



# Adoption Tracking Tool: Differences Across Local Courts Impact Implementation of a Cross-Sector Communication Tool

Amanda Rose Brown, Dennis Alford, Becci Akin, Kaela Beyers,  
The University of Kansas

TAP TO RETURN TO  
KIOSK MENU

## Abstract

**Adoption Tracking Tool (ATT)** is a case-tracking tool for agency workers and court/legal personnel newly designed to document the adoption process and support communication across agency and court personnel. Data were collected from surveys and focus groups to evaluate implementation in 6 pilot counties. Individuals across sectors responded favorably to the ATT, but differences in local court procedures, court delays due to COVID-19, and differential exposure to the ATT in practice impacted implementation.

## Introduction

The ATT was developed in collaboration with court and child welfare agency leaders to:

- Clarify and **streamline procedures**
- **Improve communication** between caseworkers and courts
- Expand efforts to **identify barriers** to timely adoption
- Increase **collaborative accountability**

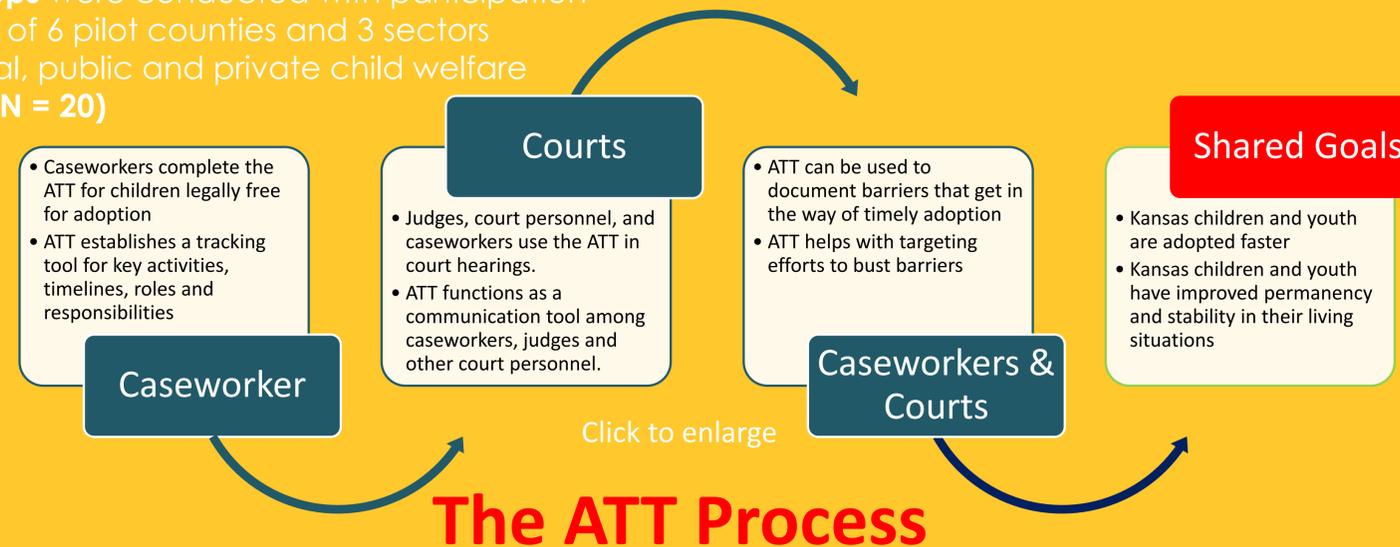
This study evaluates the effectiveness of the ATT in meeting these goals through surveys, focus groups and interviews with agency and court personnel from 6 pilot counties.

## Methodology

**Participants:** Court and child welfare personnel handling adoption cases, including judges, prosecuting attorneys, guardians ad litem, parent attorneys, adoptive family attorneys, court appointed special advocates, and public and private child welfare agency staff (e.g., directors, supervisors, caseworkers)

### Procedures:

1. **Online Surveys** were completed monthly. (N = 77)
2. **Focus groups** were conducted with participation from each of 6 pilot counties and 3 sectors (court/legal, public and private child welfare agency). (N = 20)



### Responses varied by sector:

*"...There's a lot of processes that are out of our hands... It's not going to make the other entities that we rely on complete their step any faster."* –Private Agency Personnel

*"So, we even, in our office, check and make sure that things are moving, that we get the journal entry done and get it to [public agency], and just some of the processes that we can assist with..."* –Court Personnel

## Results

- Overall, ATT was **rated positively** for supporting milestone tracking, communication, and identifying barriers to adoption.
- See slide 4 for example quotes from study participants

### Responses varied by local court procedures:

*"It would possibly be slightly redundant in [county] just because of how they – their court reports are set up..."* –Public Agency Personnel

*"I find it beneficial, because then, I know where the agency is, because that information is not provided in my court reports."* –Court Personnel

Click to see full list of quotes

## Summary of Results

- ATT was rated positively for its identified objectives.
- Responses varied by role regarding collective accountability.
- Responses varied according to

## Conclusion

These **pilot findings demonstrate promise** for ensuring all case participants have a shared understanding of the status, process, and barriers to completion.

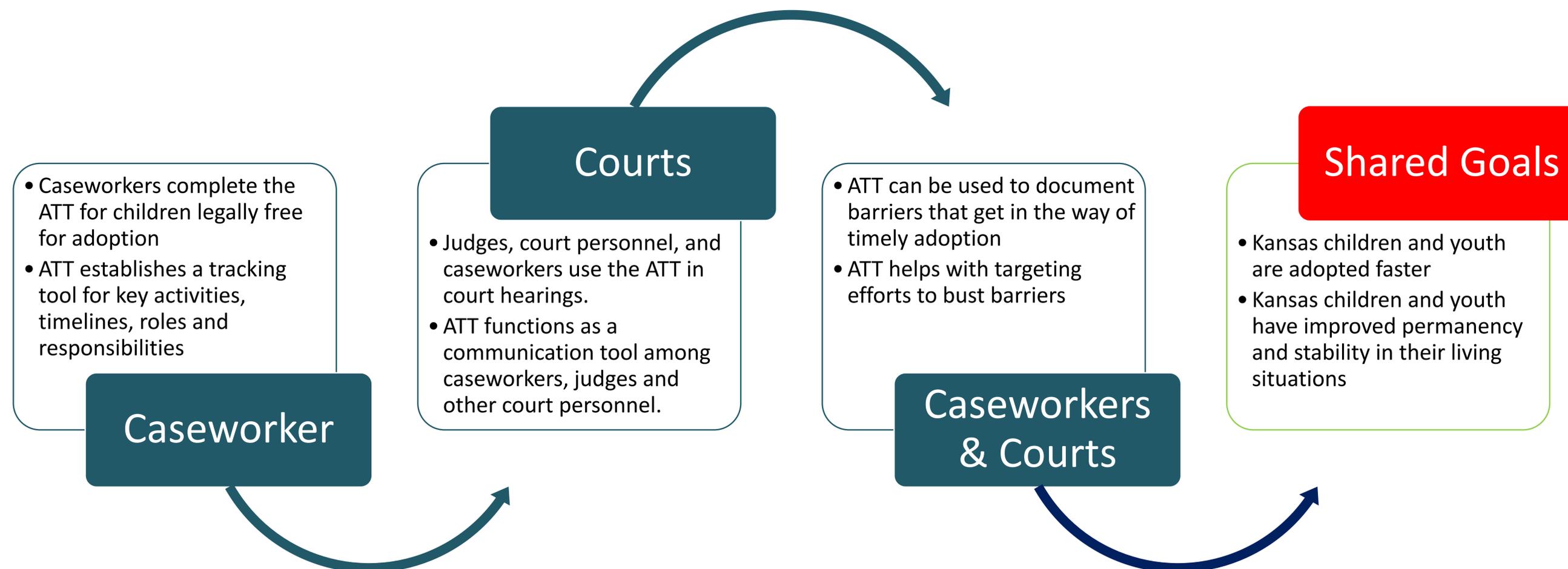


Learn More about the Adoption Tracking Tool

## Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the Kansas Supreme Task Force on Permanency Planning, the Office of Judicial Administration, Kansas Dept. for Children and Families, Cornerstones of Care, DCCCA, KVC Kansas, Saint Francis Ministries, TFI Family Services, and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare for their collaboration. This study was part of the Kansas Strong for Children and Families project, which is funded by the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, under grant number 90-CO-1139. The presentation's contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Children's Bureau.

# Enlarged View of the ATT Process



Responses varied by **local court procedures:**

*“It would possibly be slightly redundant in [county] just because of how they – their court reports are set up...” –Public Agency Personnel*

*“I find it beneficial, because then, I know where the agency is, because that information is not provided in my court reports.” –Court Personnel*

Responses varied by **sector:**

*“...There's a lot of processes that are out of our hands... It's not going to make the other entities that we rely on complete their step any faster.” –Private Agency Personnel*

*“So, we even, in our office, check and make sure that things are moving, that we get the journal entry done and get it to [public agency], and just some of the processes that we can assist with...” –Court Personnel*

*“I think it's a good way to help ensure that everyone's on the same page... and just helps ensure everyone is doing their part...” –Private Agency Personnel*

Most Participants Agreed: ATT helped **track milestones, improve communication and identify barriers.**

*“I think it will generate those conversations in court where they should be happening.”*

*-Public Agency Personnel*

*“We spot the issue that we need to address faster.” –Court Personnel*

*“...Prior to the tracking tool, a child would be free for adoption, but I had no idea where we were in the process, what was taking so long for this child to get adopted?” –Court Personnel*

*“I think it saves me time. So, I can get right to the meat of the issue.”*

*-Court Personnel*

*“That's one of the first things I flip to, the adoption toolkit, because it hits all the highlights...”*

*-Court Personnel*

*“...I do think it does a good job of tracking those milestones.” –Private Agency Personnel*

[Back to Main Page](#)