

Some people think that professional athletes make good role models for young people, while others believe they don't.

Discuss both these points of views and give your own opinion.

Model answer

People everywhere like watching sports. Many top athletes are admired throughout their countries, and some even have fans all around the world. Young people especially, view many athletes as role models and want to emulate the way these stars dress, act and live their lives. While some athletes aren't deserving of their "role model" status, others act like role models and responsible community citizens.

Top athletes get the attention of young people. Most children and teenagers like to follow professional sports. For many of them, star athletes represent heroes, and children want to be like their heroes. This means they will want to play sports, which is good for their health. Playing sports also teaches valuable life lessons such as teamwork, discipline, goal setting, and the realities of dealing with success and failure. Professional athletes demonstrate the importance of working hard to achieve a goal, or practicing regularly to become good at something. This is a good example for children to follow.

However, professional athletes are not always good role models. For one thing, when young athletes reach a level of fame, it comes with media attention, large financial benefits and social attention. This can lead children to believe that money and fame are an important part of sports. Children might focus more on these aspects than on the fun of the game or on the challenge of learning how to play well. Then there are those athletes who behave badly. For example, some cheat to win their games or take drugs to improve their performance. This kind of behaviour sends the wrong message to children.

Athletes are people who are held at a lofty place in the society owing to their popularity and wealth. These attributes are what makes people want to look up to them and model various facets of their lives along those of the athletes. We can thus be led to conclude that professional athletes can be very good role models for children, as long as they focus on the positive aspects of playing sports.