seen from their favorite athlete on the playing surface as children often imitate what they see. They will win and lose with dignity and play the games with enthusiasm and enjoyment as many of their athletic role models do.

# Chapter Four

## Results:

*Surveys:*

The surveys were conducted with the help of students from Pine Crest in Ft. Lauderdale and the Pine Tree Day Camp held at Lynn University in Boca Raton. Over 110 surveys were handed out with a disappointing return of 46 %. Part of the reason for such a poor return was, after the surveys were administered at elementary schools it was revealed that I needed approval of the Broward County School Board. I tried repeatedly to contact the School Board by leaving messages but I never received any response from them. Possibly with the school term concluding for summer break the school board was too busy to return my calls.

However, with these road blocks, I was able to receive fifty responses, 8% being age 8, 6% were 9 years old, 22% were 10 Years old, 36% were 11 years old, 28% were 12 years old.

Out of the fifty surveyed, 46% were male and 54% female. The male's favorite athlete was Michael Jordan while the female's favorite athlete was Mia Hamm. The survey also showed the favorite sports of the athletes chosen was soccer at 44% and basketball at 26%. A reason for such a concentration of these sports may be explained because of the peak of the NBA playoffs and the World Cup Soccer Tournament.

These sports were receiving the greatest concentration of media attention. Perhaps in the height of football season the children would have chosen a football player as their favorite athlete.

Of the children surveyed, 70% selected their favorite athlete due to the player's athletic ability. A few other interesting observations on why they chose their favorite athlete was the athlete's desire to achieve their goals, and they are positive role models to these young children. One child, 13 years of age, selected Dennis Rodman as his favorite athlete because of his originality. Twenty-seven out of the fifty respondents said that they also had memorabilia of their favorite player or that player's team ranging from trading cards to jerseys. In an attempt to discover if children had a favorite athlete they once looked up to but have since selected a new favorite athlete, the question was posed and 42% indeed have selected a new athlete. The overwhelming reason was that player being traded or leaving due to free agency leaving the respondents feeling deserted. Two children said because of the player's use of drugs and the selfishness of the player has led them to selecting another favorite athlete. When asked if they consider athletes as role models, 70% said yes (exhibit 4). The main reasons for this choice was due to athletic ability and that they would like to be a professional player (exhibit 5). Interestingly, two children chose their mother as their role model and five selected their father.

In an attempt to discover how much exposure children have to sports and contact with stories about athletes I asked about the amount of television viewed by them. Most children, 58%, responded that they watch between 2 to 4 hours of television per day with 52% watching between 1-2 hours of sporting shows per day (exhibit 6). The most watched shows were cartoons, sports, comedies and music videos (exhibit 7).

After compiling the surveys of the adolescents and then sifting through their responses, certain evidence is brought to light. These children consider athletes as role models for several reasons including the player's athletic ability, the salaries they earn and the humanitarian qualities they possess.

*Observations:*

Observations were another area of interest in this study. I wanted to see if the children mocked their athletic super hero. Observation sessions lasted one-half hour per session with 65% taken place between 3-7 p.m. and 35% taken place between 9 a.m. and noon. There were ten separate sessions at five different locations around the greater Pompano Beach area where twenty-five subjects were observed.*

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* The five locations were Pompano Park, Cypress Park and Mullins Park in Coral Springs, Pompanoo Beach Municpal Golf Course, and Toski/Battersby Golf Center in Coconut Creek.

Based on my hypothesis that children select athletes as role models, emulating their demeanor I expected to see children imitating their favorite athlete by acting like them on the playing surface in a flamboyant and outspoken way. However, this was not the case. The subjects acted for the most part in the opposite way. They showed sportsmanship to their fellow competitors, teammates and coaches.

The activities that were observed were; baseball, basketball and golf. The baseball observations were conducted during organized practices. Basketball observations were conducted during pick-up games on the playground. The golf observations were conducted during practice sessions on the driving range. One of the criteria used to measure my premise was whether the children were wearing the apparel of athletes. Over half of the children were indeed wearing apparel from a professional or college team. An overwhelming constant in my observations was that children do wear athletic apparel of their favorite team's player.

Another measurement was the demeanor of the child. It was my premise that the children would act like the flamboyant athlete on the playgrounds of their respective sports. Much to my surprise the children were well mannered. They listened to their coaches and officials as well as respected their opponents.

A possible explanation to these findings may include; the type of discipline the children have received from their parents and teachers, the interaction they have between other children and adults, and the positive demeanor they see in the athletes, their role models. After filtering through the collected data, I believe it is a combination of all of these factors. Children learn from adults as well as other children and will often imitate what they see.

Although an overwhelming majority of the observations revealed good sportsmanship, there was one incident where one of the children used trash talking and profanity in a pick-up basketball game in an attempt to unsettle his opponents.

Emulation of professional athletes was another criteria of this study. I wanted to see if the children acted like their favorite professional athlete. What I was using to gauge this criterion was whether the children copy the batting stance of the professional athlete? Do the children field a ball like the professional athlete? For example, catching the ball one handed, the trademark "snap catch" of a fly ball like Ricky Henderson. Do the children pose after shooting the basketball or hitting the golf ball? These were some of the things I was looking for. After measuring this criterion I did receive a positive conclusion of my initial assumption.

Nearly half of the children in the recorded and unrecorded observations did emulate the professional athlete especially in golf and basketball by posing after shooting a jump shot in basketball or after hitting a golf ball.

I did however, expect more baseball players to emulate the professionals through the various batting stances and by not running out every ball but that was not the case. Perhaps it can be explained that they have good coaching or parental influence that has built a foundation not to be flamboyant.

Research conducted by several authors including Judith L. Irvin and Thomas P. Hebert provides insight into the influence that adults have on young children. As mentioned previously in this study, Judith Irvin studied developmental tasks that take place in early adolescence and how awareness can reduce what she calls at risk behavior. Thomas Hebert conducted a study looking at factors that influence achievement and underachievement. Hebert concluded that achievers had a strong belief in oneself that was due to family support and the support of other adults. Underachievers did not believe strongly in themselves. They faced difficult family issues and had inconsistent family value systems.[18]

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18 Hebert, Thomas P. "Factors that influence achievement and underachievement." Journal for the Education for the Gifted. Summer 1998. p. 385.

# Chapter Five

## Conclusion:

Charles Barkley, a NBA basketball player, makes the claim that athletes are not role models for children. The truth is that they are, and in fact, impact children's lives. As shown in exhibit 4, a resounding 70% of the children surveyed stated that athletes are role models to them. Exhibit 5 points out that children look up to sport figures for several reasons. Some look up to athletes because they aspire to one day be a professional athlete. Others look up to athletes because they have great athletic talent, and still others because of their work ethic. For whatever reason, children look up to athletes as role models. To determine how much exposure children have to athletes, they were questioned on how much television they watch per day. Exhibit 6 reveals of the respondents, 58% recorded they watch between 2-4 hours per day. Further inquiry found that 52% spend at least 1-2 hours per day watching sporting shows. Exhibit 7 reveals the types of television programs the children watch. The most popular shows chosen by the surveyed children were comedies, sports and cartoons.

Observations were another area of study. These observations also revealed that children are exposed to their favorite athlete and subsequently dress in their favorite player's apparel.

It was also observed that children do what can be described as the television pose after shooting the basketball and hitting golf balls.

Of note in this study, the observed subjects, with only brief exceptions, were found to be respectful of their fellow competitors, coaches and officials which leads me to conclude that sportsmanship is alive and well among 8-12 year olds. However, where are these children learning sportsmanship? From athletes? From their coaches? From their parents?

Even though these children are at the influential whim of society, witnessing brawls in baseball and arguments with officials on television as a daily occurrence, these young adolescents have better sense than to carry those actions they see on television over into their lives. These children play with enthusiasm. They win and lose with grace and dignity. They play for the enjoyment of the game; not for the business of the sport.

Further research is needed to draw a more substantial conclusion about why young adolescents look to athletes as role models. As mentioned throughout the study, children do consider athletes as role models. Some choose athletes for their athletic ability, others because of the financial rewards of being an athlete and still others because of the humanitarianism displayed by athletes. More surveys are needed from a wider array of children in a greater geographical area.

By doing this it will give a more diverse pool of respondents. Along the same lines, more observations need to be conducted in a greater geographical area. Again this will provide a more diverse cross section of subjects. Also, following these children into their middle school years and into the high school years will inevitably aid in determining if athletes are still an integral part of the evolution into adulthood.

Exhibit 1

Survey Questions:

Subjects age:_____ Subjects sex: M/F

1. Who is your favorite athlete if any?

2. Why do you like him or her?

3. Do you have any clothing of him or her or of their team?

4. If you do have their clothing what items (hats, shirts, shorts, jackets, trading cards…)

5. Were there any athletes you used to like but don't like anymore?

6. If you chose someone in question 5 why don't you like them anymore?

7. Do you consider athletes as role models, someone you can look up to for guidance or someone you would like to grow up to be like?

8. If answered yes to question 7, why?

9. If you answered no in question 7 who do you look up to?

10. About how many hours of TV do you watch per day?

(a) less than 2 hours per day (b) 2-4 hours per day (c) 4-6 per day (d) more than 6 hours per day.

11. What kind of TV shows do you watch?

12. Of the TV shows you watch, how many hours per day do you watch sporting events?

Exhibit 2

Activity: Location: Date/Time:

Observation:

1. Behavior- are the children emulating athletes on the playgrounds or in the parks through their action (the way they walk, talk conduct themselves)
2. What types of apparel are the children wearing?

- shirts
- shoes
- hats
- shorts/ pants
- other items

3. What is the demeanor on the playground or field?

- taunting other players
- hot dogging/ show boating
- physicality of play

4. Are the children emulating the professional athlete's game?

- through batting stance
- fielding the baseball
- posing after shooting a basketball
- other observations

Exhibit 3

Parental Consent Form:

My name is Mark A. McNerney and I am a graduate student at Lynn University. I am conducting a research study for my thesis paper on the effect athletes as role models have on adolescents between the ages of 8 and 12 years old. I need students to help me with my research and approval from their parents or guardians. The student's identity will be anonymous. The survey questions that I will be asking pertain to who the child's favorite athlete is, if any and why they chose him or her. If you can please return this permission slip with the parents or guardian's signature I would be ever so grateful. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely;

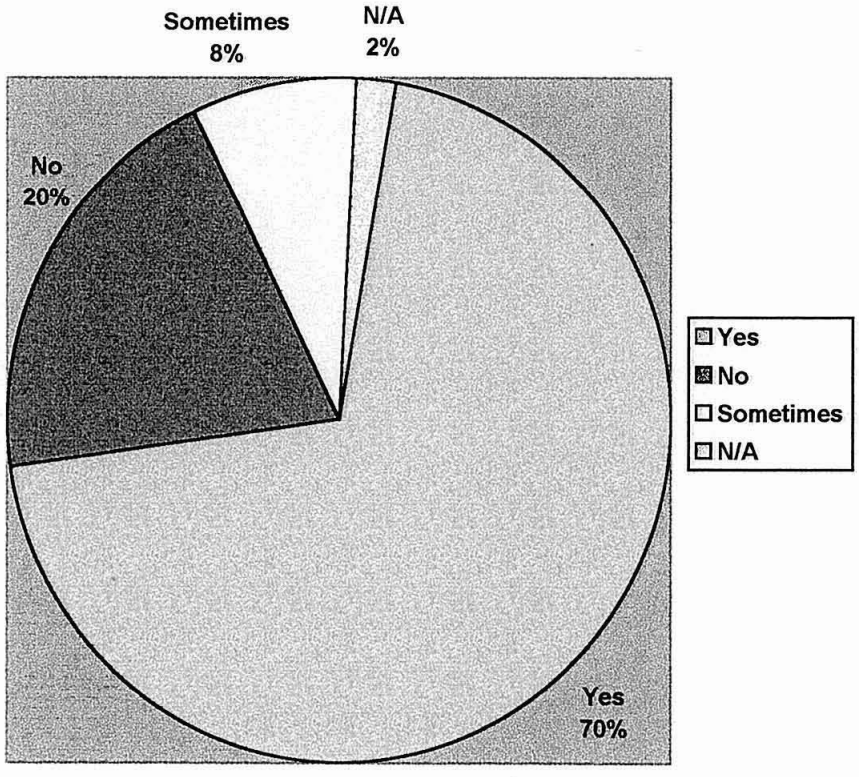
Mark A. McNerney

Yes, my son or daughter can participate in the survey.

Signature:_____

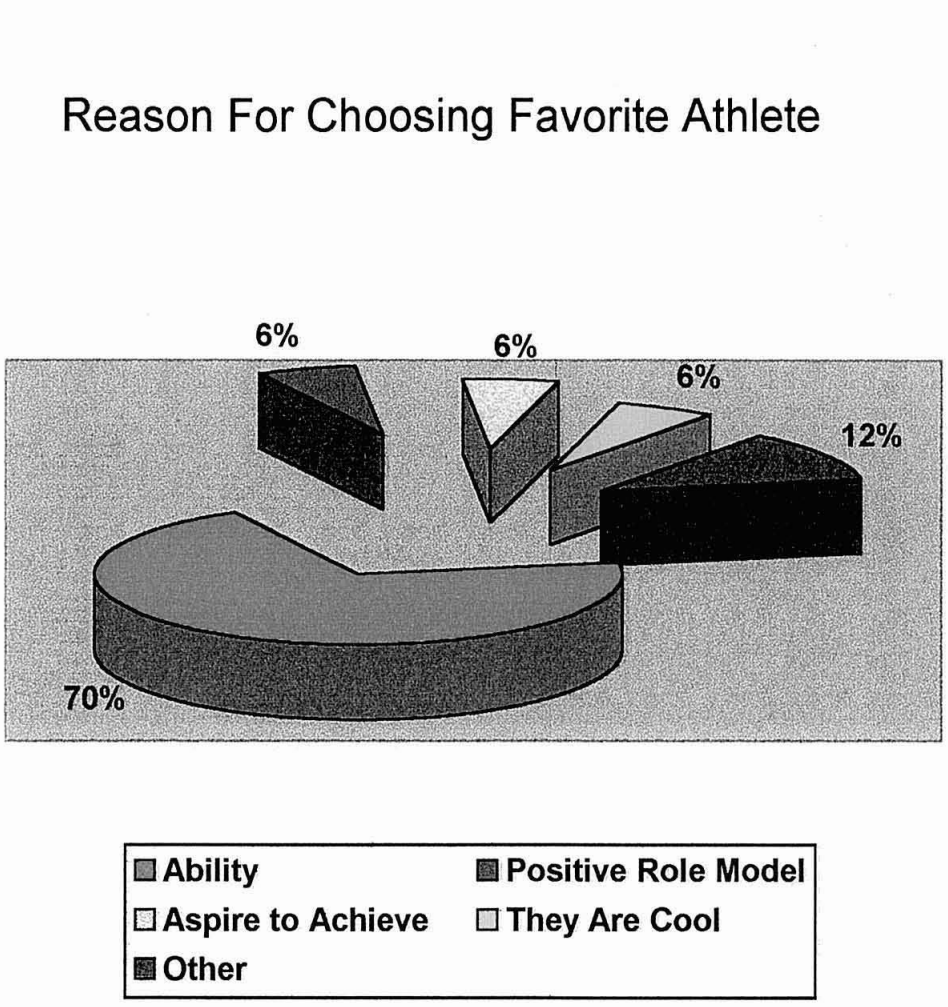
Exhibit 4

# Athletes as Role Models?



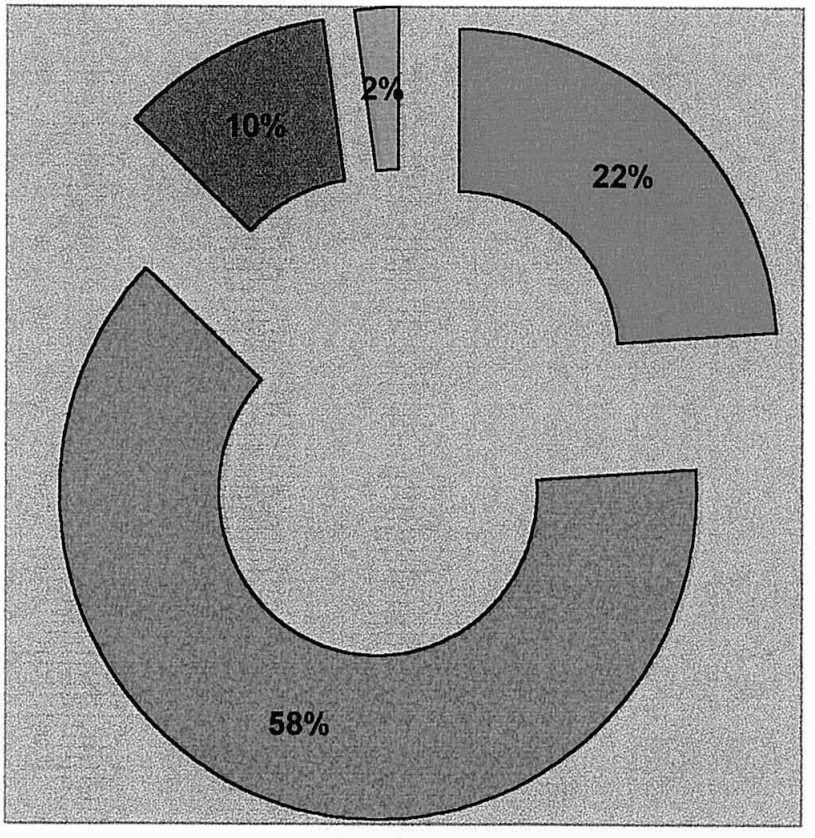

- These are the responses of the fifty children polled regarding if they consider athlete's role models.

Exhibit 5




- Respondents' answers for ~~the~~ reasons for choosing their favorite athlete.

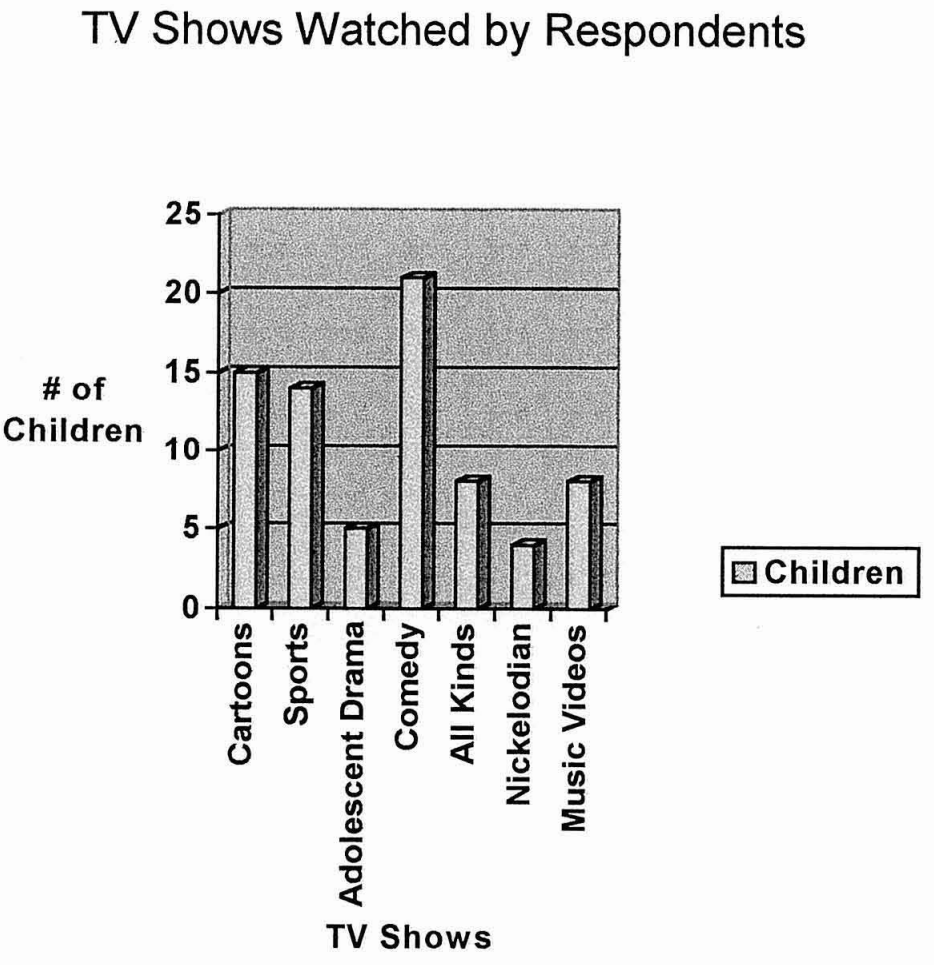
Exhibit 6




The Amount of TV Watch per Day by Respondents

- The graph depicts how much TV/day the fifty surveyed children watch.

Exhibit 7




- These were the television shows the children listed as most watched by them. They were not limited to choosing only one show.
- Adolescent Drama are shows like, Dawson's Creek, 7th Heaven, Felicity and Party of Five

**ENDNOTES**

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[3] Chuansheng, Ellen Greenberger. (1998). The role of "very important" non-parental adults development. Journal of Youth and Adolescence. p. 321.

[4] Irvin, Judith L. (1996). Developmental task of early adolescence: How adult awareness can reduce at risk behavior. The Clearing House. p. 225.

[5] Ibid., p. 242.

[6] Reynolds, Bill. "Role models fill fantsasy needs". The Providence Journal-Bulletin. 13 Jan, 1998. p. 1D.

[7] Ibid. p.1D.

[8] Globus, Sheila. Athletes as role models. Current Health 2. February 1998. p. 25.

[9] Sylven, Steven Jr. "Sportsmanship adults whether they realize it or not, athletes are role models". The Providence Journal-Bulletin. 4 March, 1997. p. 4D

[10] Wright, Scott M. (1998). "Attributes of excellent attending physician role models". The New England Journal of Medicine. p. 1987.

[11] Arenofsky, p. 7.

[12] Anonomous. "Cheryl Miller on athletes and responsibility". Current Health 2. February, 1998. p. 27.

[13] Yancey, p. 259.

[14] Anonymous. (1996). "Primary needs of primary students". Education Digest. p. 32.

[15] Ibid., p.30.

[16]Globus. p. 25.

[17] PIAA. (1999). What is sportsmanship? Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association. p. 1.

18 Hebert, Thomas P. "Factors that influence achievement and underachievement." Journal for the Education of the Gifted. Summer 1998. p. 385.

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Yancey, Antonette K. (1998). Building positive self-image in adolescents in foster care: The use of role models in an interactive group approach. Adolescence, 33. p. 257-267.