

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COURT OF APPEALS

In the Matter of CHRISTOPHER DEAN-GLEN
ANDERSON and BELLE ANN-MARIE
CLEMENT, Minors.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

JENNIFER ANGELIQUE CLEMENT,

Respondent-Appellant.

UNPUBLISHED

June 19, 2007

No. 275159

Barry Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 06-007368-NA

Before: Kelly, P.J., and Markey and Smolenski, JJ.

PER CURIAM.

Respondent appeals as of right from the trial court order terminating her parental rights to the minor children under MCL 712A.19b(3)(b)(i), (g), and (j). We affirm.

The trial court did not clearly err in finding that the statutory grounds for termination were established by clear and convincing evidence. MCR 3.977(J); *In re Miller*, 433 Mich 331, 337; 445 NW2d 161 (1989).

Evidence indicated that respondent's infant daughter was injured when she drank from a bottle containing bleach. Although respondent claimed that she was not responsible for the bleach incident and that her three-year-old son or her friend must have put bleach in the bottle and fed it to the infant, the trial court clearly stated that it did not believe respondent or her witnesses. The credibility of respondent and her friend, both of whom testified at the termination trial, were within the province of the trial court, and this Court gives special regard to the trial court's assessment of credibility. MCR 2.613(C); *Miller, supra* at 337.

In addition to the bleach incident, other evidence indicated that respondent physically abused or injured her children, and that there was a reasonable likelihood that the children would suffer injury or abuse if returned to her care. Witnesses testified that respondent blew marijuana smoke into her young children's faces, had her young son demonstrate how to smoke a marijuana joint and pipe, failed to obtain necessary medical attention for her infant daughter's flattened head and smoked cigarettes and allowed others to smoke around her asthmatic son.

Respondent was provided numerous opportunities to improve her parenting skills and her home environment, but failed to make any progress. She also permitted young people to use her home as a flophouse and the home was rarely, if ever, in a condition that was appropriate for young children. Often the home was found filthy and without sufficient food, and the children were left unsupervised. Employment was a constant problem, as was financial management. The evidence was clear and convincing that respondent had failed to provide proper care and custody of her children and no evidence indicated that she would be able to do so within a reasonable time, given the children's young ages.

Moreover, the evidence did not show that termination of respondent's parental rights was clearly not in the children's best interests. MCL 712A.19b(5); *In re Trejo*, 462 Mich 341, 356-357; 612 NW2d 407 (2000). Respondent contends that she had a strong bond with the children, was their primary caregiver, and never had an opportunity to improve her parenting skills. Respondent's bond with her children was questionable, especially given her statements to others about being overwhelmed, feeling trapped, and being fed up with parenthood. Further, she was provided with numerous services over the last several years in an effort to assist her to become a better parent. These children are young and deserve permanency and stability, which respondent has failed to provide. The trial court did not err in terminating respondent's parental rights to the minor children.

Affirmed.

/s/ Kirsten Frank Kelly
/s/ Jane E. Markey
/s/ Michael R. Smolenski