

NEWS RELEASE from Ebdaah

## **‘Engage In Teen Talk To Aid Youth Mental Wellbeing’, Experts Urge UAE Parents**

**Adolescents Falling Prey To Today’s Highly Competitive Environments, Warns  
Ebdaah**

**Dubai UAE, October 20 2015:** Parents need to talk more to their teenage children if they are to help them avoid stress and mental ailments which is becoming increasingly prevalent in today’s highly digitalised and instant gratification world, according to Dubai-based multi-disciplinary consultancy Ebdaah.

Urging parents to take their teenagers more seriously, Ebdaah points to recent UK research, which says that today’s high-pressure lifestyles are increasingly putting adolescents at risk of depression and anxiety. The study by the National Citizen Service shows that teenagers are foregoing talking to their parents about worrying issues preferring instead to share them on social media.

“The fact is teenagers believe adults lack understanding of the pressure they are under in today’s world and it’s interesting that one in seven parents admit they don’t always believe their teenagers when they claim to be stressed while four in ten say they would immediately think their offspring were exaggerating,” said Ebdaah consultant Jim Boylan, the consultant child & adolescent psychiatrist who manages the training of registrars and students in the UK’s Northern Health Region For Training & Psychiatry.

“The fact is that if teenagers turn to social media to air their stress, they can easily become prey to cyber-bullying, their self-worth takes a dip and worse, they could begin, through the wrong peer pressure, to poorly self-medicate. Parents have to wake up to the dangers and realise that they can bridge the communications gap with their teenagers with a healthy dose of patience and respect.”

On November 28, Ebdaah is hosting a ground-breaking seminar at Dubai’s Grand Millennium Hotel aimed at ensuring teenagers live life to the full. The seminar will be moderated by Jim Boylan and Dr. Madeleine Portwood, Ebdaah advisor and the British Psychological Society’s spokesperson on child development and neurodevelopmental disorders.

The seminar comes in the wake of a 2013 study by Dubai Health Authority which revealed that about one in five teenage students in Dubai showed symptoms of depression. Out of 1,289 students surveyed, between the ages of 14 and 18, 17.5 per cent were diagnosed with advanced symptoms.

“Augmented social expectations and hyper-scheduled lives in a highly competitive environment like Dubai can be an added stress to a vulnerable teen,” said Boylan. “And when parents don’t listen, or take them seriously, it can be a trigger for them to turn to undesirable sources for unwanted support.”

However, the Ebdaah consultant admits the pressures can be both ways. “Adolescence isn’t an easy time for parents. As children transition through various tumultuous circumstances associated with adolescence, whether physical, emotional, or social— the pressures they encounter can seem all-consuming and can lead to a variety of mental health ailment.”

Boylan said red flags parents should be sensitive to are excessive sleeping well beyond usual teenage fatigue, low self-esteem, lack of interest in hobbies, a fall-off in academic performance, weight and appetite loss and personality swings.

“In the seminar we’ll explore more coping techniques which parents, educators and health professionals can use to put, and keep, teenagers on the right track,” he said.

More details from: [http://ebdaah.com/mental\\_health\\_well\\_being](http://ebdaah.com/mental_health_well_being)

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**Picture Caption:**

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**About Ebdaah** – Enabling Opportunity UAE-based Ebdaah is a specialist training and capacity building consultancy, delivering support and solutions towards disability management to transform the lives of people with disabilities in the Middle East.

The Ebdaah team of specialists are geared to offering hands-on specialist consultancy, training and deployment to governments, key stakeholders, organisations and corporates to support and drive opportunities for people with disabilities across the UAE and beyond.

Ebdaah was established in Dubai as a partner company of TECOM’s Knowledge Village, and has specialist knowledge in supporting special needs inclusion across Hospitality, Retail, Education, Transportation, as well as organisations of all shapes and sizes.

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