Every year it seems there are more and more teen drinking cases around Eagan. This past year it seems the Eagan community has had a few more incidents than usual. With there already being a few suspensions due to consumption in “The Pit.” Eagan wants to crack down on the issue.

According to *SADD.Org*, Nearly 72% of students will consume alcohol before their high school career is over. And more than 37% have consumed alcohol by the end of eighth grade. Eagan High School Athletic Director Ms. Setter said, “Alcohol is a legal adult drug which makes it more difficult to deal with. It’s dangerous for the brain and body. Addiction is a dangerous disease and using at a younger age creates a greater chance for abuse later.”

Alcohol is seen to Eagan High School Officer Marshall as a gateway drug. Officer Marshall said, “Alcohol comes and goes. In 2009 there were kids with containers of alcohol in class and there were a few issues then. Alcohol then faded away for a while other drugs took its place. We have had a resurgent this year. It’s not only bad for the brain and the liver but studies show a full adult shouldn’t even have more than 1 drink a day. Our bodies weren’t meant to handle that much at a time.”

This school year already there have been problems with alcohol consumption in the school’s fan section, “The Pit.” As well as issues with the Developmental Psychology students. Developmental Psychology is a class that takes the best of the best. The most important part of Developmental Psychology (DP) is the commitment to stay substance free. Students must stay substance free from their time of acceptance which is usually mid January of the previous year to the day they graduate. Lately with social media networks such as Twitter and YikYak there has been a notorious amount of rumors accusing DP students of drinking.

Developmental Psychology student Monica Warner said, “People drink because it’s fun, and they see their friends doing it so there’s a lot of peer pressure. People who aren’t in DP have actually been inspired to band together and to become substance free. Ideally we want a decrease in teen drinking but it’s unpredictable. Something might not happen unless something is really done. Drinking and being substance free can change your life early on so you want to stay free so you don’t get hooked and spiral down. I hear it’s the feeling afterwards that people like and the feeling of fitting in.”

Administrative Assistant Mr. Thompson broke down Eagan’s substance abuse consequences, “The first offense is a 5 day suspension with a chemical evaluation if you’re under the influence on campus or any school event.” Officer Marshall then added, “If it’s on campus it’s a double jeopardy because not only do you get the school punishment but, you’ll also get a ticket for minor consumption if you’re under the age of 18. If you’re over 18 you’ll get an under-age consumption ticket and along with that you’ll have to go to a class to learn about the dangers of substance abuse.”

If you’re a theater kid or an athlete, not only will you have to deal with one of those consequences depending on your age and whether you consumed off or on campus but, you’ll also have to deal with the MSHSL consequences. The MSHSL athletic consequences vary. If it’s the first violation you will miss your next contest or 14 school days whichever is long. The 2nd violation results in missing 6 contests or 21 school days.The third violation results in missing 12 contest or 28 school days. The student may still practice but they are not able to participate in the game it self.

“I think continuing communication is key. Parents need to talk with students as well as teachers about the impacts underage usage can have on their mind and body” according to Setter. Assistant Principal Dr. Zak added, “If you see something go to *reportit.com* it’s an anonymous website where you can report any underage usuage you see. If people use that we can further help the issue.”

There are multiple ways the school is trying to beat underage drug consumption. With programs such as DP and a strict MSHSL code, Eagan can only hope that the issue decreases over the years.