

STATE OF MICHIGAN
COURT OF APPEALS

In the Matter of CHLOE REEVES, Minor.

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES,

Petitioner-Appellee,

v

LUTHER MYLES,

Respondent-Appellant.

UNPUBLISHED

July 20, 2006

No. 267851

Saginaw Circuit Court

Family Division

LC No. 05-030055-NA

Before: Neff, P.J., and Bandstra and Zahra, JJ.

MEMORANDUM.

Respondent appeals as of right from the order terminating his parental rights pursuant to MCL 712A.19b(3)(g), (j), and (l). We affirm.

Respondent did not attend the child protective proceedings because of the existence of a bench warrant against him, and he never requested the court to appoint an attorney to represent his interests. At the termination hearing, the child's mother testified regarding respondent's misappropriation and mismanagement of her income and benefits. She also described instances of domestic violence perpetrated by respondent while the child was nearby, respondent's control and intimidation of her, and respondent's continued use of drugs. Other witnesses testified about respondent's lengthy criminal history, his status as an absconder from probation, and his failure to provide a drug screen or to participate in Families First ("FF"). Lastly, evidence was admitted regarding prior terminations of respondent's parental rights to other children. Respondent argues on appeal that the trial court's reliance upon the testimony of the child's mother was misplaced since the child's mother had intellectual limitations and was susceptible to coaching by Department of Human Services ("DHS") workers. There was no evidence of coaching, and this Court gives deference to the trial court's special opportunity to judge the credibility of the witnesses. MCR 2.613(C); *In re Miller*, 433 Mich 331, 337; 445 NW2d 161 (1989). Respondent also argues that, given his absence from the child protective proceedings and the failure of the trial court to appoint an attorney to represent his interests, there was an obligation on the part of petitioner and the child's attorney to present a more balanced portrayal of respondent's parenting abilities. Since respondent cites no authority for this claim or developed it sufficiently, he has abandoned it. *People v Kevorkian*, 248 Mich App 373, 389; 639 NW2d 291 (2001).

The trial court did not clearly err in determining that the statutory grounds had been established by clear and convincing evidence. MCR 3.977(J); *In re Trejo*, 462 Mich 341, 356-357; 612 NW2d 407 (2000). The evidence of respondent's past showed clearly and convincingly that he had not properly provided for the child and placed the child at risk of harm from utility shut offs, domestic violence and his drug use. Respondent's future did not look promising considering his refusal to participate in FF or provide a drug screen, his status as an absconder from probation, and his total lack of participation in the child protective proceedings. MCL 712A.19b(3)(g) and (j). The evidence also clearly and convincingly established numerous prior terminations of respondent's parental rights. MCL 712A.19b(3)(l).

Finally, the child's best interests were best served by being removed from a father who led an unstable and criminal lifestyle, did not participate in the protective proceedings, and who used her, her mother and the DHS to extract as much money as he could for his self-serving interests.

Affirmed.

/s/ Janet T. Neff
/s/ Richard A. Bandstra
/s/ Brian K. Zahra