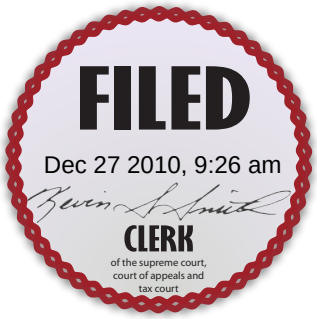

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IN THE
COURT OF APPEALS OF INDIANA

IN THE MATTER OF THE TERMINATION OF THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP OF: J.B., A.B. and A.B., Minor Children	)	
A.M. and D.B., Appellants-Respondents,	)	
vs.	)	No. 07A04-1005-JT-322
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES, Appellee-Petitioner.	)	

APPEAL FROM THE BROWN CIRCUIT COURT
The Honorable Judith A. Stewart, Judge
Cause Nos. 07C01-0909-JT-114, 07C01-0909-JT-115 and 07C01-0909-JT-116

December 27, 2010

MEMORANDUM DECISION – NOT FOR PUBLICATION

RILEY, Judge

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Appellants-Respondents, A.M. (Mother) and D.B. (Father), appeal the trial court's involuntary termination of their parental rights to their respective minor children.

We affirm.

ISSUE

Mother and Father raise one issue in this consolidated appeal, which we restate as: Whether the sufficiency of the evidence supports the trial court's judgment.

FACTS AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Mother and Father are the biological parents of A.B.1, born in January 1997, A.B.2, born in March 1998, and J.B., born in August 1999. The facts most favorable to the trial court's judgment reveal that the family has an extensive history of involvement with the Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) and was involved in three Informal Adjustments[1] in several counties including Monroe, Greene, and Brown Counties due to substantiated allegations of neglect and/or life and health endangerment in 2001, 2004, and 2007. In addition, the Brown County local office of the Indiana Department of Child Services (BCDCS) substantiated five reports of abuse or neglect of the children by Mother and Father between March 2008 and August 2008.

[1] A program of Informal Adjustment is a negotiated agreement between a family and a local office of DCS whereby the family agrees to participate in various services provided by the county in an effort to prevent the child/children from being formally deemed children in need of services (CHINS). *See* Ind. Code 31-34-8 *et. seq*.

The events giving rise to the underlying proceedings began in August 2008 when BCDCS received a referral alleging the family was homeless, living in a pop-up camper in unhealthy and unsafe conditions, and moving from campsite to campsite. An assessment worker with BCDCS initiated an investigation and observed clothing, food, shoes, and trash scattered around the campsite where the family was living. Inside the camper, trash, food, blankets, and a ferret cage were crammed in such a manner that there was no clear room to walk. The assessment worker also observed that A.B.1 was holding a rag to her nose and was covered in bruises, scratches, and insect bites. A.B.1 explained that her nose had been broken during a fight with one of her siblings.

Based on this investigation, the children were taken into emergency protective custody and placed in the temporary care of their maternal grandmother. BCDCS thereafter filed petitions under separate cause numbers alleging all three children were children in need of services (CHINS). Mother and Father admitted to the allegations of the CHINS petitions during a fact-finding hearing in September 2008. The children were allowed to remain in the care of their maternal grandmother and a dispositional hearing was scheduled for December 2008.

Following the dispositional hearing, the trial court entered an order formally removing the children from Mother's and Father's care and custody, adjudicating the children wards of DCS, and allowing the children to remain in the physical custody of the maternal grandmother. The trial court's dispositional order also directed both Mother and Father to participate in a variety of services in order to gain reunification with the children.

Specifically, the parents were ordered to: (1) obtain and maintain employment to support the family and secure a home; (2) work with a home-based therapist and/or vocational rehabilitation specialist; (3) submit to mental health evaluations and follow all resulting recommendations; and (4) participate in regular visits with the children as arranged by BCDCS.

From the start, both parents' participation in court-ordered services was unsuccessful. Although Mother and Father met with the home-based therapist to work on basic life skills such as budgeting, searching for employment, and making appointments, neither parent appeared to be progressing in these areas. Similarly, although both parents visited the children at the grandmother's home, the grandmother reported to BCDCS that Mother and Father would frequently show up for visits unannounced, ask for food, money, and cigarettes, and upset the children. As a result, the grandmother requested that she no longer be responsible for supervising visits between the children and Mother and Father. Thereafter, BCDCS made arrangements for a home-based therapist to begin supervising scheduled visits between the parents and children while also providing family therapy during the visits.

Both parents also participated in mental health evaluations administered by psychologist Jennifer Spencer (Dr. Spencer). Dr. Spencer diagnosed Mother with antisocial personality disorder, somatization disorder, alcohol abuse, opioid dependence, and borderline intellectual functioning. Father was diagnosed with major depressive disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, paranoid personality disorder or delusional disorder, borderline intellectual functioning, and a learning disability. Based on these diagnoses, Dr. Spencer

believed it would be difficult for Mother and Father to identify and meet the needs of the children due to the lack of empathy and reckless disregard of safety for self and others that oftentimes is exhibited by people with these types of disorders. In addition, Dr. Spencer believed treatment would likely be difficult because, typically, individuals with Mother's and Father's types of disorders tend to resist treatment and blame others for their own actions. Nevertheless, Dr. Spenser recommended individual therapy for both Mother and Father. However, Dr. Spencer indicated that it would likely take at least two years of intensive treatment before either parent would be able to effectively manage their conditions, assuming the parents were willing and motivated to participate in said therapy.

In April 2009, the children were removed from their grandmother's care due primarily to her failing health and were placed in their current foster home. Mother and Father continued to participate in services including visitation and home-based services, but both parents were still unable to demonstrate they were significantly progressing in their ability to care for the children. As a result, the visitation supervisor was not able to recommend unsupervised visits. Although Mother and Father had secured a home during this time, domestic violence between the parents also began to escalate from verbal arguments to threats and episodes of physical violence.

In May 2009, when BCDCS family case manager Alycia Shirar (Shirar) visited the family home, Mother informed Shirar she had just been fighting with Father. Mother showed Shirar bruises on her leg and stated Father had kicked her. Shirar also observed dog waste on the floor and vomit where, according to Mother, Father had gotten sick and then left without

cleaning up the mess. By the time of a review hearing on May 13, 2009, Mother and Father had lost their housing and were camping again.

For the next several months, Mother and Father continued to make limited progress in their overall abilities to care for the children. Although they participated in home-based services and supervised visits with the children, they were only sporadically employed, were unable to secure and maintain stable housing, and failed to make progress in their respective individual therapy and parenting skills. In September 2009, BCDCS filed petitions seeking the involuntary termination of both Mother's and Father's parental rights to all three children. A two-day evidentiary hearing commenced in February 2010 and was concluded in March 2010. At the conclusion of the termination hearing, the trial court took the matter under advisement. On April 28, 2010, the trial court entered a judgment terminating Mother's and Father's parental rights to all three children.

Both parents now appeal. Additional facts will be provided as necessary.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION

I. *Standard of Review*

We begin our review by acknowledging that this court has long had a highly deferential standard of review in cases concerning the termination of parental rights. *In re K.S.*, 750 N.E.2d 832, 836 (Ind. Ct. App. 2001). When reviewing the termination of parental rights, we will not reweigh the evidence or judge the credibility of the witnesses. *In re D.D.*, 804 N.E.2d 258, 265 (Ind. Ct. App. 2004), *trans. denied*. Instead, we consider only the evidence and reasonable inferences that are most favorable to the trial court's judgment. *Id.*

Moreover, in deference to the trial court's unique position to assess the evidence, we will set aside the court's judgment terminating a parent-child relationship only if it is clearly erroneous. *In re L.S.*, 717 N.E.2d 204, 208 (Ind. Ct. App. 1999), *trans. denied*.

Here, the trial court's judgment contains specific findings and conclusions. When a trial court's judgment contains specific findings of fact and conclusions thereon, we apply a two-tiered standard of review. *Bester v. Lake County Office of Family & Children*, 839 N.E.2d 143, 147 (Ind. 2005). First, we determine whether the evidence supports the findings, and second, we determine whether the findings support the judgment. *Id*. A finding is clearly erroneous when there are no facts or inferences drawn therefrom that support it. *D.D.*, 804 N.E.2d at 265. A judgment is clearly erroneous only if the findings do not support the trial court's conclusions or the conclusions do not support the judgment thereon. *Bester*, 839 N.E.2d at 147. Thus, if the evidence and inferences support the trial court's decision, we must affirm. *L.S.*, 717 N.E.2d at 208.

A parent's interest in the care, custody, and control of his or her children is arguably one of the oldest of our fundamental liberty interests. *Bester*, 839 N.E.2d at 147. Hence, "[t]he traditional right of parents to establish a home and raise their children is protected by the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution." *In re M.B.*, 666 N.E.2d 73, 76 (Ind. Ct. App. 1996), *trans. denied*. These parental interests, however, are not absolute and must be subordinated to the child's interests when determining the proper disposition of a petition to terminate parental rights. *Id.* In addition, although the right to raise one's own child should not be terminated solely because there is a better home available for the child,

parental rights may be terminated when a parent is unable or unwilling to meet his or her parental responsibilities. *K.S.*, 750 N.E.2d at 836.

Before an involuntary termination of parental rights may occur, the State is required to allege and prove, among other things, that:

> (B) there is a reasonable probability that:
> (i) the conditions that resulted in the child's removal or the reasons for placement outside the home of the parents will not be remedied; or
> (ii) the continuation of the parent-child relationship poses a threat to the well-being of the child; [and]
> (C) termination is in the best interests of the child . . . .

Ind. Code § 31-35-2-4(b)(2)(B) and (C) (2008).[2] Moreover, "[t]he State's burden of proof in termination of parental rights cases is one of 'clear and convincing evidence.'" *In re G.Y.*, 904 N.E.2d 1257, 1260-61 (Ind. 2009) (quoting Ind. Code § 31-37-14-2 (2008)). Father and Mother both challenge the sufficiency of the evidence supporting the trial court's findings as to subsection 2(B) of the termination statute cited above. *See* I.C. § 31-35-2-4(b)(2)(B). In addition, Father also challenges the sufficiency of the evidence supporting the trial court's determination that termination of his parental rights is in the children's best interests. *See* I.C. § 31-35-2-4(b)(2)(C).

[2] Indiana Code section 31-35-2-4 was amended by Pub. L. No. 21-2010, § 8 (eff. March 12, 2010). Because the changes to the statute became effective in March 2010 following the filing of the termination petition herein, they are not applicable to this case.

II. *Termination of Parental Rights*

A. *Remedy of Conditions*

In claiming there is insufficient evidence to support the trial court's termination order, Father asserts the trial court looked "solely to [Father's] current ability" to care for the children as of the time of the termination hearing and "ignored the progress being made." (Father's Br. p. 15). Father further claims that "even if the evidence is held to be clear and convincing, this court should closely examine the findings to determine whether a mistake has nonetheless been made." (Father's Br. p. 15). Similarly, Mother asserts that, at the time of the termination hearing, she had "made significant progress regarding the specific conditions that led to the removal of her children," namely, she had "divorced [Father][,] . . . obtained and maintained full time health insurance benefits, secured stable and clean housing, had not missed visits with the children, and was participating in [BCDCS]-required counseling . . . ." (Mother's Br. p. 1). Both parents therefore contend they are entitled to reversal.

At the outset, we note that Indiana Code section 31-35-2-4(b)(2)(B) is written in the disjunctive. A trial court therefore need only find one of the two requirements of subsection 2(B) has been established to properly terminate parental rights. *See In re L.V.N.*, 799 N.E.2d 63, 69 (Ind. Ct. App. 2003). Here, the trial court determined that BCDCS presented sufficient evidence to satisfy both elements of subsection 2(B). Because we find it to be dispositive under the facts of this case, however, we only consider whether BCDCS presented clear and convincing evidence establishing there is a reasonable probability the

conditions that resulted in the children's removal and continued placement outside of Father's and Mother's care will not be remedied. *See* I.C. § 31-35-2-4(b)(2)(B)(i).

In interpreting this statute, this court has held that the trial court must judge a parent's fitness to care for his or her child at the time of the termination hearing, taking into consideration evidence of changed conditions. *In re J.T.*, 742 N.E.2d 509, 512 (Ind. Ct. App. 2001), *trans. denied*. However, the court must also "evaluate the parent's habitual patterns of conduct to determine the probability of future neglect or deprivation of the child." *Id.* Pursuant to this rule, courts have properly considered evidence of a parent's prior criminal history, drug and alcohol abuse, history of neglect, failure to provide support, and lack of adequate housing and employment. *A.F. v. Marion County Office of Family & Children*, 762 N.E.2d 1244, 1251 (Ind. Ct. App. 2002), *trans. denied*. The trial court may also properly consider the services offered to the parent by the county department of child services, and the parent's response to those services, as evidence of whether conditions will be remedied. *Id.* "It is not just the basis for the initial removal of the child that may be considered for purposes of determining whether a parent's right should be terminated, but also those bases resulting in the continued placement outside of the home." *In re A.I.*, 825 N.E.2d 798, 807 (Ind. Ct. App. 2005), *trans. denied*. Moreover, a county department of child services is not required to provide evidence ruling out all possibilities of change; rather, it need establish only that there is a reasonable probability that the parent's behavior will not change. *In re Kay L.*, 867 N.E.2d 236, 242 (Ind. Ct. App. 2007).

Here, the trial court made numerous detailed findings concerning both parents' failure to successfully complete and benefit from court-ordered services throughout the duration of the CHINS and termination proceedings. Specifically, the trial court found that the children's removal and continued placement outside the family home was due, in part, to the fact "the parents could not provide adequate housing for the children," but was also "largely because the parents did not provide appropriate education, care[,] and supervision to the children." (Father's App. pp. 90-91). The trial court further found that domestic violence between the parents "was also a significant factor in continuing placement of the children outside the home." (Father's App. p. 91). In addition, the trial court observed that Mother and Father had a significant history of involvement with DCS prior to the current case and had received services from DCS through Informal Adjustments in July 2001 in Monroe County, November 2004 in Green County, and August and September 2007 in Brown County.

With regard to both parents' mental health disorders, the trial court found that the prognosis for treatment for Mother's antisocial personality disorder was "not good" and that her diagnosis of somatization disorder was also "treatment resistant." (Father's App. p. 92). Similarly, the trial court found that the prognosis for treatment of Father's mental health disorders was "not good" and that both parents continued to have "substance abuse issues with prescription medications" at the time of the termination hearing. (Father's App. p. 92).

Although the trial court acknowledged that both parents, "particularly [Mother] and to a lesser extent [Father]," had made "significant progress in providing for the physical needs

of their children," including providing satisfactory housing, Mother maintaining employment, both parents attending counseling as requested and consistently visiting with the children, and both parents participating in some form of schooling or vocational training, the court nevertheless found:

> 23. Despite the areas in which the parents have improved, they have made minimal progress in improving their parenting skills as they relate to the children's emotional and educational needs. Visitations between the parents and the children have been supervised throughout their removal. The most recent visitation supervisor was Roxanna Collier. Although her notes reflect some positive aspects to the visits, [Collier] testified that she has seen minimal improvement in the parents' parenting skills. [Mother] has ignored the children when they come for a two hour visit, choosing rather to focus on her computer. [Father] seems at a loss as to what to do with the children other than provide them a meal or walk with them around town. The parents still do not provide sufficient help to the children with their homework. Both parents discuss subjects that are upsetting to the children and are inappropriate for them.
>
> 24. The [BCDCS] [f]amily [c]ase [m]anager testified that she did not believe the children could be safe with [Mother] due to her continued inattentiveness to the children, her lack of supervision[,] and her inability to put her children's needs ahead of her own.
>
> 25. Dr. Spencer agreed that the positive changes in [Mother's] circumstances, including maintaining employment, getting out of a violent relationship[,] and buying a home were all improvements. However, Dr. Spencer testified that while some of her symptoms might be milder, it would be her opinion that [Mother] would still fit the criteria for the diagnoses.

(Father's App. p. 93). The trial court thereafter concluded:

> 12. [BCDCS has] also proven by clear and convincing evidence that there is a reasonable probability that many of the conditions that resulted in the children's removal and placement outside of their parents' home will not be remedied. Despite the substantial services offered to the family by [BCDCS], [Father] still is not able to provide for the

> children's physical, educational[,] or emotional needs. Although [Mother] is now able to provide for the majority of the children's physical needs, she is not able to provide for the children's emotional, educational[,] and supervisional needs. Despite the recent improvements in some areas, the parents' pattern of conduct over the past nine years leads the [c]ourt to conclude their inability to provide adequate education, supervision[,] and care for their children will not be remedied.

(Father's App. p. 97). Our review of the record reveals ample evidence for these findings and conclusions, which, in turn, support the trial court's ultimate decision to terminate Mother's and Father's parental rights to the children.

During the termination hearing, family case manager Shirar confirmed the parents' lengthy history of involvement with the DCS, stating that in July 2001 BCDCS substantiated a report of neglect involving the family due to no food being in the home, in 2004 BCDCS substantiated a report of neglect due to the children not being fed properly, the presence of a handgun in the home, and poor living conditions, and in August and September 2004 BCDCS again substantiated reports of neglect and life and health endangerment prior to the events leading to the current case. When asked whether the parents' prior history concerned her, Shirar answered, "It does," and explained as follows:

> There's . . . several years of the same issues. Neglect of the children, not enough food for the children, poor living conditions[.] [S]ervice providers are always put in place when an [I]nformal [A]djustment is, is entered. And my concern would be how could we ever safely close this case . . . [?] [I]f [the parents] can't . . . do it with service providers[,] how will they do it without?

(Transcript p. 47).

Shirar also informed the trial court that she did not observe any significant improvement in the parents' ability to care for the children throughout the duration of the underlying CHINS proceedings, despite Mother's and Father's participation in several court-ordered services. In so doing, Shirar testified regarding the parents' housing and employment instability and the fact she had observed even "more violence" between the parents as the case progressed, including "[l]ots of accusations back and forth over threats made towards each other" and "hitting each other." (Tr. p. 39).

When asked why she petitioned the court for approval to file a petition seeking the involuntary termination of both parents' parental rights, Shirar answered, "[b]ecause at that point[,] a year had passed and the kids need[ed] to be able to count on having a place to live, having food to eat, having people that care about them." (Tr. p. 42). When asked whether she had observed a "renewed effort" by the parents to successfully complete services after BCDCS filed its termination petitions, Shirar replied, "No. What I saw was the violence escalating between the two of them." (Tr. p. 44). Shirar further testified that even after the parents had separated, although she observed that they were "calmer without being with each other," she still had not seen any improvement in their respective parenting abilities. (Tr. p. 44).

Testimony from Dr. Spencer further supports the trial court's findings that although the parents' respective mental health symptoms may have lessened somewhat since the commencement of the CHINS case, they nevertheless are not currently resolved, and are unlikely to be remedied in the future. Dr. Spencer informed the court that based on the

results of her psychological evaluations of each parent, the individual prognosis for Mother and for Father in gaining control of their mental health issues is "not good." (Tr. p. 77). Dr. Spencer also confirmed both parents have "lower IQ[s]," which impacts an individual's ability "to make good judgments" and to gain "insight" into one's behaviors. (Tr. p. 79).

Visitation Supervisor Roxanna Collier (Collier) also testified during the termination hearing. Collier informed the trial court that working with Mother and Father on basic parenting issues such as behavioral problems, homework, and doing activities with the children continued to be "a challenge." (Tr. p. 106). Collier further explained that both parents told her they "didn't know how" to do the children's homework and they "didn't want to" know. (Tr. p. 109). Collier also stated that despite the parents' regular participation in home-based services, they "never did think there was an issue with any of [the children's] behaviors." (Tr. p. 109). In addition, Collier reported that the parents' interaction with the children was only "somewhat" improved, but that they continue to (1) not focus on the children and especially ignore A.B.1, who "spends probably a fourth of her [visitation] time in her room," (2) use "some very foul language" and make inappropriate comments to the children during visits, such as telling the children they inherited the parents' "stupid gene" when working on homework or describing in detail how a horse had recently stomped a friend of the family to death, and (3) ignore the children for long periods of time while working/playing on the computer during visits. (Tr. pp. 107-08, 110-11). When asked if she had "seen a difference overall in the visits and the interaction with the parents and the

children throughout the life of the case," Collier described the parent's progress as "very minute progress." (Tr. p. 166).

As previously explained, a trial court must judge a parent's fitness to care for his or her children at the time of the termination hearing, taking into consideration the parent's habitual patterns of conduct to determine the probability of future neglect or deprivation of the children. *D.D.*, 804 N.E.2d at 266. "A pattern of unwillingness to deal with parenting problems and to cooperate with those providing social services, in conjunction with unchanged conditions, support[s] a finding that there exists no reasonable probability that the conditions will change." *Lang v. Starke County Office of Family & Children*, 861 N.E.2d 366, 372 (Ind. Ct. App. 2007). Moreover, where there are only temporary improvements and the pattern of conduct shows no overall progress, the court might reasonably find the problematic situation will not improve. *In re A.H.*, 832 N.E.2d 563, 570 (Ind. Ct. App. 2005). Based on the foregoing, we conclude that BCDCS presented clear and convincing evidence to support the trial court's determination that there is a reasonable probability the conditions resulting in the children's removal and/or continued placement outside both parents' care will not be remedied. Mother's and Father's respective arguments on appeal amount to an invitation to reweigh the evidence, and this we may not do. *D.D.*, 804 N.E.2d at 264.

B. *Best Interests*

We next consider Father's additional assertion that termination of his parental rights is not in the children's best interests. We are mindful that, in determining what is in the best

interests of a child, the trial court is required to look beyond the factors identified by DCS and to consider the totality of the evidence. *McBride v. Monroe Co. Office of Family & Children*, 798 N.E.2d at 185, 203 (Ind. Ct. App. 2003). In so doing, the trial court must subordinate the interests of the parent to those of the child. *Id.* The court need not wait until a child is irreversibly harmed before terminating the parent-child relationship. *Id.* Moreover, we have previously held that the recommendations of the case manager and court-appointed advocate to terminate parental rights, in addition to evidence that the conditions resulting in removal will not be remedied, is sufficient to show by clear and convincing evidence that termination is in the child's best interests. *In re M.M.*, 733 N.E.2d 6, 13 (Ind. Ct. App. 2000).

In addition to the findings set forth previously, the trial court also made several detailed findings regarding the children's behavioral issues and mental health disorders. Specifically, the trial court found A.B.1 was diagnosed with attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, a psychiatric disorder, reactive attachment disorder, a conduct disorder, and a low I.Q. J.B. and A.B.2 were both diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, and possibly intermittent explosive disorder. J.B. also has the additional challenge of a learning disability, and all three children suffer from parent-child relational disorder. The trial court further found:

> 12. The evidence established, through Dr. Jennifer Spencer, that for a child to receive a diagnosis of reactive attachment disorder, there had to be "pathological parenting" involving significant abuse or neglect so that the child is unable to bond. This diagnosis often leads to serious behavior problems and further diagnosis of conduct disorder. This in fact is the case for A.B.1, who[se] behavior had included extremely aggressive behavior, fire starting, and killing animals.

13. Meagan Moore has provided mentoring services . . . for the children through Ireland Home Based Services. . . . [A.B.2 and J.B.] . . . exhibited a great deal of aggression. However, in settings where boundaries were set for them, such as in school, the children behaved much better.

* * *

26. The Guardian ad Litem [GAL] testified that termination of parental rights was in the children's best interest[s].

* * *

29. The children's behavior since being placed in foster care and receiving services through [BCDCS] has improved dramatically, although some behavioral concerns remain, including hoarding food.

* * *

32. Dr. Spencer also testified that the longer the children remain in a non-permanent environment, including a foster home that does not lead to adoption, all three children were at risk of attachment disorder.

33. The children love their parents and enjoy contact with their extended family. The parents are not, however, able to provide appropriate parenting to the children.

34. The children need permanency and stability that their parents for a multitude of reasons are not able to provide them.

(Father's App. pp. 91, 93-95). The trial court thereafter concluded that termination of Father's parental rights is in the children's best interests, stating that despite the efforts toward rehabilitation and reunification made by BCDCS and Father, his "underlying issues of inability to parent the children" had not been resolved. (Father's App. p. 97). The trial court also concluded that Father's poor parenting "ha[d] caused some of the children's disorders," and that Father did not possess and/or had not exhibited the necessary effort and ability to

provide his special needs children with necessary supervision, education, care, structure and skilled parenting necessary to ensure the children's future emotional and physical safety. (Father's App. p. 97). These findings and conclusions are also supported by the evidence.

During the termination hearing, Shirar and GAL Marjorie Cook (Cook) recommended termination of parental rights as in the children's best interests. In so doing, Shirar testified that both parents "don't seem to be able to put the kids' needs ahead of their own." (Tr. p. 48). In addition, Cook indicated during the termination hearing that Father never acknowledged "any responsibility for the children being removed from [his] custody." (Tr. p. 163). Cook also testified that she had observed significant improvements in the children since their removal from Father's care.

Finally, Dorian Angebrandt (Angebrandt) informed the trial court that he was a licensed clinical social worker and had provided counseling for the children during the underlying proceedings. Angebrandt testified that the children had "struggled with uncertainty" and "anxiety" regarding their future during the underlying CHINS and termination cases and that they "definitely" needed "consistency" and "permanency" regarding what the future holds for them. (Tr. pp. 94-95). When asked whether he believed it would be "detrimental" if the children were required to continue to wait for permanency, Angebrandt answered in the affirmative. (Tr. p. 96).

"It is undisputed that children require secure, stable, long-term continuous relationships with their parents or foster parents. There is little that can be as detrimental to a child's sound development as uncertainty." *Baker v. Marion County Office of Family &*

Children, 810 N.E.2d 1035, 1040 (Ind. 2004). Based on the totality of the evidence, including Father's history of involvement with DCS, failure to successfully complete a majority of the trial court's dispositional goals, and past and current inability to demonstrate he can provide his children with the safe, structured, and stable home environment they desperately need, coupled with Shirar's and Cook's testimony recommending termination of parental rights, we conclude that clear and convincing evidence supports the trial court's finding that termination of Father's parental rights is in A.B.1's, J.B.'s and A.B.2's respective best interests. *See, e.g., A.I.*, 825 N.E.2d at 811 (concluding that testimony of court-appointed child advocate and family case manager, coupled with evidence that conditions resulting in continued placement outside of home will not be remedied, is sufficient to prove by clear and convincing evidence termination is in child's best interests), *trans. denied*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing, we conclude that the trial court properly terminated both Mother's and Father's parental rights to all three children.

Affirmed.

ROBB, J., and BROWN, J., concur.