

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COURT OF APPEALS

---

In the Matter of ANAMARIE GRAHAM,  
KRYSTAL GRAHAM, and DYLAN ADAMS,  
Minors.

---

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

RHONDA ADAMS,

Respondent-Appellant.

---

UNPUBLISHED

April 26, 2007

No. 273299

Macomb Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 2004-046314-NA

Before: Cavanagh, P.J., and Jansen and Borrello, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent-appellant appeals as of right from the order terminating her parental rights to the minor children pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i), (g), and (j). We affirm. This appeal is being decided without oral argument pursuant to MCR 7.214(E).

Termination of parental rights is appropriate where the petitioner proves by clear and convincing evidence at least one ground for termination. *In re Trejo*, 462 Mich 341, 355; 612 NW2d 407 (2000). Once this has occurred, the trial court shall terminate parental rights unless it finds that the termination is clearly not in the best interests of the children. *Id.* at 353. This Court reviews the trial court's findings under the clearly erroneous standard. *In re Sours*, 459 Mich 624, 633; 593 NW2d 520 (1999).

The conditions that led to adjudication were respondent's failure to properly care for her children and the deplorable conditions of her home. At the time of the termination hearing, the condition of respondent's home continued to be an issue. Lindsey Green, the caseworker, testified that respondent's gas utilities had been shut off for some time. At her visit to the home, Green found garbage "overflowing" outside the home, broken glass in the yard, and extreme clutter inside the home. These conditions posed a serious risk of harm to the children. Given the amount of time respondent had to address this issue, and her failure to do so, the trial court did not clearly err in finding that there was no reasonable likelihood that this condition would be rectified within a reasonable time. Although respondent argues that she substantially complied with the parent/agency agreement, this Court has stated that it is not enough to merely go through the motions; a parent must benefit from the services so that she can improve parenting

skills to the point where the children will no longer be at risk in the parent's custody. *In re Gazella*, 264 Mich App 668, 676; 692 NW2d 708 (2005). Despite attending parenting classes and counseling sessions over a two-year period, the evidence revealed that respondent could not provide an appropriate home for the children.

The trial court also did not clearly err in its best interests determination. Although the trial court found that termination of respondent's parental rights was in the children's best interests, it was only required to find that termination was not clearly against their best interests, in accord with MCL 712A.19b(5). Green, the caseworker, testified that these children had spent more time in foster care than with respondent. Green opined that the children needed some permanency in their lives. At the time of the termination hearing, respondent still could not provide a suitable and stable environment for her children. Thus, the trial court did not clearly err in finding that termination of respondent's parental rights was in the children's best interests.

Affirmed.

/s/ Mark J. Cavanagh  
/s/ Kathleen Jansen  
/s/ Stephen L. Borrello