FILED
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CLERK SUPREME COURT

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF IOWA

IN THE INTEREST OF R.L.K.,	)	191
A Child.	)	Filed November 26, 1985
M.McK.F., Natural Mother,	)	5-484 85-430
Appellant.	)	

Appeal from the Iowa District Court for Wapello County - Max H. Ruschmeyer, Judge.

The mother of an 11-year-old boy appeals from the juvenile court order terminating her parental rights. **AFFIRMED.**

H Edwin Detlie of Knight & Detlie, Ottumwa, for appellant mother.

Thomas J Miller, Attorney General; Charles K. Phillips, Assistant Attorney General, and Ruth Cooperrider, Assistant Wapello County Attorney, for appellee State

Dennis Emanuel of Webber, Gaumer & Emanuel, P.C., Ottumwa, for the child

Heard by Oxberger, C.J., and Donielson and Sackett, JJ.

The mother of an 11-year-old boy appeals from the juvenile court order terminating her parental rights. She challenges the sufficiency of the evidence to demonstrate that the child cannot be returned to her custody. We affirm.

The male child in question was born in June of 1974. He lived with his natural mother until 1983, when he was declared a child in need of assistance and was placed in foster care. His natural father's parental rights had been previously terminated.

The evidence showed that the child has suffered from serious emotional and behavioral problems, allegedly resulting from parental neglect. The evidence also showed that the mother has been unable or unwilling to address the child's special needs. There was evidence that the child's mother has had a series of stormy relationships with men who abused her. There was also evidence that the mother and her boyfriends had administered inappropriate discipline or physical abuse to the child and his siblings. The evidence showed that the mother moves frequently, sometimes lives in small campers, and occasionally spends the summer months following carnivals. While the child was in foster care, the mother did not always appear for scheduled visitations or for counseling sessions.

The juvenile court terminated the natural mother's parental rights on the ground stated in Iowa Code section 232.116(5). That statute permits termination if the court finds that:

> a. The child has been adjudicated a child in need of assistance pursuant to section 232.96; and
>
> b. The custody of the child has been transferred from the child's parents for placement pursuant to section 232.102 for at least twelve of the last eighteen months; and
>
> c. There is clear and convincing evidence that the child cannot be returned to the custody of the child's parents as provided in section 232.102.

The mother has appealed from the termination order. She challenges the sufficiency of the evidence to demonstrate that the child cannot be returned to her custody. In particular, she points to the testimony of one social worker that she had shown improvement in the weeks before the termination hearing and that she should perhaps be given an additional four months to show whether the improvement is permanent. The mother argues the juvenile court erred by declining to grant her this four-month grace period.

The mother does not dispute that subsections (a) and (b) of section 232.116(5) are satisfied, but does, however, contest whether the clear and convincing evidence standard of subsection (c) is met. She bases this claim primarily on testimony from a social worker that if the mother was given an additional four months the situation might improve. We disagree.

The social worker who favored an additional four-month period also testified that reintegration would take an additional year and the likelihood of success was a longshot. This was the only testimony which did not indicate that termination was necessary. Moreover, considerable evidence was introduced which showed that there was no prospect of the child enjoying a stable environment with his natural parents.

The mother cites In the Interest of Dameron, 306 N.W.2d 743 (Iowa 1981), for the proposition that parental rights should only be terminated when the likelihood of the child being successfully returned to the parent(s) is greatly outweighed by the adverse consequences delay could have on the child. The mother claims that a four-month delay in the proceedings will not be detrimental to the child in this instance. We disagree.

Dameron provides that parental rights should be terminated when the statutory requirements are met and the best interests of the child require such action. 306 N.W.2d at 745, 747. Parents are not granted unlimited opportunities

'o improve their child care responsibilities if no meaningful purpose would be erved See In the Interest of T.D.C., 336 N.W.2d 738, 744 (Iowa 1983); Long ' Long, 255 N W 2d 140, 146 (Iowa 1977).

The record does provide clear and convincing evidence to warrant a termination of parental rights "Stated otherwise, the evidence convinces us that the children will suffer harm if returned." Dameron, 306 N.W.2d at 747 (emphasis in original) R L K enjoys a stable environment with his foster parents and appears to be justifiably unenthusiastic about the prospect of returning to live with his mother The child's hopes of establishing a relationship with his mother have already been dashed by her unwillingness to give her son adequate care and attention We affirm the district court's ruling.

AFFIRMED