

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COURT OF APPEALS

In the Matter of SADIE HOWELL and HANNA
HOWELL, Minors.

FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

CAROLINE HOWELL,

Respondent-Appellant,

and

MICHAEL A. RATAJ,

Respondent.

UNPUBLISHED

August 10, 1999

No. 213365

Macomb Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 00-044831

Before: White, P.J., and Markey and Wilder, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent appeals as of right the order assuming jurisdiction over the minor children after a jury trial. We affirm.

The court's assumption of jurisdiction over the minor children was supported by a preponderance of the evidence. MCR 5.972(C)(1); *In re Brock*, 442 Mich 101, 108-109; 499 NW2d 752 (1993); *In re Riffe*, 147 Mich App 658, 671; 382 NW2d 842 (1985). There was evidence that respondent emotionally abused her children by repeatedly making claims of sexual abuse against her ex-husband and subjecting her children to examinations and interviews, even though the sexual abuse allegations were consistently determined to be unsubstantiated. There was also evidence that respondent coached the children into making false accusations. Further, respondent continued to

deny her ex-husband his visitation rights with the minor children, contrary to court orders, thus depriving the children of the love, support and nurturing of their father.

Affirmed.

/s/ Helene N. White

/s/ Jane E. Markey

/s/ Kurtis T. Wilder