

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING
May 25-26 and June 1-2, 2021
University of Economics and
Innovation in Lublin



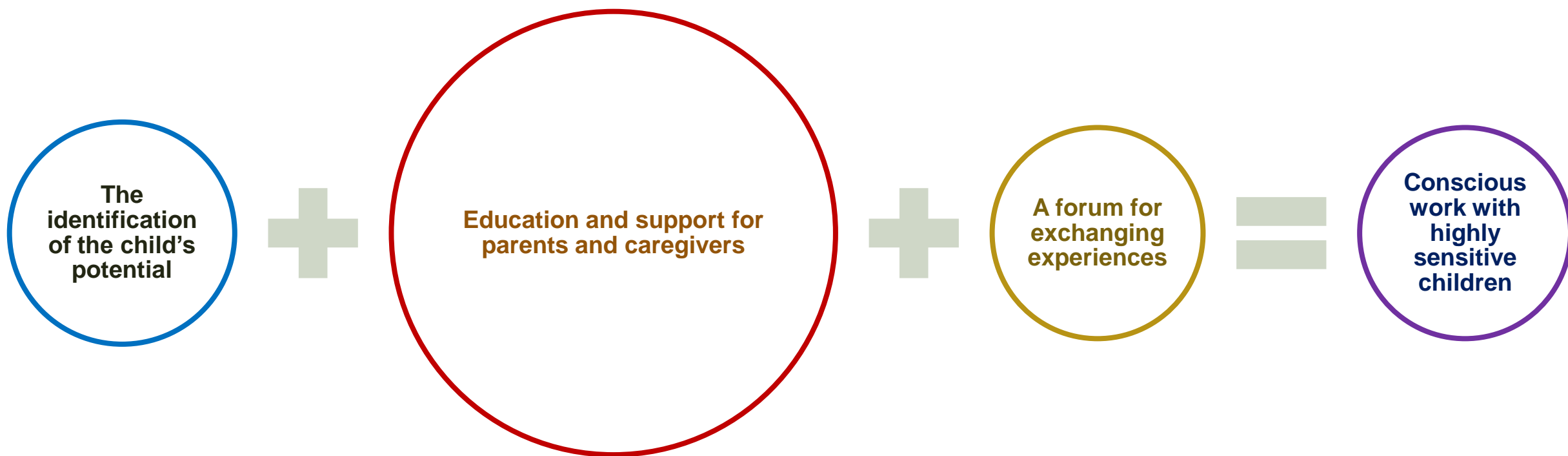
„A MODEL OF SUPPORT FOR HIGHLY SENSITIVE CHILDREN IN PRESCHOOL AND EARLY SCHOOL AGE”

Education and psychoeducation of parents and teachers of highly sensitive children - educational materials

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Baryła-Matejczuk (2019)

Structure

Theoretical background

Basis for the proposed approach

Types of educational materials

Conscious work with highly sensitive children

- The conscientious work does not involve interference with a trait, an assumption of high sensitivity being a disadvantage or a problem that needs to be dealt with,
- rather, it focuses on providing **conditions** in which highly sensitive children may have equal opportunities to develop their potential.
- The basic developmental task of e.g. preschool children is to become prepared for commencing school education.

Conscious work with highly sensitive children

- Within the perspective of the child taking up new roles, it is necessary for them to be ready to function in the conditions outside the home environment and to deal with typical preschool/school situations.
- In order to accomplish this task, a certain level of physical, cognitive, emotional and interpersonal development is necessary (Smykowski, 2003).
- Parents and adult carers are the key roles [because we want to build mental resilience in children]

Resilience

Recent studies concerning the determinants of dysfunctions and difficulties in the adaptation of children and adolescents are not wholly focused on risk factors, but more on protective factors

Confrontation with these tasks can thus become an opportunity for the child to adapt and acquire new skills or for the emergence of dysfunctions and non-adaptive behaviours.

Resilience

For a description of the above mechanisms, the term ‘resilience’, derived from the Latin salire, which means spring, spring up and resilire-bounce back, spring back, was adapted.

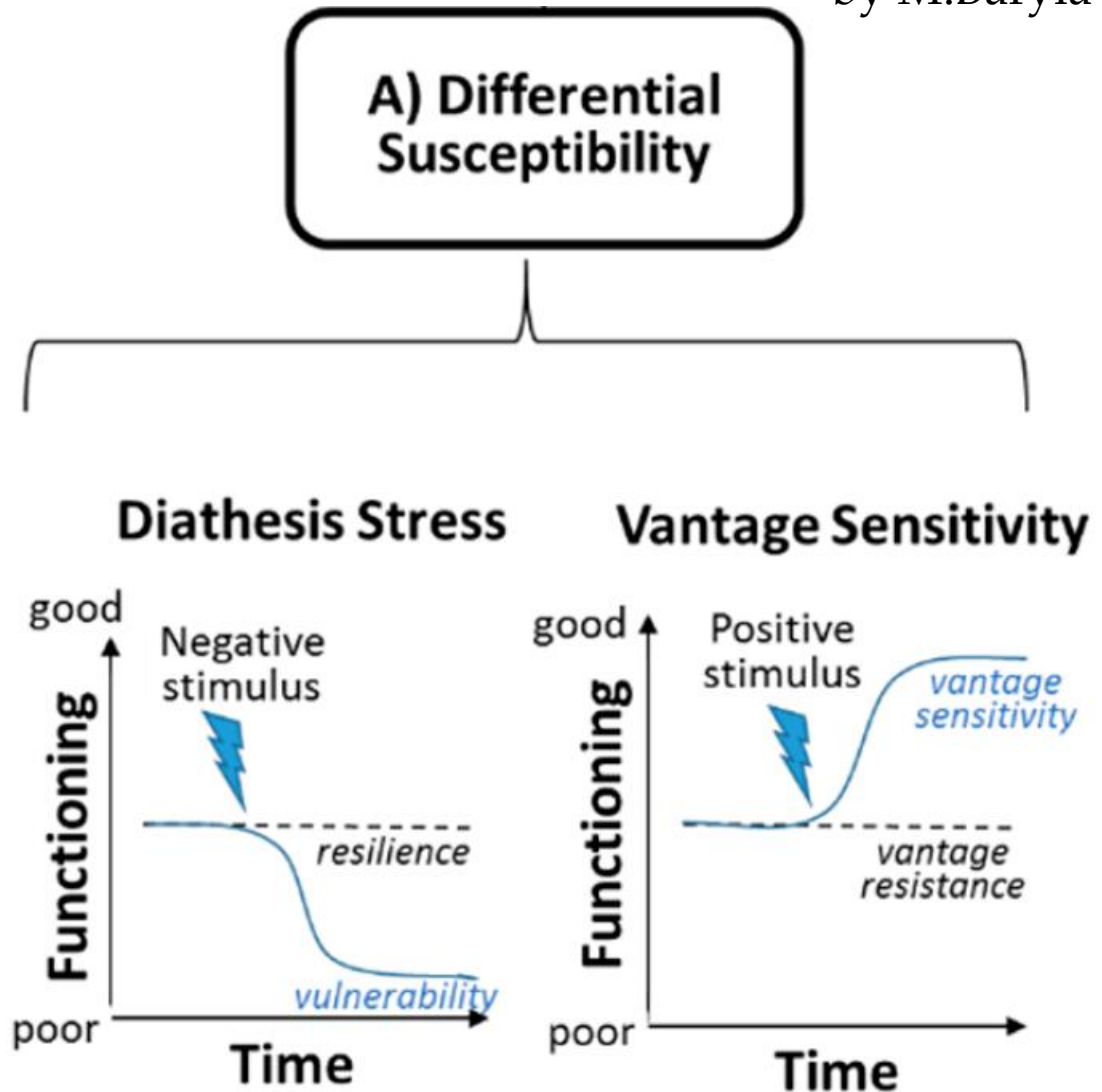
In psychological literature resilience is defined in three ways:

1. as a set of personality features characterizing the individual,
2. the effect of adapting to difficult conditions that are challenging,
3. the process of adaptation itself

(Ogińska-Bulik, Juczyński, 2011, pp. 8)

Differential Susceptibility

- Combines vantage sensitivity and diathesis stress models: Individuals are differentially susceptible not only to negative environments, but also to beneficial effects of positive environments.
- Emphasises moderation of environmental influences by genetics, temperament and endophenotypes.



Resilience

It is worth emphasizing that **resilience** is sometimes perceived to be the result of the interaction of forces in the ecosystem:

the individual - the environment

It is characterized by significant dynamics and a dependence on the context of life, which allows for the introduction of modifications to shape and develop resilience (Heszen, & Sęk, 2007).

Resilience



Prepare the Child for the
Road, Not the Road for
the Child



It's hard not to clear every obstacle in our children's path so they can be happy now - getting what they want, when they want it. But when we clear the road for a child, we make their life too easy. We don't allow them to build life-coping skills they'll need down the road to handle life's hard realities.



As the closest
environment, we
prepare the conditions!

What can adult caregivers be equipped with?

Types of educational materials

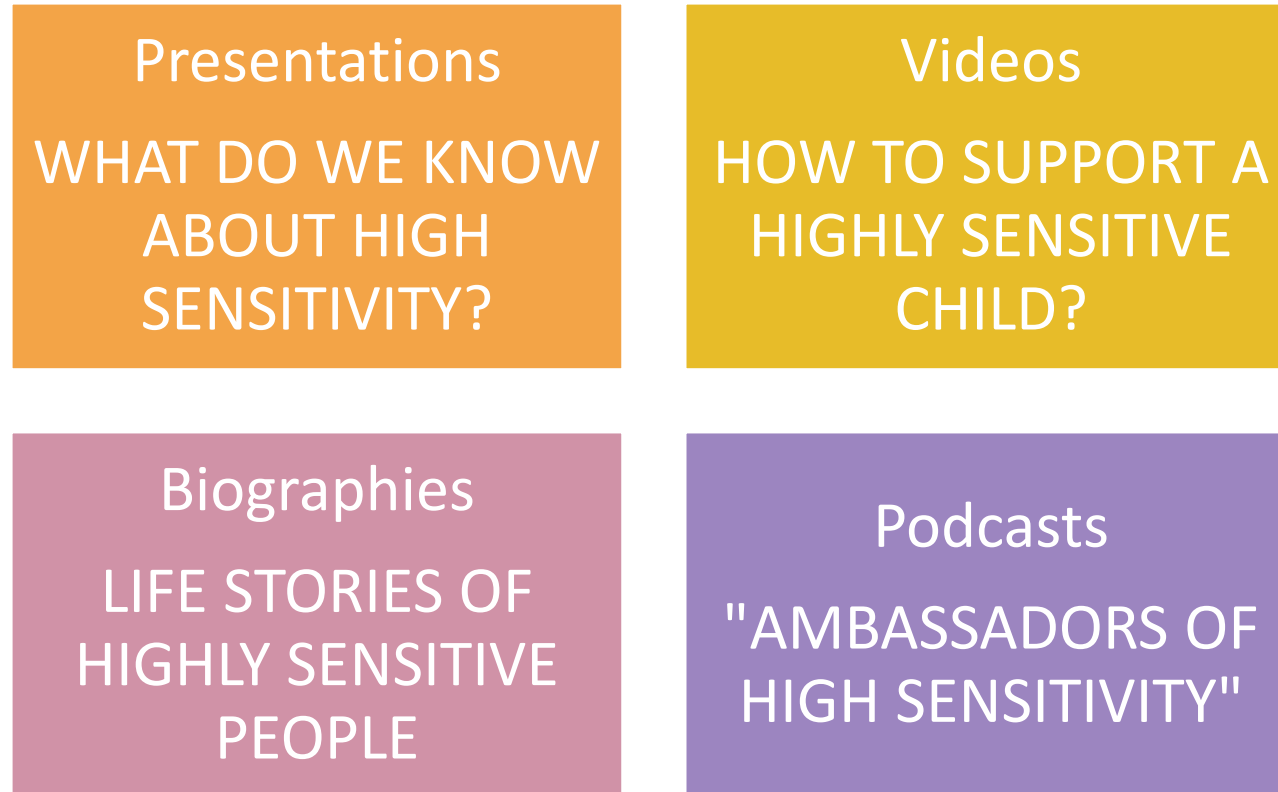


Figure 1 Types of educational material for parents and teachers of highly sensitive children.

The first group of materials developed are presentations whose common title is: WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT HIGH SENSITIVITY?



Figure 1 Types of educational material for parents and teachers of highly sensitive children.

Types of educational materials

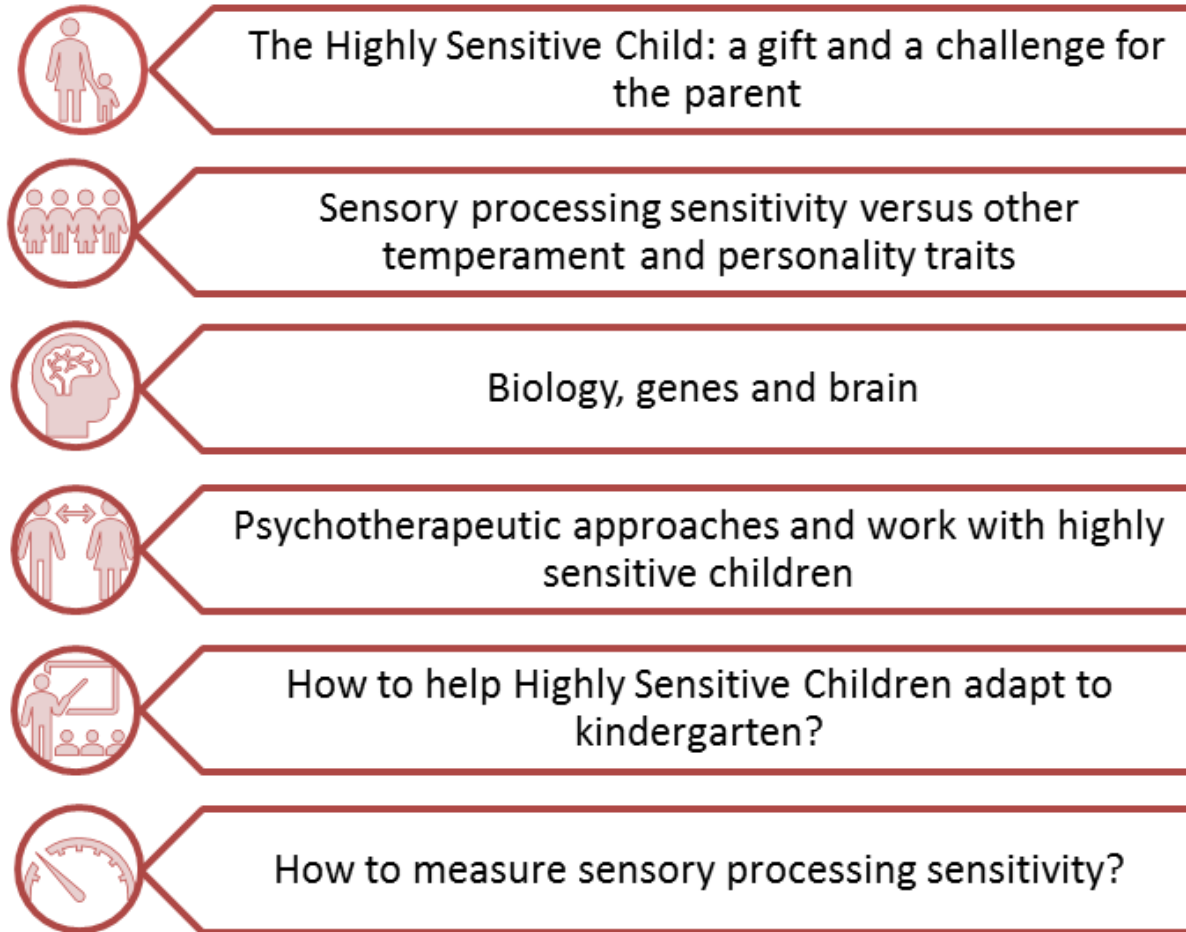


Figure 2 Educational material: subject areas developed as multimedia presentations

The second group of materials are videos, prepared in the form of video edugraphs.

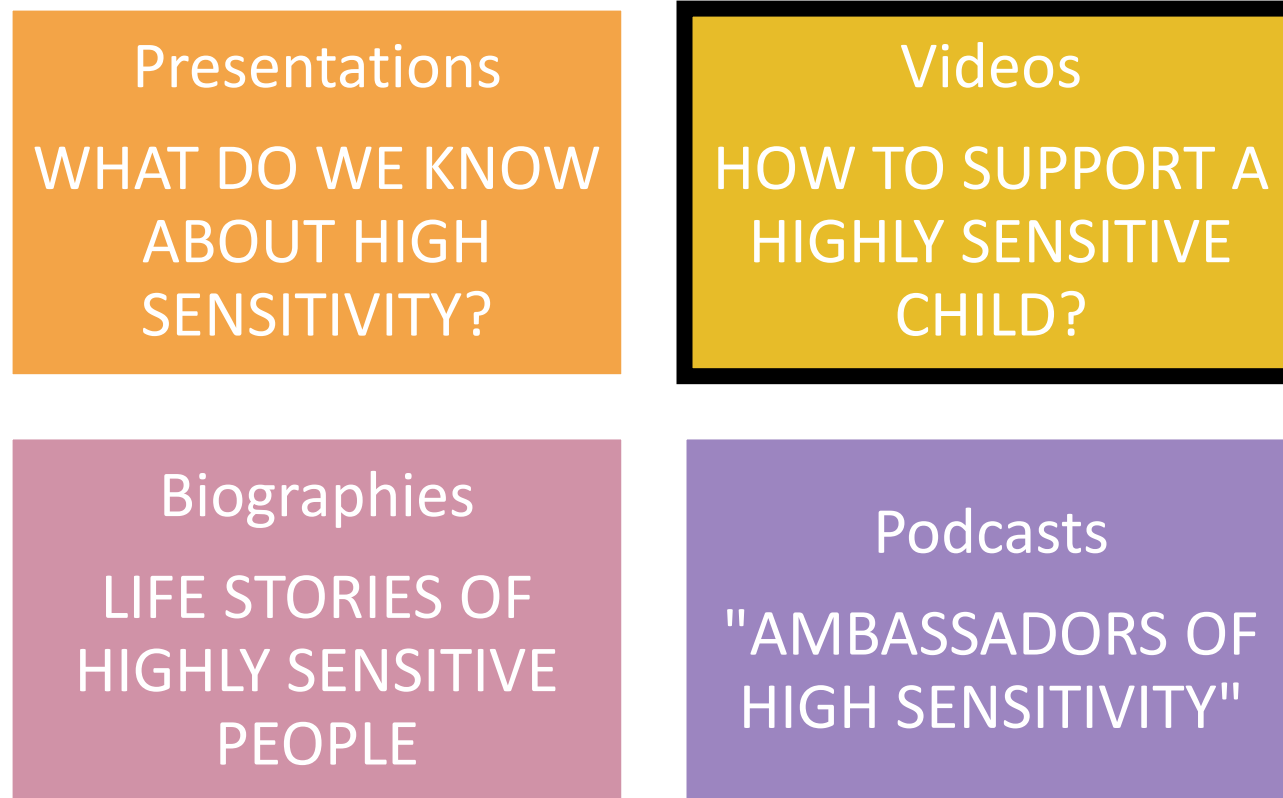


Figure 1 Types of educational material for parents and teachers of highly sensitive children.

HOW TO SUPPORT A HIGHLY SENSITIVE CHILD?

(1/2)

by M.Baryła-Matejczuk

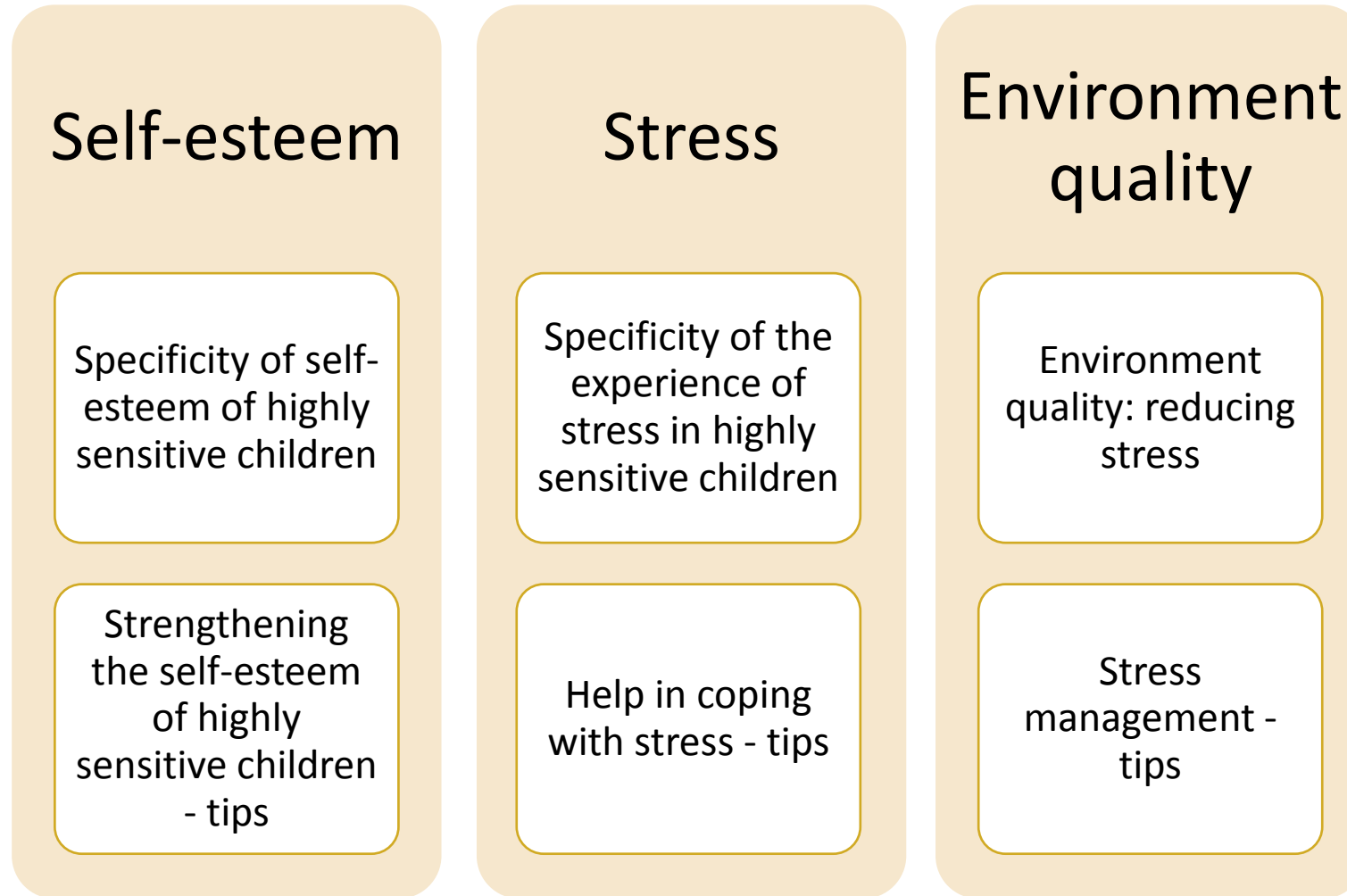


Figure 3 Educational material: support areas for highly sensitive children developed by video - part 1

HOW TO SUPPORT A HIGHLY SENSITIVE CHILD?

(2/2)

by M.Baryła-Matejczuk

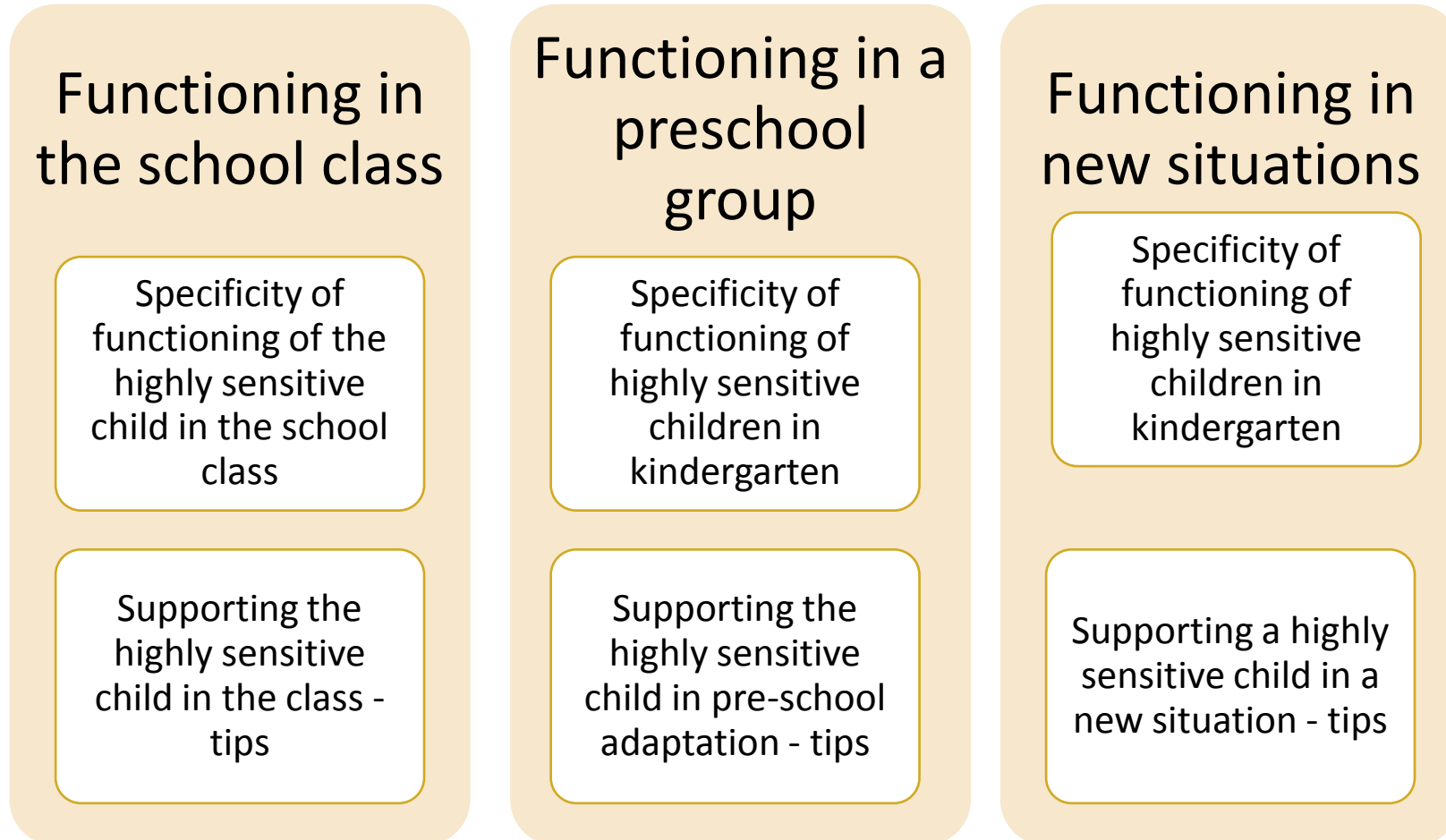


Figure 4 Educational material: support areas for highly sensitive

The third group of materials consists of biographies of highly sensitive people



Figure 1 Types of educational material for parents and teachers of highly sensitive children.

Biographies

LIFE STORIES OF HIGHLY SENSITIVE PEOPLE



The assumptions of McAdams' theory (2018) were used in the interviews conducted.



His theory, (commented on in many psychological works, e.g. Ciecuch, 2011), primarily emphasises the fact that the deepest knowledge of the other person is provided by a personal narrative.



This narrative integrates the life story, thus giving coherence, purpose and meaning (Teusz, 2016).

LIFE STORY

Chapter 1 – Fleeing in thoughts

Psychologist/Counsellor, aged 43, Bucharest, Romania

"With my knowledge and inner development, as I look at it now, I can say that I grew up in a family often surrounded by clouds of anxiety and worry. I had this perception since childhood, but I could not translate it into words. It was simply a feeling of emotional burden that tended to overwhelm me..."

LIFE STORY

Memoir #4 My close ones: family -friendships-loves

Teacher, aged 67, Lublin, Poland

"What I value most in relationships is loyalty. I was lucky to always have someone I could call a friend. Not all relationships from my childhood or teenage years survived into later years. But somehow it happened that there was always someone close to me at school or university. I have contact with some of them to this day...."

Types of educational materials

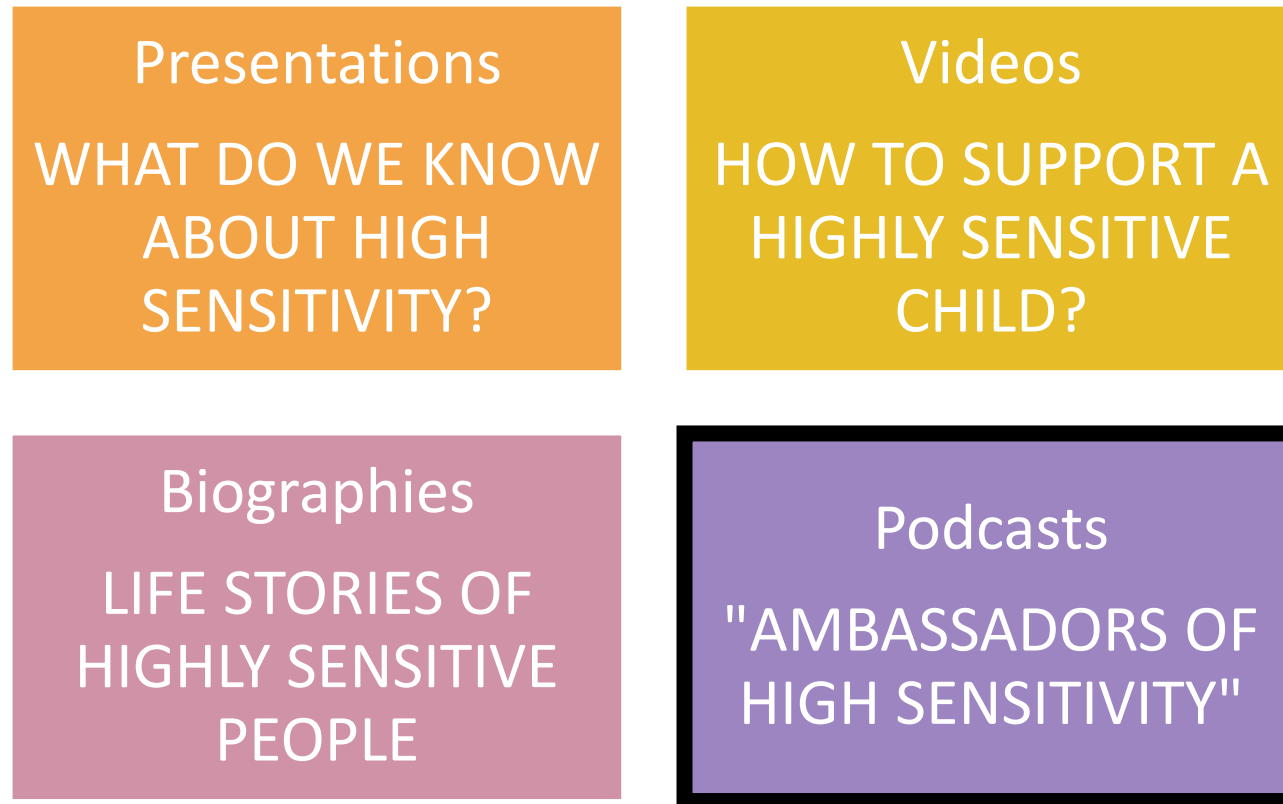


Figure 1 Types of educational material for parents and teachers of highly sensitive children.

Podcasts

The fourth group of materials features podcasts – the interviews conducted with the so-called "Ambassadors of High Sensitivity".

To record them, people from the world of art, science and business who consciously use their sensitivity in their lives and work, and are willing to share their creativity and the results of their work were invited.

The podcasts were prepared in sets:

- a short version (about 5 minutes) collecting the most important contents of the interview
- and a longer version (about 30-40 minutes) being a full, professionally edited interview.

In each of the countries (Poland, Spain, Italy, Macedonia and Romania) a minimum of two people were interviewed.

by M.Baryła-Matejczuk

*My sensitivity seemed
to change over time.*

*I was gaining
awareness, I was
growing up. (...) I
think I've learned to
live with sensitivity.*

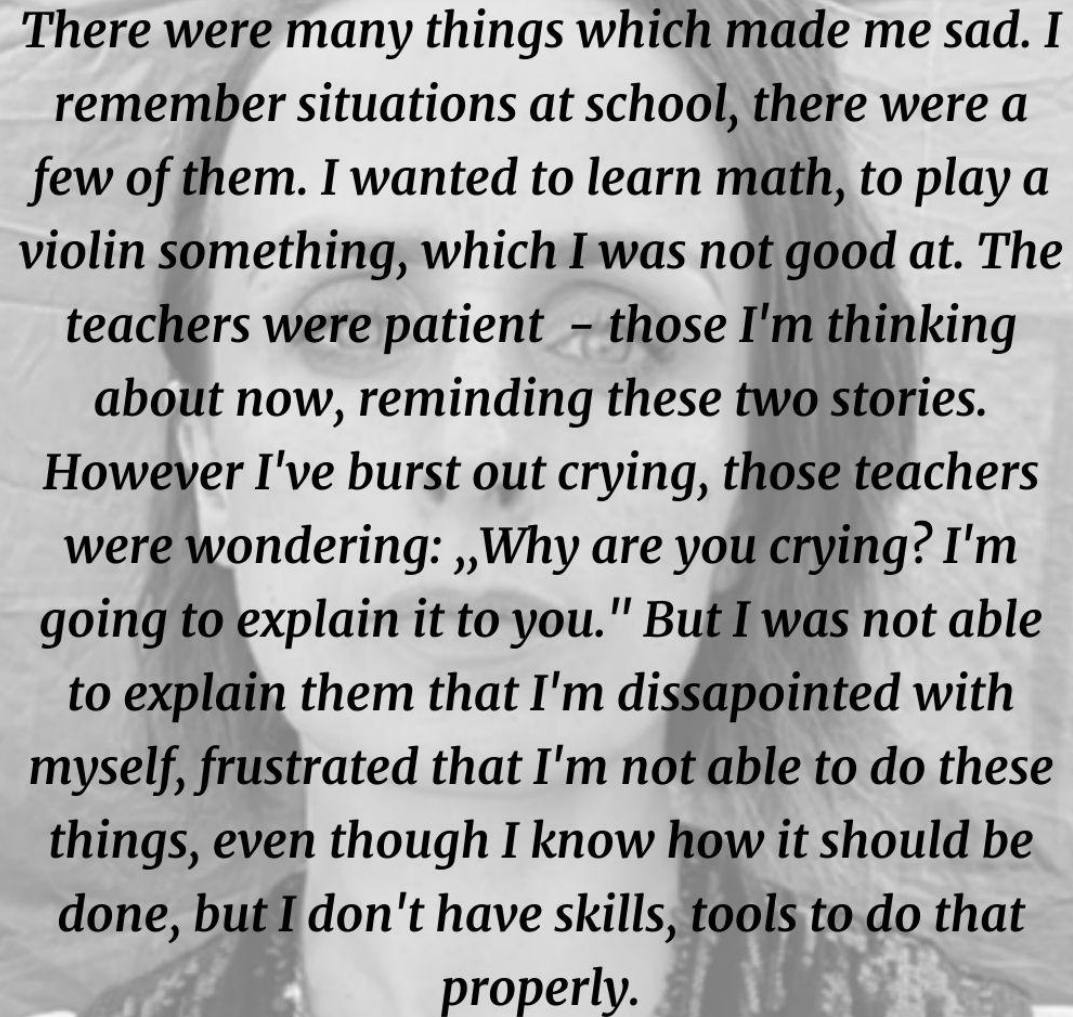




How was my sensitivity manifested? I made up some very strange things to keep myself busy as a kid. I was able to go through the entire geography atlas from beginning to end and, for example, remember all the capitals of countries in the world. At nine years old. Just pure fantasy. But I wasn't an isolated kid either.

*The sensitive person
feels good when he sees
that the other sensitive
person understands him.
And sensitive artist can
convey this sensitivity
within sounds, words,
song and even
instrumental music.*






There were many things which made me sad. I remember situations at school, there were a few of them. I wanted to learn math, to play a violin something, which I was not good at. The teachers were patient – those I'm thinking about now, reminding these two stories. However I've burst out crying, those teachers were wondering: „Why are you crying? I'm going to explain it to you." But I was not able to explain them that I'm dissapointed with myself, frustrated that I'm not able to do these things, even though I know how it should be done, but I don't have skills, tools to do that properly.

*It is good when
next to a sensitive,
talented child is
someone who will
expand the world
and not narrow it
down.*





*I wanted and still like to watch,
listen, experience the world of
someone else's imagination. This is
something that has always inspired
me to experience. This is more
interesting to me than physical
meaning.*

Summary

Each of the described groups of materials constitutes valuable input for supporting adult carers of highly sensitive children: parents, teachers as well as pedagogues or psychologists.

They can be used complementarily in the implemented prevention programme.

They can be recommended to parents and carers of highly sensitive children as a source of knowledge and practical advice on supporting children.



WYŻSZA SZKOŁA
EKONOMII I INNOWACJI
W LUBLINIE



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Thank you for attention!

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