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Party Responsibly

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Underage drinking is a serious issue that can affect teens in many ways. Young people’s brains are still developing and alcohol can harm this growth – especially in areas related to memory and decision-making.

Drinking can cause physical and social problems. Teens may have trouble thinking clearly, make poor choices, or get into unsafe situations.

Mr. Wilson, a science teacher at Wilson Magnet High School, states, “Physically, it could impact the brain and lead to long-term health problems, including addiction.”

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) states that, “people who start drinking before the age of 15 are at a higher risk for developing alcohol use disorder (AUD) later in life.”

Some students say there is also pressure to drink in social situations. Samuel Marcus Tangelder, a student from the Netherlands attending Windesheim Almere, said, “I’ve been at parties where my friends were drinking and I wasn’t. It made me feel like an outsider, and there was pressure to join in, but I chose not to.”

The long-term effects are even more serious. The NIAAA reports that Alcohol can affect memory, learning abilities, and decision-making, and teens are more susceptible than adults. Drinking frequently can also lower motivation in school.

Parents and home environment can influence a teen’s decision to drink. Families that drink regularly may make their youth think it is acceptable, while positive influences can help prevent it.

Mr. Wilson states, “There is a time and a place where it is acceptable, but high school drinking is not one of them. This is an exciting time of year, with the weather improving, school wrapping up, and prom and graduation parties. Enjoy life and have fun, but please don’t drink and drive or get in a car with a person who has been drinking. It is a mistake that could change your life forever.”