



PRESENTATIONS TOPICS FOR EDUCATORS:

Elective Classes: StrengthBank® I, II, III, IV
StrengthBank® Classroom Strategies
Community Involvement - Talk Groups
High School Reform: Personalization

No speaker engages an education audience with more flair, inspiration from-an-educator's-perspective solutions than Sandra Shelton! (More about the speaker at the end of the document.)

Elective Classes: StrengthBank® I, II, III, IV

The high school day is filled with academic courses, lunch period, hopefully an advisory period frequently, and elective classes. There is no time allotted for personal growth or for students who having completed all their core classes need something besides teacher or office aid to idle away an hour.

What we have found is that once students have StrengthBank® I, they are eager to continue the study into II, III, and IV because the curriculum makes all the other hoops they are put through make sense. Not only that, because each now knows a specific purpose and direction in each one's life, they find relational issues such as peer pressure and bullying can be handled individually and successfully; they have a greater purpose and can recognize what might push them off track.

Methodology: Teacher-led study guide + mentor-led talk groups (at discretion of the teacher) - a developmental life process not just another elective class.

The accredited version of StrengthBank® for High Schools - A Relationship Initiative began at Santa Fe High School in Santa Fe, Texas Fall of 2004. The StrengthBank®-Certified secondary teachers bring in mentors from the surrounding community about once a week for Talk Groups similar to those in the school-wide, advisory period implementation, i.e., StrengthBank® Talk Groups.

The first semester the program began at SFHS, the students wanted to extend the ideas for more discussion so convinced the school to create an school club called

StrengthBank® Club. Then the students petitioned the StrengthBank®-certified teachers to allow them to make up a StrengthBank® t-shirt as a fundraiser for the club. In-school suspension (ISS) dropped by 20% the first year of the program... focused teens understand behaviors - the heart of living in StrengthBank®

Students continue to make decisions to stay in school, return to school even after having dropped out for a period of time, and make better present choices by having a clearer view of consequences.

StrengthBank® levels the playing field. In this class students particularly learn to respect each other's differences, not judge differences.

Participant Take Aways:

- Full overview of curriculum basics.
- Projected improvement numbers.
- Aligned research specific to high school student performance.
- Direct experience with tenets of program.

StrengthBank® Classroom Strategies

Secondary teachers have the hardest job in America. Among all the tasks that we juggle, two are paramount; curriculum and discipline. Neither is more important, nor can one be effective without the other. There is no doubt that core curriculums for each academic discipline as well as co-curricular activities need to be taught thoroughly and with a passion. However, we have taken high school curriculums and created a crucible for hammering in 'Readin,' Ritin,' and 'Rithmetic to the exclusion of what powers these skills into fulfilled lives that contribute to the greater good.

Teachers care about kids and their academic area of concentration. Classroom strategies that honor both of those passions seemed to end when testing became the heavy norm. Teachers were no longer trusted to care about kids and curriculum; they have been mandated to get the curriculum taught for high scores regardless of whether the students "liked" it or not. The result of that thrust has been a rise in all the negative numbers, i.e., dropouts, school shooting, aberrant behaviors by teens, and unwed mothers. The high school students are screaming for tutelage related to their significance in the midst of gathering all this information and spitting it back on a test. HELP! Are we listening?

Albeit, there is a big push for character education, most of these programs fall to another "testing criteria" that assumes if you can define the character traits, get an award for using them, and have all the "Sunday school" answers when asked, you have passed character test. Character is a relational and developmental process, not a lesson to be learned and practiced.

Without the 4th "R" - Relationship Skills, we are turning out what former president of John Hopkins University Steven Mueller calls "highly skilled barbarians," kids who can pass the "test" but lack relational values.

"StrengthBank® Classroom strategies enable teachers to develop relationship skills alongside core curriculum the way teachers inevitably want to teach., that is, finding out how to engage all the kids in the classroom rather than resorting to discipline referrals for those who do not immediately "tame" to the classroom moment. With StrengthBank® Classroom Strategies in hand, teachers are able to engage the students from all diversities quickly and with a sense of humor rather than forced "Bruin Hilda" demeanors that "turn off" teens' learning except for those with strong parental support. Let's face it, strong parental support is not in the picture as once it was. It appears that strong parenting will not be in the picture until the kids we teach today have the relationship skills needed to be in a condition to parent.

Time to deal with reality!

Teens are still in developmental stages. They can be reached and enfolding their academic day with relational savvy brings back the safe, fun, learning environment we need.

It's always too soon to give up on innovative leadership from the high school platform! There is a constructive side to imperfect behavior – along with a very destructive one! Disagreements are an opportunity for change, good change, even with teenagers. Know-it-alls, martyrs, complainers, manipulators, put-down artists, and procrastinators – the list of annoying, irksome behaviors is limitless and teens are masters of them all! How do you teach anything if the students won't sit down, be quiet and listen? If an educator can't conveniently remove herself, himself, or them (after all, detention can hold only so many), what are the options? High school education does not have to become merely "crowd control." Hope for the continuing teachable moment floats and the educator has to know where to grab this life preserver – and on a moment's notice. Leadership for educators is about building a repertoire of new responses for heretofore humorless situations.

Participant Take Aways:

- Practical experience with core concepts during the session..
- Projected classroom discipline for specific academic areas.
- A new perspective on the possibilities for engaging students in learning.
- Aligned research specific to high school classroom as an engaging learning environment.
- Case study evidence.
- WorkOuts in small groups to demonstrate effectiveness of each strategy.

Community Involvement - Talk Groups

Community mentors add to the needed clarifying of teenage mystique because high school teens don't come with user manuals

High school students are your business and you love teens; yet, as the school term goes by, how easy it is to see students as inconveniences and problems waiting to invade space and time. Education is in partnership with the community who is not merely a "buyer" of a product (high school education) but of a total relationship experience that comes with the deliverable (high school graduate). Companies spend nearly \$3 billion annually on community volunteer programs and are increasingly looking to link such efforts to business goals. Now is the time to engage the experienced productive citizens as mentors to extend a hand in "training up" emerging productive citizens. There is a bridge between today's and tomorrow's workforce; mentors can help navigate the terrain to get there.

High School Advisory Periods: The High School Student Is Still Just Youth!

Advisory periods are as needed as any academic or elective class. Character education should not be a program but is a process; it is a way of life personally developed in each student from the inside out. If character has not been developed before a lesson on or example of a character trait, there is little chance of life-long benefits from the lesson.

Advisory periods may be the only time a teen gets to take a few minutes on a regular basis for relationship counseling. Think about it! High school violence, aberrant behaviors, disengagement are first relational! No academic discipline or high test score prepares youth for the inevitable struggles of life after high school. Success depends, first, on the ability to get along with others, work interdependently with others, and each one's understand individual worth.

Typically we teach students readin', writin', and 'rithmetic then let them learn relationship skills by "osmosis" in the halls, bathrooms, and parking lots. Advisory periods infused with a process-oriented relationship skills curriculum is a vital step in high school reform – personalization. Advisory periods done right require less therapy and more common sense in everyday relationships. We can win the battle for the character of our youth!

Participant Take Aways:

- Practical experience with core StrengthBank® Talk Group concepts during the session..

- New perspective on what can be done by a community member joining forces with educators
- Examples and case studies for effectiveness of advisory periods with a solid curriculum.
- Aligned research specific to advisory periods.
- Steps to take to begin moving the StrengthBank® Talk Groups into the community and the high school.

High School Reform: Personalization - Great Talk, Minimal Application

The great efforts of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to fix the American High School looked great on paper. The problem came in implementation as principals without the needed leadership skills training attempted to follow the guidelines. Former teachers were thrown into principalships and then tried to run a school like a classroom. Soon, in desperation many have become micromanaged by superintendents who were promoted from the same position. The question becomes, who is watching the kids as the number one priority?

Contributing also to the difficulty of the public high school principal's job are a myriad of distractions from discipline issues, teachers' pay issues, student disrespect for authority backed by parent bullying, more and more state and federal intrusion along with reports to monitor, e.g., state API scores and federal AYP scores. The API scores measure growth in test scores year to year, while the AYP numbers show whether schools are meeting No Child Left Behind standards. No Child Left Behind requires all government-run schools receiving federal funding to administer a state-wide standardized test annually to all students. This means that all students take the same test under the same conditions. The students' scores determine whether the school has taught the students well. Schools which receive Title I funding through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 must make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in test scores.

Yes, it all comes down to fighting for the money for our school by making the numbers what they need to be. What got lost in this shuffle? Students relational development. Parents are too busy earning money to "live large" or live at all and teachers and principals are too distracted and pressed for results. Therefore, kids have turned to themselves and teen pregnancies have increased along with other aberrant behaviors - high school violence, dropouts, drug use, and gang membership. Basically, the wrong numbers are going up.

Parents who could afford it are now sending kids to private schools. The result is that high achievers (parented kids) have been stripped from the public school arena and left the kids who for the most part are rearing themselves, who needed a peer role model of seeking success rudderless in a maze of beautiful school buildings, access to computers, and free meals most don't really need rather than individual, personal development.

The good news is that we can still take to win back our public high schools.

Upping The High School Graduation Numbers: Disengagement, Enemy #1

Educators and business and community leaders seldom think of their jobs sales jobs. The reality is that selling kids on staying in school is imperative. Would many of us have had an easy time staying in school with the increased pressures of performance testing? In a recent poll asking kids why they are dropping out of high school, the number one reason was not that they felt inadequate to complete the work but that they were bored. The solution to rising high school graduation rates is not that high school administration and staff become entertainers. The solution lies in a common "sales strategy" to involve not only the high school but also the community who stands to benefit from an educated citizenry. Becoming engaged defeats boredom.

*Disengaged Youth Disengage From Education...
No Education = No high life goals = Poor work ethic*

Participant Take Aways:

- Clear understanding of the roots of low performance in public high schools
- Resources for supporting the character of leadership development for principals.
- Think tank scenarios to set up in the community- Aligned research specific to high school classroom as an engaging learning environment.
- How to get everyone on faculty and staff to pitch in and implement unique, new strategies
- WorkOuts in small groups brainstorm and prepare for roadblocks.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Sandra Shelton is an engaging international speaker, former high school classroom educator then administrator candidate, author, coach, and frequent media guest. Sandra is one of those rare speakers who gets the message across and in an entertaining way. She presents the good news at education conventions and to high school faculties to help secondary teachers everywhere. Participants begin each session with courteous giggles, move through more chuckles and into side-splitting belly laughs as Sandra shares anecdotes, ideas, and most importantly, solutions for secondary education issues. For over two decades she has presented over 2100 speeches and seminars nationwide and in 15 foreign countries. Her ingenious, one of a kind, people strategy – StrengthBank® – The Ultimate People Performance Upgrade – has improved working the relationship culture of hundreds of organizations.

The strength of positive relationship building forms an important connection between education to its extended life in corporate productivity, that is, what we teach, we learn. Sandra comes from an impressive background in academic education and corporate leadership. In addition, she has authored books, CDs, DVDs, videos, mentoring curriculums, and corporate training programs.

Her clients include a broad range of industries that include: American Airlines; Burlison Independent School District, Keller Independent School District, Hurst-Euless-Bedford Independent School District, Bridgeport ISD, Burlison ISD, Santa Fe ISD, Astra Merck Group; AT&T; Blue Cross and Blue Shield; Brinker International; Coca-Cola; "The Montel Williams Show;" National Missile Defense; Sara Lee Corporation; Showtime, Inc., and the former World Trade Center NYC. (Short movie demos at <http://www.strengthbank.com/video> and <http://www.talkgroups-mentors.org>)

Current Curriculums:

The StrengthBank® For High Schools – A Relationship Skills Initiative: *Leader's Guide for Business and Community Volunteers To Answer The Call: "Be A Mentor!"*

You + Your Dream + Your Original Equipment = A Lifetime You Can Love (*textbook for elective StrengthBank® I*)

Upcoming Book Releases:

Gorgeous School Buildings, State-Of-The-Art Technology, Lower High School Performance Numbers
It's Relationship Skills, Seeker!

Why StrengthBank® Kids Do Better and Stay in School
How high school kids can "get a grip" on the plan for each life that will not harm, that will prosper and give Hope and a future.