



## Broadcast Transcript

**Broadcast:** Helping Our Girls Defeat Fear and Anxiety

**Guest(s):** Patti Garibay

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- Dr. 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.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Well, hello everyone, and welcome to Family Talk, a division of The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, I'll be your host today. We all know that fear and anxiety can be debilitating. Even before the coronavirus pandemic, America had an epidemic of depression and anxiety disorders among teens and young people, but it's exploded now. The pain, the pace, the pressure of everyday life can really take hold of a person and it's showing. Even a decade ago, according to a survey published by the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 31%...
- Dr. Tim Clinton: Let me say that again, 31% of all youth in the United States have diagnosable anxiety disorders. Now, just this past month, the city of San Francisco filed a lawsuit against their own school district because keeping their schools closed is catalyzing a mental health crisis among school-aged children. According to the lawsuit, UCSF Children's Hospital has seen an increase, a 66% increase in the number of suicidal children in the emergency room and a 75% increase in youth who required hospitalization for mental health services.
- Dr. Tim Clinton: If that doesn't get your attention, I don't know what will. Here's another example, Clark County School District in Las Vegas, the fifth largest school district in the United States, has seen a massive rise in suicides among students since the COVID lockdown began. Sadly, they've experienced 19 suicides in that district since March 2020, 19 suicides in 10 months and 13 of those since July, that's a big problem. We have a big problem. Adding to the uncertainty and lack of routine of this pandemic to the normal pressures of life has compounded the amount of anxiety and stress that our kids have to deal with today. And our girls are certainly no exception. Our guest today has been working with and ministering to girls for over two decades. And she's joining us today to discuss how we as parents, or grandparents and mentors can help the girls in our lives during what has proven to be a very stressful and uncertain time.

Dr. Tim Clinton: We're talking to Patti Garibay today. Patti is the founder and executive director of American Heritage Girls, a national Christ centered leadership and character development program that has helped thousands of girls discover their true identity and purpose in Christ. She is also the host of Raising Godly Girls, a daily one-minute radio feature, which can be heard on thousands of radio stations across the nation. Patti's the author of Why Curse the Darkness When You Can Light A Candle? Which is her story of trust and obedience in founding American Heritage Girls. This book is really meant to inspire those who want to make a kingdom impact, but struggle with the fear of inadequacy.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Patti's been featured in hundreds of media outlets, including Fox News Radio, Time Magazine and more. And she's actually one of the very first guest ever interviewed here on Family Talk back in 2010. One of the reasons we're here today with Patti is she and her group have a new resource and blog series that you need to know about that could be extremely helpful in this uncertain time. It's called A Raising Godly Girls Guide to Fear and Anxiety in Uncertain Times. It's packed with wise biblically based advice to help you and the girls in your life combat stress and anxiety. Patti, welcome back to Family Talk. It's great to have you with us.

Patti Garibay: Oh, it's a pleasure to be with you.

Dr. Tim Clinton: As we get started, let's go back and kind of do a reset for our audience a little bit about what American Heritage Girls is all about, what an amazing organization.

Patti Garibay: Thank you. Yes. AHG has been part of the national landscape since 1995. We celebrated our 25th anniversary this fun year of 2020, but yet, God is sovereign and He continues to bless this ministry. It has affected, or we like to say transformed, over tens of thousands of girls over those 25 years and their families, along with the charter organizations that come alongside to sponsor or charter these troops to allow for girls to really know who they are and whose they are in Christ.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Patti, it'd be a little bit like a girl scouts organization, it's a faith based organization that focuses on God, family, community, and country. And so you were actually a girl scout leader back in the day, right? And God kind of gave you this vision, but hey, what an organization for such a time as this one, we're living in a cancel culture, an environment where they're trying basically to rid a lot of our American history and make sure our kids don't grow up with that knowledge and beauty that we grew up with as we look back at our country and the gift that God gave to us in and through it.

Patti Garibay: Absolutely, we believe it is an Esther moment, I mean, to your point, for a time such as this. Everything we stand for in American Heritage Girls seems to be the antithesis of what the social mores are today. And so they are the biblical truths, the founding of our country, all of these important parts. We're not a perfect country, we all know that Dr. Tim, but certainly we have done some things right. And those need to be celebrated. And we need to learn from the things we've

done wrong, but we don't just cancel it all because we have made some missteps. So American Heritage Girls is here to celebrate, like you had said, God, the importance of family, the very importance of the community and serving in it, and then being part, a good citizen of our country.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Patti, when I think of today's kids, what normally comes up is discussion about social media, how much time kids are spending online, how they don't get outside and then throw in COVID and everything else that comes with it. And we're going to talk about stress and anxiety in a little bit, and highlight the insanity that's really going on with our kids today. But an organization like this, I mean, the push is let's get back to maybe badge programs, where they earn merit, where they're out serving others, where they're learning leadership skills and more, and they're not all stressed out and lost and being bullied and all that. It's a fresh way of looking at how we're supposed to be doing family life and how we're supposed to be growing up in our country.

Patti Garibay: Absolutely, this kind of relational activity, and that's what American Heritage Girls does, they have troop meetings that happen every other week usually. They have camp outs and retreats and they go on a high adventure. And for those girls that don't like high adventure, there's still something in it for you. But what is the most important part from the girl's perspective is the building of relationships and finding like-minded girls to be aligned with and to be able to be friends with.

Patti Garibay: And so they learn a lot about confidence growing, and it's not about the girl power and that kind of stuff like the other organization. It's really about the power of the Holy Spirit within the girl. So the Christ centeredness of this program is essential to its success and to it having a niche in the market, in that, if you would like to see something for your daughter that would help have an eternal impact on her while giving her relational, social, emotional, leadership, all of these skills, then you want to consider American Heritage Girls.

Dr. Tim Clinton: No doubt a lot of people listening are saying, "You know what? I want to make sure my daughter gets plugged into an organization like American Heritage Girls." Tell us a little bit about also the Trailblazer Program. I think there are probably a lot adults who would say, "You know what? I'd like to get involved, maybe start a troop or maybe volunteer or something like that."

Patti Garibay: Absolutely. So American Heritage Girls is open to any biological girl, age five to 18, that would like to be part of this program. Now for the adults, they have to agree to a general statement of faith and be approved by a charter organization or American Heritage Girls, because we do believe as adult mentors, they have a higher calling and that's very biblical. So what you could do is visit our website, [AmericanHeritageGirls.org](http://AmericanHeritageGirls.org), and you could look up where there's a troops, find a troop or how to start a troop. And then if the troop thing just can't be on your radar right now, and you would like to work this with your daughter, you could become what we call a Trailblazer. And that is open to anyone who agrees with

what we're about, who wants to instill these values in their own daughter, they can be part of the family too. We want everyone to feel like they can belong.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Patti, you guys have put together an amazing resource guide called A Raising Godly Girls Guide to Fear and Anxiety in Uncertain Times. It's presented again by your organization, the American Heritage Girls. And I think it's such a beautiful piece of work because I know, coming from the mental health side, that this isn't just an issue. This issue is exploding around us. Some of the statistics we shared as we opened up the program, 31.9% of adolescents have an anxiety disorder. And this is according to the National Institutes from Mental Health, "Of the adolescents with an anxiety disorder, an estimated 8.3% of them have severe impairment." Now, when you go back and look at the stats, that's probably around four, four and a half million teenagers have an anxiety problem. And the prevalence among them is higher for girls than it is for boys. Nearly 38% of girls have a diagnosable anxiety disorder. Now, you're on the front lines, what are you seeing? What do you think's really precipitating that?

Patti Garibay: The confusion and what is right and wrong. These kids do not know biblical worldview, they do not know biblical truths. So what they're hearing from the media... And they are ingesting a ton of media, we all know that. What? Six to nine hours a day. And I would imagine with the pandemic it might be higher, that they are hearing all of these messages and then every message that bounces against their shield, which I hope they all have, makes them wonder, "Well, is that me? Do I have that? Perhaps that's my identity." What I am seeing, even in American Heritage Girls, is this battle with gender identity is off the charts. And I'm talking the last five years. It has just exploded in the Christian community. And we have got to be prepared to deal with that. But in addition, the anxiety, absolutely, social media, how do we measure who we are and how well we're doing is by how many likes we might have on our Instagram.

Patti Garibay: But all of that stuff is what is defining in a girl. And our goal in American Heritage Girls is that for them to know that they are good enough, they are made in the image of God. So what does that look like? Well, in order to understand the image of God, we have to understand His word and we have to know what others are saying about Him. And we have to put that into doing life. And that is not something we put on a Sunday school shelf. We have to do life together and talk about that image of God. And then they will start to understand who they are. So all of these are building blocks. And I believe because we have not been really great... And I'm owning this too, my generation has not been great at teaching biblical worldview. We've let it all get homogenized and messed up. And now it is time to come back to truth because it's timeless and it is what's going to help them navigate.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You're listening to Family Talk, a division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. Tim Clinton, your host, our special guest today is Patti Garibay. She's with the American Heritage Girls and an amazing organization God is using for such a time as this, to kind of reintroduce them to what it means to understand family and leadership and culture, and so much more from a faith based

perspective. It's so beautiful. Patti, let's come back to this issue for a moment. I think a lot of parents want to believe their kids are immune to the stress and the pressures of modern day life. And they also think if they don't talk about it, that it won't bring things to them, but nothing could be further from the truth. These kids are seeing it online. They're hearing it from other people. And yet, they're also stressed out. And I saw a University of Maryland piece that talked about some of the top stressors for kids.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Let me share some of these and then I want you to respond to them. They're worried about things like this. Listen to this, parents having problems, maybe mom and dad are fighting. Fights with their friends or siblings causes a lot of stress. School does. The exams, the homeworks, maybe performance stuff. How about crowded schedules? They're just so packed. They don't have any time just to hang out. Self-esteem, how they look, what maybe their peers are saying about them. Patti, kids are tough, they're brutal to each other, they're mean. How about that movie years ago? Mean Girls, and just think about girls and what they're going through. And so much of who I am is based on what I do or what others think of me. And Patti, when you start throwing this in, and there's so much more here, whether or not my teacher or my coach likes me or whatever, it leads to a place where now it makes sense. When you think of 38% of our girls out there have a diagnosis of some type of anxiety disorder, this isn't serious, this is out of control.

Patti Garibay: Absolutely. And what is the antidote? We know as Christians what the antidote is, and the only way that we as humans will have peace is by understanding and building our relationship with Christ. He is the great peacemaker. He is the great provider. And if the girls are not being taught up or formed in their spiritual formation intentionally... And that really does begin with the family, it's got to be a combination, and it takes... I don't want to use the overused term, but I'm going to, it takes a village, but it takes the right village to raise them up in the way they should go. And so, the only way they're going to know is by having these complete affirmations. I was recently talking with Dr. Magniker and she said something really, really great. "Quit praising your girls for performance and start talking about character."

Patti Garibay: Maybe they performed well, but what about that performance was part of her character so that she no longer if she doesn't do well performing, what part of her character made a difference? And what I love about that is maybe she was gritty or perseverant, I saw that you worked through that. That was a character trait that when she doesn't get an A next time or doesn't get that goal, she still has grit and perseverance. And that's really, I think what we need to get back to. We as parents are always doing metrics, we're in a metric driven world. "What are my kids' grades? How many sports are they in? Are they going to get a college scholarship?" Blah, blah, blah. How many times are we asking, "Are they going to go to heaven?" I mean, honestly, this is where we should be devoting our time.

Dr. Tim Clinton: It's interesting also, Patti, years ago, I was taught a principle and that was, if you could spend about 20 minutes a day of command free special time with your son or daughter, it would be pretty revolutionary. As a matter of fact, it's the cornerstone of some real mental health treatments for oppositional defiance and more. Learning to hang out with your son or daughter. In other words, I'm not coming in and I'm not telling her what we're going to do. I'm just here, "Honey, you get to set the agenda."

Dr. Tim Clinton: And by doing this very thing, think about this, 20 minutes a day, on a regular frequent basis, dynamics start to happen between us. She starts thinking that she's a priority because I want to be with her. Number two, when you're hanging out, eventually you're going to have to figure out what to do. One of the greatest deterrents to this, Patti, is we don't know what to do. Well, hey, guess what? We're going to have to figure that out. And so when you start doing things together, you start learning what motivates or what people like, what they don't like. And when I think about American Heritage Girls, what I think about in my mind is this dad getting time with his daughter in a unique opportunity, if I can volunteer, but you understand what I'm saying? These are the principles, right, Patti? That make the difference.

Patti Garibay: Absolutely. And dads are so integral. So I cannot underestimate or underscore what you said. It is so important.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And that relationship piece is what this is all about, that if you get this going, instead of this isolation and loneliness... And think about COVID's done to us, what it's done to our kids, no school, they're locked down. There's no sports activities. There's no graduation, there's nothing. And we've lost this connectedness. And somehow we've got to get it back. And hopefully in our homes, we're getting that going. But the stress level keeps going up for everybody. The gap's getting bigger, we're losing sight of each other. We've got to press in, we need structure. We need opportunity to press in that kind of direction and we need direction.

Patti Garibay: Absolutely. And I have had more letters this year from moms saying, "We are so thankful for American Heritage Girls." It's the one thing that we can still connect on. They're not only meeting virtually, but they're doing camp outs. You can do that in most areas. It depends, maybe not California, but you know what I'm saying?

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yes. Patti, and understanding anxiety, often people bring up the word, worry, it's a big topic. And stop being such a worrywart, it's hard to turn that off. When you get that negative thinking going, that pattern, we teach thought stopping and thought insertion, but explained to us worry and young girls and teen girls.

Patti Garibay: Absolutely. It really is, it is absolutely detrimental to their health, number one. It is not something that's just, "Oh, that's just her tick." Or, "That's just her little issue. She's a worrywart." No, it is actually detrimental to her health and will affect her in many, many ways. What I define worry as, is a negative focus on

the future. I mean, it's speculation, you don't have any facts around it. You might have a hunch, but what are hunches except for emotions gone awry, and we've seen what emotion does to an entire country. I feel like right now, we're just in this emotional fervor without a lot of facts around it. So speculating what might occur under potential circumstances. I mean, think about it, speculation and potential. These are all things that we make up, these narratives that we create in our heads that we have no facts around, but we have feelings around and then we let that affect our health. Worry is very destructive and worry and anxiety go hand in hand, right?

Dr. Tim Clinton: I remember my wife, Julie, Patti, telling the story of when she was little, her bedroom was on the other end of the house, away from her mom and dad. And she used to crawl in the bed and get really afraid. And she said, "Tim, I was so scared. I'd have to talk to myself and pray." And I remember as a boy, when I would go to bed at night, I would be really afraid and I'd pull the blankets right up to my eyes. And I would listen for any and every noise in the house and get terrified. We'd sleep outside five, six nights a week during the summer and not fear anything, snakes, everything around us.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Go into the house and we were sure that some burglar, somebody was going to break in and kill us. But I learned to calm myself by reciting scripture, casting all my cares upon Him because he cares for me. God, you love me. And I would try to calm myself, sooth myself through this whole process, actually believing in the presence and power of God as a boy. And how important is it to do that thought stopping and that thought insertion process to help calm our kids and teach them these basic skills because often we don't have these conversations with our kids. We ignore them. I don't know why.

Patti Garibay: Yeah. And isn't prayer always the last thing we go to it seems, when it should be the very first? Oh, we humans. The Lord has a lot to talk to us about when we see Him finally.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah, He does.

Patti Garibay: To teach our kids that they have the father of all fathers, the Good Good Father, to quote the popular song. The creator of their entire world, the creator of them themselves, to think of them as the Prince of Peace, I mean the Alpha and the Omega, He was here before it started, He's going to be here when it all ends. And the Lord that provides, our Jehovah Jireh. That is what my life's ministry is about, is teaching children the goodness of God, because if we really understood that, we don't have fear and anxiety because we know He's got it. Now, it might be in His own timeline and it usually is, not ours, but we have to know that God's got this and He's got us.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I'm reminded of the scripture that says, "Train up a child in the way he or she would go and when they're old, they won't depart from it." I really believe that that training piece, attending to the uniqueness of our kids and giving them godly training in this journey is what it's all about. You can't get it done, number

one, if you don't show up as mom or dad speaking into those moments, being available, especially in those vulnerable broken moments that they're going through.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And number two, if we don't have instruction, opportunities like programs like American Heritage Girls, that they get into, and they're focused on skill development, anchored and developing relationship with older women, older women influencing the younger women to grow up into maturity in Christ. What a beautiful thing that is and how important in this hour now more than ever with this COVID pandemic, this cancel culture crisis that's going on around us and so much more. We salute you, Patti. We thank you for the gift that God has given and placed inside of you and is working through you to influence young women all over the world. It's such an amazing story. Thank you again.

Patti Garibay: Thank you, Dr. Tim, appreciate that.

Roger Marsh: And you've been listening to Patti Garibay, the founder of the American Heritage Girls, discussing ways to help our girls defeat fear and anxiety. Her conversation with Dr. Tim Clinton here on Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh. When preteen and teenage girls spend hours a day on unrestricted smartphones with access to all kinds of social media sites, they are definitely going to be defined by this sin stained world. That's why we are so excited about the great of American Heritage Girls, where they embrace the Titus 2 model of older Christian women discipling the younger ones. If you have a daughter, or if there's a girl in your life who needs some special guidance and fun, find a local troop or start one, go to the website for the American Heritage Girls, which is [AmericanHeritageGirls.org](http://AmericanHeritageGirls.org). Now to learn more about Patti Garibay or to read her latest blog series on girls, stress and anxiety, visit our broadcast page at [Dr.JamesDobson.org/broadcast](http://Dr.JamesDobson.org/broadcast).

Roger Marsh: And by the way, when you're there, you can hear any portion of today's broadcast that you might've missed, or just listen to the whole show again. That's [Dr.JamesDobson.org/broadcast](http://Dr.JamesDobson.org/broadcast). One final note, remember you can always drop us a line, we love hearing from you. Write to us at The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, PO box 39000 Colorado Springs, Colorado. The zip code, 80949. Again, that ministry mailing address is The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, PO box 39000, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80949. For all of us here at Family Talk, and the James Dobson Family Institute, I'm Roger Marsh, if you like what you hear, tell a friend and I'm sure there'll be encouraged too. Thanks again for listening. Have a blessed day and join us again next time.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of The Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.

Dr. Dobson: Hello, everyone, this is James Dobson, inviting you to join us for our next edition of Family Talk. Every day we come to these microphones with someone in mind, whether it's a busy mom looking for tips on discipline or a husband who wants to learn more about connecting with his wife. We want to put an arm around



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