

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COURT OF APPEALS

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In the Matter of MICHAEL LEE WILDE, Minor.

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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

ROBIN WILDE,

Respondent-Appellant,

and

RON WILDE,

Respondent.

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UNPUBLISHED

January 29, 2008

No. 281520

Van Buren Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 98-011968-NA

Before: Beckering, P.J., and Sawyer and Fort Hood, JJ.

PER CURIAM.

Respondent Robin Wilde appeals as of right from a circuit court order terminating her parental rights to the minor child pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(g), (i), (j), and (l). We affirm. This appeal is being decided without oral argument pursuant to MCR 7.214(E).

Respondent does not challenge the trial court's determination that a statutory ground for termination was established by clear and convincing evidence. Instead, she argues only that termination of her parental rights was contrary to the child's best interests. *In re IEM*, 233 Mich App 438, 451; 592 NW2d 751 (1999).

Once a statutory ground for termination has been proven, "the court shall order termination of parental rights . . . unless the court finds that termination of parental rights to the child is clearly not in the child's best interests." MCL 712A.19b(5). This means that "[o]nce a ground for termination is established, the court must issue an order terminating 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). The trial court's decision regarding the child's best interests is reviewed for clear error. *Id.* at 356-357.

The evidence showed that the child has severe psychological problems that have hindered his placement in a foster home. In light of those problems, the work necessary to overcome them, and the child's strenuous objection to termination, the court concluded at a prior hearing that termination would hinder his progress in treatment or even cause regression. Unfortunately, maintaining the parent-child bond did not help, and the child made minimal progress and was still not ready for placement in a foster home. Because the continued existence of the parent-child relationship caused the child to hold out hope of reunification despite the fact that he would not be returning to either parent's home, professionals believed that removing the distraction created by the uncertainty of the child's legal status would allow him to focus on his treatment and become better socialized with the hope that he could be placed in a foster home and ultimately adopted.

Upon finding that a statutory ground for termination was established, the trial court was not required to find that termination of respondent's parental rights was in the child's best interests as a prerequisite for termination, but rather was required to terminate respondent's parental rights unless doing so was clearly contrary to the child's best interests. MCL 712A.19b(5); *In re Trejo*, *supra* at 357, 364 n 19. Because the evidence no longer showed that termination was clearly contrary to the child's best interests, the trial court did not err in terminating respondent's parental rights to the child. *Id.* at 356-357.

Affirmed.

/s/ Jane M. Beckering  
/s/ David H. Sawyer  
/s/ Karen M. Fort Hood