

# The AMBIANCE Project

**Nov, 2018  
newsletter**

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- Project overview, timeline, & training plan

## What is the AMBIANCE project?

The acronym refers to the Atypical Maternal Behaviour Instrument for Assessment and Classification, which is an observational tool anchored in attachment research that screens for potential maladaptive parenting. The project aims to bridge the knowledge-to-practice gap in child and family services.

## Who is involved?

The AMBIANCE project is led by Dr. Sheri Madigan and involves multi-site collaboration between academic researchers and community agencies across Canada. Throughout the duration of the project, an advisory council has provided feedback and guidance. Social services professionals will receive training and play a key role in the project.

## Why is this research important?

Currently, there is a lack of valid tools for use in community practice. The AMBIANCE-brief possesses strong psychometric properties. By developing this practical and empirically-supported observational assessment tool, we can aid family services with intervention planning, staff training, and risk screening activities.

## Introducing: The AMBIANCE-brief

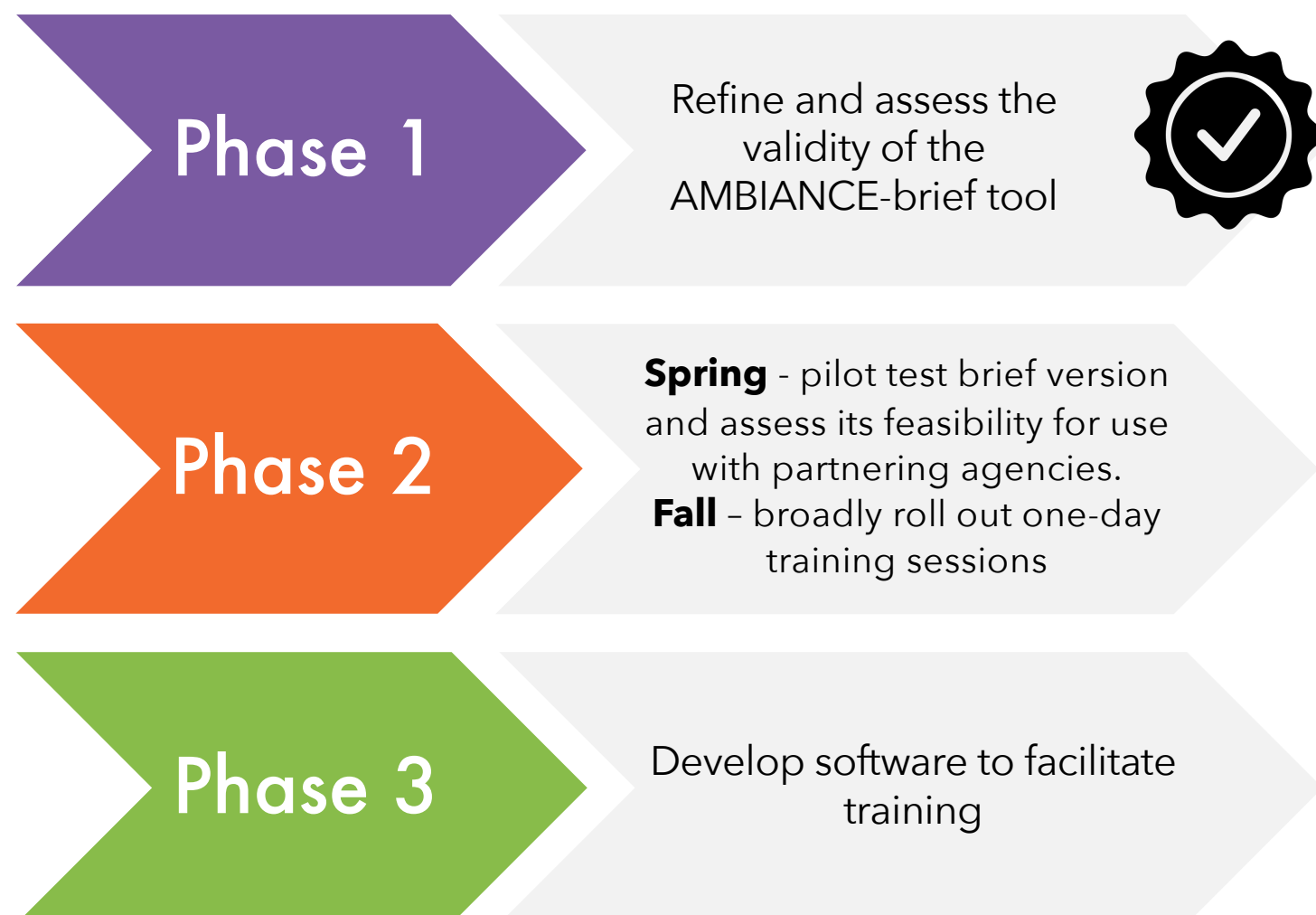
In December of 2017, we successfully refined the AMBIANCE, making a more streamlined version that **focuses on the most salient indicators of problematic parenting behaviors** in order to make it more feasible for use in community settings. The number of behaviours coded for was **reduced from 153 to 45**. The new brief measure takes **5-7 minutes to code** (based on 3 minutes of parent-child interaction), demonstrating its feasibility. Convergent validity has recently been established between the original AMBIANCE and the brief version – confirming that both the long and brief version are measuring the same construct of maladaptive maternal behavior. Furthermore, we have established that **the AMBIANCE-brief predicts infant-parent disorganized attachment**, making it a useful tool for identifying caregiving behaviours that put infants at risk for disorganized attachment. In the Spring of 2019 we will pilot test the AMBIANCE-brief, and in the Fall of 2019 we hope to roll-out single-day training sessions more widely.

## ◀ Rewind – 2017

In 2017, we received a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Development Grant (SSHRC-PDG) and partnered with community agencies across Canada to bridge the knowledge-to-practice gap and implement an observational tool that can be used in applied settings with families at high social risk to detect problematic parenting behaviors.



## Project Timeline





# The AMBIANCE Project

## Phase 2 Training Plan

i

### 8 hour training session with community agencies

- Give an overview of AMBIANCE-brief and it's functions.
- Discuss & provide examples of specific behaviours that are coded for by the AMBIANCE-brief.
- Describe how to determine overall rating of disrupted or maladaptive caregiving behaviour for each parent and the various types of disrupted classifications.

ii

Have agencies code 10 AMBIANCE-brief reliability videos within 2 weeks of training & compare them to expert coder's ratings.

iii

Obtain feedback regarding the measure and its implementation. Then, determine it's feasibility.

Thank you to all of our partners for their contribution in making this project possible. We are excited to work you on this project over the coming year! Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

## Research Collaborators

### Project Director:

Sheri Madigan (University of Calgary)

### Co-Investigators:

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