



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics that Confuse Kids and Scare Parents – Part 1

**Guest(s):** Dan Seaborn

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**Dr. James Dobson:** Welcome everyone to Family Talk. It's a ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute supported by listeners just like you. I'm Dr. James Dobson and I'm thrilled that you've joined us.

**Roger Marsh:** Well, greetings and welcome back to Family Talk, and welcome to another week of encouraging programs to strengthen your marriage, raise up your kids, and help you in your walk with the Lord. I'm Roger Marsh and I'm so grateful that you have joined us today. On behalf of everyone here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, I say thank you for making us a part of your day.

Not only are Christian parents forced to raise their kids in a culture that denies the traditional values of their faith, but also in a culture that strongly opposes them at every turn. On today's edition of Family Talk, our own Dr. Tim Clinton and his guest, author Dan Seaborn, address this concern by breaking down Dan's recent book called *Winning At Home*. Dan Seaborn stresses the need for parents to have a solid foundation in Christ to support their parenting efforts even when they're at their wits end.

Now, the information these two men put forth is detailed and the conversation was extensive, but we believe it is also so valuable that we've programmed it into three parts. So today you'll hear part one, and then tomorrow in the following day, you'll get a chance to access parts two and three. This miniseries, if you will, is entitled, "Winning At Home: Tackling the Topics That Confuse Kids and Scare Parents." Well, I've been there. Maybe you have too. So let's go there right now. Here is Dr. Tim Clinton to introduce his guest right here on Family Talk, the voice you trust for the family you love.

**Dr. Tim Clinton:** Parents today are raising kids in a culture that not only disagrees with the traditional tenets of the Christian faith, but strongly and loudly opposes them pretty much at every turn. We know our faith needs to inform every aspect of our lives, including our parenting, but the Bible doesn't always offer cut and dry answers for the nuanced issues that we face in this fast-paced culture we're in. Questions like: how do you parent a child who struggles with mental health issues? How and when do you talk to your kids about sex? What about those wild, wild teenage years, getting through them? Well, today our guest has dedicated his life in ministry to helping people answer those kind of tough

questions and find victory in their homes. His name is Dan Seaborn. He has new book out called *Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics that Confuse Kids and Scare Parents*.

Dan has teamed up with several of his credentialed colleagues to dive into the fray of parenting today, provide a lifeline for those who are desperately seeking a faith-based perspective on raising their kids. Dan Seaborn is the founder and president of Winning At Home, an organization that seeks to support marriages and families. He's also an author, speaker, serves as the leader of the Marriage & Family division of the American Association of Christian Counselors. Dan and I go back a few years. I admire him and the ministry God's doing in and through him. He holds a master's degree in Christian Ministries and is the author of nearly 15 books. Dan and his wife Jane have been married for nearly 40 years, have four adult children, seven grandkids. I like that. Dan, always great to have you joining us. Thank you.

Dan Seaborn: Well, Tim, thank you. It's so good to be with you. I'm so proud of you too and what God has allowed you to do through the American Association of Christian Counselors and now through Family Talk and your connection there with Dr. Dobson. I mean, obviously he's a great influence on both of our lives. I go back 30 years and I remember him starting some shows with what you just said. I remember him introducing himself and saying, "I'm trying to speak in the culture of our day." And so we're carrying on that awesome legacy and trying to continue to make a mark for Christ in a society that seems somewhat similar to what it was like in that day, and maybe even a little bit more in the negative side. And so it's fun to join you today. I appreciate so much you do, your partnerships you've allowed me to share with you. And hey, we're two dads just trying to work our way through life and guide our kids, and now they're adult kids, but what a joy it is to partner alongside you and just chat a little bit today about what it means to be parents in the society we're in.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, let's jump in, Dan. It goes without saying, it's been a tough go the last couple of years. It's actually hard to imagine what we're seeing happening in culture right now, right before our eyes. And Dan, I'll add this, right before our kids' eyes. I mean the battle for parental rights, gender ideology being forced on us. There's so much happening and it's like, I can't believe where we're at. Dan, you're on the front lines. Tell us what you're seeing. What are you sensing from families and people struggling to win at home?

Dan Seaborn: Well, exactly what you said, Tim. You're in the mental health field, and I know in all my years of working and being in this field, I've never seen anything like it. If we go back to pre-COVID, I would tell you the calls to our office are probably three times what they were before COVID hit because people are struggling with anxiety, depression, and it's not just adults struggling with that. The majority of the phone calls coming our way that are new right now are millennial and younger.

And so it's interesting to watch what's going on in our culture in that specific area. And one of the reasons we're coming to this show today just to talk is because for me, I'm always about stepping back and seeing the big picture. And one of the things that's got to be happening right now in this culture is the adults have to be adults. They have to have their solidity, they have to have their foundation in the Lord. If you find your foundation in any cultural thing, your feet are going to be swept out from under you, and that's going to bring more anxiety to your kids' lives.

Tim, you're one who told me way back when we first met. We would talk about the importance of a parent being strong in their own faith, strong in who they are as a person, because when your kids see that in you, it gives them peace. No matter what they're going through in life, if they see that foundation in their parents, it gives them an inner peace whether they say it or not. And right now, I think one of the things we need to be talking about and doing in this culture is talking about what are we doing to create a steadiness and a peace in our own spirit? Where is our anchor?

I spoke at a corporation the other day, Tim, to about a thousand employees, and I simply asked the question, "What's your anchor?" If somebody came to you today and said, "If all hell breaks loose, how are you going to handle it? What's your foundation? What's your anchor?" And if your anchor's built on any of the things the world has to offer, you're not going to make it in the culture and society that we're in now. And I think we're just beginning to see the tip of the iceberg of what's coming.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Dan, we're going to talk about some pretty tough issues. I loved your subtitle. I mean, it's what confuses kids and what scares parents. Everything from gender ideology issues, talking to your kids about those issues that they're hearing about constantly from their phones and in their interactions at school to what they value, what priorities should be there, and whether or not they want a relationship with God in Christ. And as dads, you and I, we're not saying we get everything right, but one thing we will do is have open honest conversations about that journey. That's what I appreciate about you. I've seen you at events. When you walk up to the microphone, you're funny, you're fun, but you're raw and real. You don't pretend that you've got it all together. This is a journey.

Dr. Dobson, a few years back wrote a book called *Parenting Isn't for Cowards*. And it's so right, but somebody's got to be the parent in the home. Somebody's got to have some authority here. And then how we go about that journey, you're right, it's got to be anchored in our identity in Christ, and then we better hang on. You better saddle up and get ready to go, right?

Dan Seaborn:

Yeah. And you just said it, identity in Christ. That's not where culture starts. Culture starts with identity in gender. Culture starts with identity in sexuality and preference of sexuality, and that's just not where your identity starts. If your identity starts there, confusion is coming. And I just think in the culture we're in right now, we need to speak truth into that. Jesus never said, "Hey, I'm

here and I'd like to start by saying I'm a male and this is what I believe. This is what I think." No. He brought the identity, "I'm here to serve the purpose of God the Father." If you don't figure that out, you're going to have more confusion. You're going to have more chaos. And so parents who are trying to find themselves first in what the culture says is identity, so many churches, so many pastors are starting there and it's the wrong starting point.

We have a guy on our staff, Brad, he helped me write the chapter related to the same-sex attraction. And Brad is eloquent at making sure we understand. He dealt with same-sex issues himself, and he said, "If I start there, I'm automatically going to go down the wrong road." And we have to start with identity first, being in Christ. And that's really the foundation of what this whole book is about, is making sure you understand if you have to answer for the purpose of your life, if it starts with something about you, you're already going down the wrong trail.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

The book again is *Winning at Home*, brand new, just out on bookshelves everywhere right now, tackling the topics that confuse kids and scare parents. Again, our guest is Dan Seaborn. Dan, I want to say this up front. I want to offer a guilt-free drop to everyone listening. We're not here to beat anybody up. We're here to have a meaningful conversation again about what it's like to step into the lives of our kids, to be there and to have influence on them for the sake of their relationship with God and their days ahead. These are tough times.

Dan, I think a lot of parents are getting things right. I want to say that a lot of young parents are really saying, "Listen, not going to make those same mistakes I saw growing up," et cetera. And I think they're big on love. I think a lot of parents are big on limits. They want to have boundaries and they want to shape their kids' hearts. In the midst of it Dan, it's easy to make a few mistakes along the way. Want to become your kid's friend. You don't want to be the hard guy, the disciplinarian in the home. You want to have fun. We tend to overindulge our kids or "love them too much". You can't really love them too much, but everyone knows what that means. But Dan, what have you noticed? And a lot of people kind of try to mold kids into their personality, their way of life. And if you get caught up in that, I'm going to tell you what, this thing's going to go south really quick.

Dan Seaborn:

Oh, really quick. Well, lately, Tim, I've been saying, my line is this: parents basically are broken people raising more broken people. If you go back when I was 30, let's just go back there, Tim. When I was 30, my kids were 10 down to one and four kids. I was rocking it out. I was going to raise perfect kids. We weren't going to have any issues. We were going to hit the teen years and people were going to go, "Wow, what a model father." Well, I hit the teen years and it all hit the fan and I ended up in a situation where it's like I got a wayward daughter. You knew me in those times, Tim. You had me speaking at events with you during those times. I never dreamed that I would suffer some of the pain and the agony. My heart was like outside my chest and just getting stepped on.

And one of the reasons I wrote this book is to bring encouragement to parents who feel like, "I haven't done it right. I haven't done it perfect." Let me just encourage you, let you know you never will. And so I want to just encourage parents today to understand you are doing the best you can to guide your children. And the Lord taught me very clearly, my daughter, Anna, was the one who went wayward. You would probably remember a lot about that, Tim. But when she went wayward, I was brokenhearted. My life was shattered. I remember speaking at an event you invited me to Tim, and I was barely functioning because I was in so much pain. And parenting does that to us. We go through incredible trials, incredible challenges, and I want to join you in just saying to parents, if you're listening to this show, if you're taking time today to listen to this show, you're probably an amazing parent because you're wanting to improve, you're wanting to do the best job you can, but I also want to take the pressure off and tell you that you won't do it perfect.

Your kids are going to come and they're going to bring you some question. They're going to bring you some thought. It's going to freak you out. You're going to be like, "I don't even know what to say to them. Oh no, they're walking away from the Lord." I got it. Many of you listening right now, you've got a wayward kid. I join Tim in just saying to parents today, you don't have to have it all figured out. You just have to continue to see what the Lord is leading and guiding you to do.

Tim, I almost lost my way. If I can be real honest with you, I almost quit, man. It's amazing this book came about. Only the Lord could have done that because I was done. 10 years ago, I was walking away from it all. I didn't even tell the staff here, but I was worn out and I was ready to quit the journey. But I didn't realize that was actually part of the purpose God had for me. And I figured that out. I had my family in the wrong spot. I had my daughter in the wrong spot. I had her in the God spot. As long as she was good, I was good. That's not what the Scripture teaches. I'm good because I'm God's kid and all parents listening today before you even think about your kids, you're God's kid and you're going to be fine. You're going to make it through this and God's going to walk with you.

I'm hoping somebody will get some encouragement from this book because everybody faces great challenges. And some of you're scared with the issues you're facing in the world we live in, but I just want you to be encouraged today that God has you and He has a purpose for you. And He came for the broken hearted. So, if you're brokenhearted today, He'll meet you right there.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Dan, I was thinking about when you were talking just prodigal kids and how often parents just cry themselves to sleep at night. They wonder where they went wrong, there's a lot of self-blame. And maybe we need to own some things in there, but Dan, at the same time, they're also in this kind of state of paralysis because they're afraid. It's like walking on eggshells. They're afraid if they say something or if they push back that they'll never hear from their kids again. This concept of ghosting and stuff in culture is scary. Kids will just walk

away. I mean, they'll shut the shade, if you will, and how devastating that kind of alienation is. Dan, that stuff is so real and so scary.

Let's go into the issues, Dan, because you take on some big time stuff. I want to start with, and I love this, you started out with mental health. What do you do when you got kids who are battling mental health? We know this, Dan, since COVID hit, mental health stuff is just, it's off the charts. We don't have a mental health crisis. We have a mental health disaster going on, and our kids are the recipients of a lot of it. And we know this too, that one of the greatest underserved populations in this country when it comes to mental health are our kids.

Dan Seaborn: Yes.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We've got to get this figured out. Dan, you take on depression and anxiety. Tell us why you did that, and then maybe some of your thoughts on what we can do as parents when we're trying to help our kids get through this.

Dan Seaborn: And you know Tim, you're way more authorized to speak on some of these topics than me because I as a pastor, you as a clinician, you know and understand depression, anxiety, that those are two different things that we deal with. And this pandemic and post pandemic, I think it's going to continue to grow. I think the phone's going to continue to ring off the hook. So first of all, I would just encourage parents that are listening who are maybe feeling that way themselves, have a child in that situation, you need to just be comfortable talking to your kids about it and saying to them, "What you're feeling is not weird. You're not weird. This is pretty normal stuff." And then look to give them some next steps of guidance. A lot of times parents, when they're scared, they'll hide from it. They'll try to deny it or just go in the other room and hope the kids won't bring it up. Hope they won't say anything about it.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, there's a mindset there that if you don't have the conversation, then the kids won't wrestle with it. Or we won't put any of those seeds of depression or what have you in their head. We don't want to do that. And so it's like let's avoid it, but then nothing could be further from the truth.

Dan Seaborn: Just the opposite. I would tell you, it's almost just the opposite. I think you as a parent, as you address it, as you talk to it, you help your children realize, "Oh, okay, I'm not weird. I'm not abnormal. This is a conversation I should be having." And so I think that ability of a parent to first of all deal with it themselves and then have a conversation about it, that's just massive. And Tim, that's what you do. You are a clinician. You understand that.

I know for us, what we do specifically here, one of our ladies, Emilie DeYoung, she oversees our child therapy division and she's just amazing at this. She's given some great principles to children and I'll share one of them here. If I had really young kids right now, I would literally say to them, "Hey guys, sometimes

as your dad, I have something happen in the office, I have somebody say something, I hear something on the news, et cetera. It causes anxiety in me and I get this thing built up inside me. I can feel my heart racing a little bit and I will just pause and then I'll breathe and I'll catch my breath and then I'll pray." And those little tips like that, if the parent will acknowledge it about their own life and then pass that on to your kid. So that kind of little thought is something you can get into your children's mind and let them practice that, model it for them.

If your kid was struggling with their foot, if they're eight years old and they're struggling, can't walk, you're going to take them to the doctor. You're going to get it checked out. Well, view mental health the same way. Do not be scared of it, do not be anxious about it, do not think it's not there. So acknowledge it, step into it, speak into it, and come alongside a professional. The American Association of Christian Counselors that Tim's president of, gracious, it's all across the country. You can find a wonderful professional counselor who can help your kids in this area. And we just need to, as parents, take the responsibility of raising these kids and helping them get help when they need it. And I promise you, when they're 30 is when you'll see the thanks. When they're 30 and they get to adulthood, they're going to look back and go, "Huh, you saw me in a tough spot and you stepped in and I thank you for that."

So parents, take the pressure off yourself that you got to have it all figured out. Look for a clinician, look for a great pastor to come alongside you and help give guidance to your children in this time because they aren't abnormal. They're normal kids dealing with anxiousness. And Tim, you know as well as I do, if you're a middle schooler in school right now, can you imagine what you're seeing on your social media sites? Can you imagine what's said when the 10 of you are in a little huddle somewhere? We know what we talked about when we were 10, so that same stuff's going on, and I just encourage you to make sure you give your children that outlet to allow conversations in these areas where maybe they're a little bit confused.

Dr. Tim Clinton:

Yeah. Dan, the tendency as parents is to hope that it's not true. Hope that our kids aren't battling with depression or discouragement. Hope that our kids are not battling with fear and anxiety. My wife Julie and I talked a little bit about growing up and she said, "Tim, when I was a little girl, I used to be scared to death." She said, "My bedroom was across the other part of the house and the cellar door was outside." And she said, "I always thought at night that someone was going to get me." And she said, "I would just be terrified going to bed at night." But as a boy, I remember my dad saying, "You can pray to God, Tim, and ask Him for His presence and to calm you." And you know what? As a boy, Dan, I taught myself that very thing. And those kind of moments, those are treasure moments.

And we often found this too, that parents are pretty good indicators as to whether or not kids are anxious, whether or not they're wrestling with depression. Mom or dad, be honest here's what we're saying. The relationship

piece. If we don't have a relationship with our kids, typically we're not going to have a platform or an opportunity to speak into their life.

Dan, we're fighting a little bit of time here. I want to jump into the issue of gaming. We want to touch this real quick, especially for boys. They can get addicted to gaming. Girls more prone to get addicted to social media platforms like Instagram and more. Everybody's pushing the panic button here because screen time is just, it's stupid. It's out of control. What are your thoughts?

Dan Seaborn: A couple of things I would say there is, again, going back to the conversation, Tim, I think the ability as a parent to sit down and talk with your children and trying to help them see long-term effects of what they're doing. Just having conversation, not condemning. If you come into your kids like, "You had too much time on that screen..." You know how parenting works, they're going to do just the opposite. So that relational piece that you talked about earlier of being able to build a solid relationship with your child where you have long-term conversations with them about it and talk about your own life. We see social media, see screens as just this evil enemy against us. Try to approach that a little different. Start to go, "Okay, how can I help my child see what a good purpose it is and what long term we're trying to do here and accomplish here?" Kids don't have the ability to see long term. They're thinking about today. And as a parent, one of your jobs and one of your goals is to help them think long-term. What's the purpose? What the goal?

Tim, you laugh because I remember my son. Oh, I had one kid. He was just Mr. Screen Time. I sometimes would go down at 4:00 in the morning. I'd wake up and I'd hear him in the basement. He'd get too loud and I'd go down there, "Josh, it's 4:00 in the morning. You got school in two and a half hours." He's like, "I'm playing with some guy in Australia." And I'd be like, "No, you're not. We're turning it off." Because he said to me, "Dad, my goal is to get a million-dollar contract with Nintendo." And I said, "That's a great goal and if you want to do that when you're adult, no problem, but you're not doing it in my basement."

Dr. Tim Clinton: That's what's called parenting.

Dan Seaborn: That's what's called parenting. And so have to make the hard decision, you have to take the hard line sometimes, but you do it not in anger, not in frustration. So often that's where it hits. And I think the wise parent really controls their tones in these conversations. The wise parent controls their facial looks and you're able just to have... I call them adult conversations. Have adult conversation with your child about the purpose of it. And the reality is, Tim, again, you're a clinician. You know this better than me. I would throw a question back at you. What does it do to a teen's mind if they do screen time all the time?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Sure. Questions like: does it affect their schoolwork? Does it affect maybe getting outside physical education? Does it affect their relationship with others? Peer interaction and development? How's it impacting their walk with the Lord, their faith development? Those are critical questions, Dan.



Dan Seaborn: Yep. Have five or six questions ready that you ask your kids. That's right.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We're going to talk tomorrow on the broadcast, more about kind of an internet code of conduct and issues like sexting, cyber bullying. We're going to talk about this hypersexualized world that we're in and we're going to talk a lot about gender ideology. How do you have those kind of conversations with your kids?

Dan, delightful to have you on the broadcast today. Love what you're doing up there. I wanted people to know this too, about *Winning At Home*. You guys have like 50 counselors and coaches on staff up there in Michigan, and it's amazing what God's doing. If people want to learn more, Dan, about you and the ministry, where do they go?

Dan Seaborn: Yeah, simply go to [winningathome.com](http://winningathome.com), [winningathome.com](http://winningathome.com) and they can see all the information. We got offices also in Tampa. We got offices in Rwanda. Some in Indiana. We're beginning to broaden a little bit of the network, so we want to connect with you and help you. So thanks Tim for allowing me to be a part of the show. Man, I love being with you, love talking with you, and proud of what you're doing too.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Our special guest again has been Dan Seaborn. His new book, *Winning at Home: Tackling the Topics that Confuse Kids and Scare Parents*. Brand new book out right now by our friends at Salem Books. Dan, such a delight again to have you. On behalf of Dr. Dobson, his wife Shirley, the entire team at James Dobson Family Institute, we salute you and the work you guys are doing over there at Winning At Home. Thank you for joining us.

Dan Seaborn: Thank you right back at you.

Roger Marsh: Wow, what an incredible first part of a dynamic interview that we present to you this week, Dr. Tim Clinton with his guest, Dan Seaborn, here on Family Talk. Now let me tell you a little bit more about Dan to close the loop and set the table for tomorrow's and Wednesday's broadcasts. Dan Seaborn is the founder and president of Winning At Home, an organization that supports marriages and families. He also serves as the director of the Marriage & Family Division of the American Association of Christian Counselors. He's the author of 13 books, including *Parenting with Grace and Truth*, and *Winning At Home*. He earned a master's degree in Christian Ministries from Indiana Wesleyan University. Dan and his wife Jane, have been married for nearly 40 years. They have four adult children and seven grandchildren. As you can see, Dan Seaborn is extremely qualified to talk about winning at home and tackling topics that confuse kids and scare parents, and may I add grandparents too. Be sure to join us again tomorrow for part two or go to [drjamesdobson.org](http://drjamesdobson.org), and you'll be able to access part one or get all three parts later this week.

Well, that's it for today's broadcast. We hope you found this to be just what you needed to remain encouraged, to love and support your family, and to stay

close to God in your faith walk. Until next time, I'm Roger Marsh. And on behalf of Dr. Dobson and the entire staff, may God continue to richly bless you and your family as you grow deeper in your relationship with Him.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.