

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COURT OF APPEALS

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In the Matter of JOSHUA MICHAEL MEADOWS,  
ALFRED MORLAND MEADOWS IV,  
MATTHEW STEPHEN MEADOWS, ANGELINA  
GRACE FAITH MEADOWS, DIONDRE CHET  
MEADOWS, and NOAH ADAM MEADOWS,  
Minors.

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FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

ALFRED MEADOWS III,

Respondent-Appellant.

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UNPUBLISHED

July 10, 2001

No. 231447

Lenawee Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 00-000064-NA

Before: Saad, P.J., and Holbrook, Jr., and Murphy, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent appeals as of right from the family court order terminating his parental rights to the minor children under MCL 712A.19b(3)(a)(ii). We affirm. This case is being decided without oral argument pursuant to MCR 7.214(E).

Once a trial court determines that one or more grounds for termination has been established by clear and convincing evidence, the trial court must terminate parental rights unless “there exists clear evidence, on the whole record, that termination is not in the child’s best interests.” *In re Trejo Minors*, 462 Mich 341, 354; 612 NW2d 407 (2000). We review the trial court’s findings under the clearly erroneous standard. *Id.* at 358. “A finding is clearly erroneous where the reviewing court is left with a firm and definite conviction that a mistake has been made.” *In re Jackson*, 199 Mich App 22, 25; 501 NW2d 182 (1993).

After carefully reviewing the record, we conclude that the trial court did not clearly err in finding that the statutory grounds for termination had been established by clear and convincing evidence. Deferring to the family court’s “assessment of the credibility of the witnesses before it,” *In re Newman*, 189 Mich App 61, 65; 472 NW2d 38 (1991), the record shows that respondent had deserted all of the children for well over ninety-one days without seeking custody.

Affirmed.

/s/ Henry William Saad  
/s/ Donald E. Holbrook, Jr.  
/s/ William B. Murphy