

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COURT OF APPEALS

---

In the Matter of RACHEL MAY, RYAN MAY,  
GARY HAWKS, KAITLYN HAWKS, EMILY  
HAWKS, JIMMY HAWKS, HAILEY MORGAN  
RIDGEWAY, and MIKAYLA RIDGEWAY,  
Minors.

---

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

REBECCA JEAN REYNOLDS,

Respondent-Appellant.

---

UNPUBLISHED

November 16, 2006

No. 270855

Sanilac Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 04-034554-NA

Before: Whitbeck, C.J., and Sawyer and Jansen, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent appeals as of right from the circuit court's order terminating her parental rights to the minor children pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i) and (g). We affirm.

The trial court did not clearly err in finding that the statutory grounds for termination were established by clear and convincing evidence. MCR 3.977(J); *In re Trejo*, 462 Mich 341, 351; 612 NW2d 407 (2000); *In re Sours*, 459 Mich 624, 633; 593 NW2d 520 (1999). The evidence clearly and convincingly showed that respondent continued to place her personal desires above her children's needs for safety and stability. The court obtained jurisdiction over the children because respondent failed to protect the children from an abusive boyfriend. Earlier, respondent was involved with a man who sexually abused at least one of her children. While this case was pending, respondent left her children with inappropriate caregivers so that she could be with her new boyfriend, and then subsequently took six of the children out of state, without petitioner's knowledge or the court's approval, so they could meet her new boyfriend, whom she had met on the Internet. Although services were provided, respondent failed to benefit from those services and continued to ignore the needs of her children in order to advance her own desires and relationships with men.

Similarly, the trial court did not clearly err in its determination that termination of respondent's parental rights was not clearly contrary to the children's best interests. MCL 712A.19b(5); *In re Trejo*, *supra* at 351. The older children no longer trusted respondent and the

younger ones showed signs of anxiety and insecurity. All of the older children were in need of counseling services because of issues involving abuse and neglect. Although a family counselor opined that termination of respondent's parental rights would be contrary to the best interests of some of the children, he was unaware of significant aspects of the case. The trial court did not clearly err in discrediting his testimony for this reason and in concluding, on the whole record, that termination was not clearly contrary to the children's best interests. *Id.*

Affirmed.

/s/ William C. Whitbeck

/s/ David H. Sawyer

/s/ Kathleen Jansen