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"Theoric and methodological advances in the study of highly sensitivity in children"

Alicante, 16 July 2021







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E-MOTION – potential of high sensitivity as an example of Evidencebased practice (EBP) approach

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Structure









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INTRODUCTION

Where we started?

- 1. We started with the state of art assessment in the field of sensory processing sensitivity
- 2. Despite the growing research in Europe and numerous practical initiatives in the USA, there were **no comprehensive solutions** understood as good practices in the partner countries
- 3. On this basis, the idea was created and then its implementation

Much has been said over the past three years (trainings, national and international concefernces) and today I will summarize it in the broader context











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SPECALISTS

- they notice a group of children for whom group work and undertaking some developmental tasks is difficult
- they notice a group of children who ", slip out" the classically understood diagnosis (differential diagnosis)
- note the lack of reliable methods of identifying highly sensitive children
- many myths and false beliefs about the so-called high sensitivity





PARENTS

- they often feel helpless in the face of the child's behavior
- they have a comparison with child's peers who do not experience such difficulties in everyday life
- they are worried whether their child will cope in this "difficult world"
- they lack methods of supporting children - use popular guides promoting mainly behavioral methods





<u>CHILDREN</u>

- who are children!
- have needs that the environment often does not respond to
- are particularly sensitive to the environment
- have the right to development and independence like any child



THE EBP TRIAD

Evidence-based practice (EBP) aims to maximize the effectiveness of psychological intervention s through adherence to principles informed by

- empirical findings,
- clinical expertise,
- and client characteristics.





Evidence-based practice

Evidence-based practice involves the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of the **best available research evidence** to inform each stage of clinical decision-making and service delivery. This requires that psychologists apply their knowledge of the best available research in the context of specific client characteristics, cultural backgrounds, and treatment preferences.

Report of the CPA Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice of Psychological Treatments Canadian Psychological Association (CPA)



E-MOTION PROJECT

Is not based on "intuition"

Activities are not products

Actions are the result of taskwork but also cooperation and teamwork combining potential

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- empirical findings,
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E-MOTION Support model scheme:



The main goal of the project is to develop, test and implement a **comprehensive** model of **support** for highly sensitive children in preschool and early-school age.





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That is why we develop model of support....

- By model it is understood an integration by representing diverse findings in a common system (Tack, 1972)
- The model is built upon the approach to Sensory Processing Sensitivity in children
- The basis for its construction was also the broader construct of Environmental Sensitivity
- to foster the potential of high SPS individuals and prevent negative consequences, support of teachers and parents based on prevention programs available (a.o. Temperament-Based Intervention)

(Allen, 2015; Aron & Aron, 1997; Aron, 2002; Pluess, 2015)















That is why we develop model of support....

- The purpose of the developed model is to realize the assumption that highly sensitive students have the opportunity **to fully use their potential**, manifested in creativity, intuition, acumen, brilliance, life wisdom or empathy.
- To be perceived through all their potential, not only one-dimensional through the prism of highly sensitivity (often labeled as shyness, inhibition, fearfulness, capriciousness/grimaces) and possibilities.

(Baryła-Matejczuk, 2019)













We have transferred to the available resources in paralel...



https://highlysensitive.eu/hetool/



Identification



- The initial assessment of temperamental features is often based on the analysis of behaviours
- in the case of HSCh may be confused
- a proper ,tool' can be the first stage of the process of support for HSCh and their families as well as their close environment
- ,positive diagnosis'





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Positive diagnosis

In accordance with a positive diagnosis approach (Hornowska, Brzezińska, Appelt, Kaliszewska-Czeremska, 2014) tests, questionnaires, psychometric tools may not only be applied to diagnose difficulties (as is sometimes assumed when using the term 'diagnosis')

> but also to learn about the strengths and potential of children, their talents, predispositions in order to find out how to develop them and how to support the child's development.













Dear Parent, Dear Teacher,

We invite you to use the resources of the E-MOTION platform, where you will find helpful materials, questionnaires and tips for supporting a highly sensitive children.

The platform includes six different modules containing different types of resources.

IDENTIFICATION CHECK IF YOU CHILD IS HIGHLY SENSITIVE	WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT HIGH SENSITIVITY READ THE KNOWLEDGE BASE, SEE THE PRESENTATIONS	FORUM MEET PEOPLE YOU CAN SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH
PODCASTS MEET HS AMBASADORS	VIDEO LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT A HIGHLY SENSITIVE CHILD	MATERIALS FOR WORKING WITH A CHILD USE READY-MADE WORK SCENARIOS, LEARN ABOUT THE BIOGRAPHIES OF HIGHLY SENSITIVE PEOPLE

Some of them require basic registration (PODCASTS, VIDEO, WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT HIGH SENSITIVITY), access to others (IDENTIFICATION, FORUM, MATERIALS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN) requires answering a few additional question. If you are on the PLATFORM for the first time, click the Register, in the return e-mail you will receive a link that will allow you to enter the platform and use its resources. With each subsequent entry, all you need to do is click the Login button and there you will enter the e-mail address and password you provided during registration.







QUESTIONNAIRE OF SENSORY PROCESSING SENSITIVITY IN CHILDREN Version for parents of preschool children

PHYSICAL SPHERE

1	2	3	4	5		6			7	
Not at all			Moderately					Extre	emely	
Too hot foods both	er her/hi	m		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Finds intense lights	unpleasa	ant		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Is sensitive to temp	erature o	hanges		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Avoids being in the	bright su	in		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dislikes certain foo	d texture	s (e.g. dil	uted, pasty, lumpy)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If experiences som headache, stomach	•	ntensely,	complains of pain (e.	g. 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
More often than ot	her child	ren, signa	ls a need for rest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Badly tolerates dirt	, wetting	, etc. on c	lothing or on the hands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
When many things other children	happen	at once,	is tired more often tha	an 1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is difficult for hi day	m to fall	asleep,	especially after an activ	/e 1	2	3	4	5	6	7



The Questionnaire of Sensory Processing Sensitivity in Children (QSPSinCh) is a questionnaire designed to measure the personality trait of sensory processing sensitivity (SPS) of children who are between 3 and 10 years old. SPS is a phenotypic personality trait which is characterized by a deep information process of the environment at cognitive, sensory and emotional levels. SPS has a wide variety of levels, classifying individuals as low, medium and high sensitivity level. Thus, SPS is a phenomenon which has a great influence on different life areas.

The results obtained during the survey made it possible to describe your child's/student's functioning in four spheres: physical, emotional, interpersonal and cognitive.



Child's results are shown in the graph:

PHYSICAL SPHERE





The younger the child, the more important to their development is environmental stimulation, and thus the quality of the environment (cf. Pluess and Bielsky, 2013; Pluess et al., 2017)

Education and support for parents and caregivers e.g. HSCh with a poorquality material environment were more sensitive to the negative effects of a poor environment as adults, reporting significantly higher psychological distress scores (Keers, Pluess, 2017)



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Prevention cognitive approach

based on the assumption that if a person apprehends and understands facts, then they will make their own decision to cease a specific unconstructive activity. Therefore, the strategy of this approach is to <u>supply information</u>

(Baryła-Matejczuk, Domańska, 2018; Gaś, 1999, 2006)













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Module 2 (WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT HIGH SENSITIVITY) is a knowledge compendium about high sensitivity. You will find there supporting materials such as articles and presentations. The aim of these materials is to explain the idea of high sensitivity and specifics of the functioning of a highly sensitive child.





Prevention Normative education approach

- based on the assumption that people overestimate the universality of dysfunctional behaviours and difficulties experienced
- know about the history of life of high-sensitive people, normalizing beliefs about the ability to cope with the lives of people who are highly sensitive (beliefs such as: cannot cope in the 'hard' world)

(Baryła-Matejczuk, Domańska, 2018; Gaś, 1999, 2006)











That's why

A forum for exchanging experiences







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Is High Sensitivity a disorder?

Is High Sensitivity a disorder ? Conversations and consultations about high sensitivity usually start with the question: where does this disorder come from? Thinking about

Shy or brave – what is the shyness of highly sensitive children all about ?

Shy or brave – what is the shyness of highly sensitive children all about ? This question is often asked by parents of highly sensitive



Are highly sensitive children self-centered ?

Are highly sensitive children self-centered ? In conversations with the parents of highly sensitive children, they often manifest the problem of excessive self-focus and demand



PODCASTY











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Prevention affective approach

- assumes that adequately strong and stable self-esteem, problem-solving skills and - in relation to the research conducted
 educational skills allow for the provision of sufficient support in order to avoid dysfunctional behaviours
- The strategies undertaken as a part of this approach are aimed at improving life and educational skills and are carried out in the form of educational initiatives.

(Baryła-Matejczuk, Domańska, 2018; Gaś, 1999, 2006)













FOR THE CHILDREN 3-6 YEARS OLD

1. This is the way I am

- 2. Taking advantage of difficulties
- 3. Self-awareness
- 4. Emotions are required
- 5. Everyone is different, everyone is important
- 6. A helping hand
- 7. A walk through the regulation zones
- 8. Charging the internal batteries
- 9. I experience, feel, need
- 10. Myself in a group
- 11. Myself in the world
- 12. The positive brain

- 1. This is the way I am
- 2. Taking advantage of difficulties
- 3. Self-awareness
- 4. Emotions are required
- 5. Everyone is different, everyone is important

FOR THE CHILDREN 7-10 YEARS OLD

- 6. A helping hand
- 7. A walk through the regulation zones
- 8. Charging the internal batteries
- 9. I experience, feel, need
- 10. Myself in a group
- 11. Myself in the world
- 12. The positive brain



















Conscientious work with highly sensitive children

The essence of support for highly sensitive children

- planning support for HSCh is not about modifying their personality traits
- conscience work focuses on providing conditions in which HSCh may have equal opportunities to develop their potential
- when training, supporting adult carers in providing an adequate level of support for highly sensitive children, attention should be paid to the developmental tasks of preschool and early school age.
- we should provide support 'in something'

(Baryła-Matejczuk, Domańska, 2018; Gaś, 1999, 2006)

Thank you for attention!

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WYŻSZA SZKOŁA EKONOMII I INNOWACJI W LUBLINIE





Thank you for attention!

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