

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COURT OF APPEALS

In the Matter of JANIQUE WILLIA MARIE
BRIDGEMAN and DON WAYNE DARNELL
BRIDGEMAN, Minors.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

JESSICA BRIDGEMAN,

Respondent-Appellant,

and

HENRY SHARP and MARTINEZ MCCLAIN,

Respondents.

UNPUBLISHED

July 24, 2008

No. 280306

Wayne Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 05-447435

Before: Meter, P.J., and Smolenski and Servitto, JJ.

PER CURIAM.

Respondent appeals as of right from an order terminating her parental rights to her minor children pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i), (g), and (j).¹ We affirm.

The trial court did not clearly err when it found that clear and convincing evidence established the statutory grounds for termination. MCR 3.977(J); *In re Sours*, 459 Mich 624, 633; 593 NW2d 520 (1999); *In re McIntyre*, 192 Mich App 47, 50; 480 NW2d 293 (1991). The issues that led to the taking of jurisdiction over the minor children were that respondent did not have a source of income, respondent and the minor children lived with respondent's mother who admitted to using alcohol on a regular basis, respondent left the minor children with her mother

¹ Respondent mistakenly cites subsection (a)(ii) as a section on which the trial court relied to terminate her parental rights. The court cited this subsection only with respect to the children's fathers.

for days, and the minor children did not receive adequate medical care or food despite respondent's having been provided services in the past. After the minor children came under the jurisdiction of the court, petitioner offered many services to assist respondent and provided bus tickets or transportation to her service appointments. Respondent did complete the Clinic for Child Study evaluation, completed parenting classes, took the class for the GED, attended two therapy sessions, and filled out a few job applications. At the time of the termination trial, however, respondent had not taken the test for the GED, did not have any employment, and did not have a stable place to live. She admitted at the termination trial that, without income, she was unable to care for the minor children. She visited the minor children sporadically while they were under the jurisdiction of the court and stopped visiting them in January 2007, three months before visitation was suspended because of the filing of a termination petition. It was only at the termination hearing that respondent stated that she would attend a residential mother/baby program after having stated in the past that she was not interested. Moreover, a residential program would only have helped if respondent wanted assistance in learning to care for the minor children, and respondent's actions did not indicate that she did. The minor children had been under the jurisdiction of the court for over a year and a half when the termination hearing was held, yet respondent was in no better position to care for them, despite all of the services that were offered to her.

Respondent argues that she was more mature at the time of the termination hearing. The evidence presented at trial did not show this to be the case. Although respondent was young, she was the parent of the minor children, and her role as a parent required her to be responsible for caring for them and addressing the issues that caused them to come into foster care. Respondent did not do this, and giving her additional time to do what was required was not warranted, given that she was not putting forth the effort necessary to accomplish the requirements of her treatment plan.

The trial court also did not clearly err with respect to its best interests determination. MCL 712A.19b(5); *In re Trejo*, 462 Mich 341, 353-354; 612 NW2d 407 (2000). It was not shown that respondent had a strong bond with the minor children. They were three and two years old and had been in foster care for over a year and a half. Before that time, respondent had not provided the minor children with a safe, stable, and nurturing environment. The young children needed and deserved permanency, safety, and proper care, which respondent was unable to provide.

Affirmed.

/s/ Patrick M. Meter
/s/ Michael R. Smolenski
/s/ Deborah A. Servitto