

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COURT OF APPEALS

In the Matter of MARY J. KERN, Minor.

FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

JOSPEN MATTHEW KERN, a/k/a JOSEPHEN
MATTHEW KERN,

Respondent-Appellant,

and

SHERRY LEE WALTERS,

Respondent.

UNPUBLISHED

October 3, 2000

No. 220163

Wayne Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 95-325973

Before: McDonald, P.J., and Sawyer and White, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent-appellant appeals as of right from the family court order terminating his parental rights to the minor child under MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i), (g), (h), (i) and (j); MSA 27.3178(598.19b)(3)(c)(i), (g), (h), (i) and (j). We affirm.

Although respondent-appellant contends that the trial court erred in terminating his parental rights, he does not direct his arguments at the statutory criteria for the various statutory grounds under which his parental rights were terminated. Rather, he contends that termination was improper because petitioner failed to make reasonable efforts to reunite him with his child.

It is the policy of this state to keep children with their natural parents. However, reunification efforts are not required when it would cause a substantial risk of harm to the child's life, physical health, or mental well-being. MCL 712A.18f; MSA 27.3178(598.18f); See also *Tallman v Milton*, 192

Mich App 606, 614-615; 482 NW2d 187 (1992); *In re Springer*, 172 Mich App 466, 474-475; 432 NW2d 342 (1988). Under appropriate circumstances, a court may terminate a respondent's parental rights at the initial dispositional hearing. MCR 5.974(D).

Here, the record indicates that respondent-appellant was serving a lengthy prison sentence and had been incarcerated since January 1997. Further, before his incarceration, he was not visiting or supporting his child. Although respondent-appellant claims that he offered his mother as a temporary placement for his child during the period of his incarceration, the record indicates that petitioner made attempts to contact respondent-appellant's mother, but she did not respond to the inquires. Under the circumstances, we find no merit to respondent-appellant's claim that termination of his parental rights was improper because further efforts at reunification were not made.

Affirmed.

/s/ Gary R. McDonald

/s/ David H. Sawyer

/s/ Helene N. White