

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COURT OF APPEALS

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In the Matter of OSCAR ALLAN CURETON,  
Minor.

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FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

MICHELLE BUNCH,

Respondent-Appellant.

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UNPUBLISHED

August 16, 2007

No. 277508

Isabella Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 06-000113-NA

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In the Matter of CHEYENNE VICTORIA  
BUNCH, RAELYNN MARIE BUNCH, and  
STARLISSA ANN BUNCH, Minors.

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FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

MICHELLE L. BUNCH,

Respondent-Appellant.

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No. 277527

Isabella Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 06-000112-NA

Before: Whitbeck, C.J., and Talbot and Zahra, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent appeals as of right from an order terminating her parental rights to the minor children pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(b)(ii) and (g). 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 Trejo*, 462 Mich 341, 356-357; 612 NW2d 407 (2000). The evidence established that respondent's husband, Johnny

Bunch, was prone to frequent episodes of aggression and hostility when he lived with the family, and that he pleaded no contest to several charges of criminal sexual conduct against the children. The evidence also showed that respondent was incapable of protecting herself or her children from her husband's conduct and that respondent was complicit in some of the abuse inflicted on the minor children.

Specifically, evidence was presented demonstrating the unsanitary conditions of respondent's home. The minor children lacked appropriate supervision and nutrition. In addition, their hygiene was not routinely addressed, leaving them filthy and smelling of urine. Respondent failed to intervene when her husband, as punishment, frequently locked the minor children in their bedrooms for 30-minute periods throughout the day and overnight, precluding their access to bathroom facilities. Following their placement in foster care, the extent of the sexual and physical abuse inflicted by respondent's husband on the minor children was revealed. Respondent, despite her physical proximity and awareness of these abusive incidents, failed to intervene or attempt to preclude her husband's deviant behavior. Psychological evaluations of respondent indicated an impaired emotional connection to her children, which was described as being "severely dysfunctional." This emotional distance, coupled with respondent's immature and passive personality interfered with her ability to cope with problems and led to the denial of her husband's abusive behaviors and ignoring her children's needs and feelings. The psychologist who evaluated respondent opined that her low intellectual functioning, passive personality and lack of motivation prevented respondent from being capable of attaining the necessary skills to overcome her parenting deficiencies. Accordingly, termination was proper under §§ 19b(3)(b)(ii) and (g).

Affirmed.

/s/ William C. Whitbeck

/s/ Michael J. Talbot

/s/ Brian K. Zahra