IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF IOWA

No. 8-440 / 98-0322
Filed August 28, 1998

IN THE INTEREST OF K.D., T.D., J.D., R.D., J.D., and M.D.,
Minor Children,

R.D., Father,
Appellant.

Appeal from the Iowa District Court for Scott County, John G. Mullen, District Associate Judge.

A father appeals from the termination of his parental rights to his six minor children. **AFFIRMED.**

Jeno M. Berta of Jeno M. Berta, P.C., Davenport, for appellant.

Thomas J. Miller, Attorney General, Charles K. Phillips, Assistant Attorney General, and Gerda Lane, Assistant County Attorney, for appellee State.

Murray W. Bell of Bell, Leon & Ramirez, P.L.C., Davenport, for minor children.

Considered by Cady, C.J., and Streit and Mahan, JJ.

STREIT, J.

Richard and Candie are the parents of Michelle, born in July 1987; Junelaine, born in February 1989; Richie, born in September 1990; Jessica[1], born in August 1991; Timothy, born in August 1992; and Katelyn, born in February 1994. Richard and Candie separated in December 1995. They received a dissolution of marriage in February 1996, and Richard received custody of the six children.

The family came to the attention of the Department of Human Services (DHS) in January 1996, due to the chaos of the household and the problems Richard was having supervising the children. Richard voluntarily agreed to receive services. The family had a house fire in February 1996 and Richard moved with the children to a motel. DHS issued a founded report of denial of critical care for failure to supervise. Later in February 1996, Richard was hospitalized for an anxiety attack. Candie took the children while Richard was in the hospital, but stated she could not care for the children for more than a few days. Upon his release, Richard did not follow through with medication or psychiatric appointments.

In March 1996, Richard moved with the children to a duplex. The residence was in complete disarray, with food strewn throughout. Due to Richard's mental problems, disorganization, and limitations, he was unable to adequately supervise the children. Richard resisted services.

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[1] Richard is Jessica's legal father, although not her biological father.

The children were removed from Richard's care on March 27, 1996, and placed in foster care. The children were adjudicated to be children in need of assistance (CINA) pursuant to Iowa Code sections 232.2(6)(c)(2), (f), and (g). The court approved the case permanency plan, which required the parents to attend a parenting class, obtain a mental health evaluation, and participate in visitation. Richard was also required to attend counseling for gambling.

Richard completed a parenting class in November 1996. However, he presented little motivation to implement the skills learned in class. Richard did not otherwise participate in services, other than attending supervised visitation.

While the children were in foster care, they said they had been physically and sexually abused by Richard. The children were fearful of Richard. Based on the recommendation of the children's therapist, the juvenile court entered an order in December 1996, prohibiting contact between Richard and the children. Richard then left the area and had very little contact with DHS. Richard lived for a period of time in North Dakota, where he entered Gamblers Anonymous. Richard eventually moved back to Iowa, but did not participate in services. He sent out flyers claiming his children had been abducted by the State of Iowa.

All of the children have behavioral problems. Michelle has been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Junelaine has some problems with aggressive behavior. Richie was hospitalized in March 1997 due to his negative behaviors. He was released in October 1997, but continues to attend a day treatment

program. Jessica exhibits oppositional behavior. Timothy takes medication for his behavioral difficulties and attends play therapy. Katelyn has developmental delays. She also attends play therapy.

In July 1997, the guardian ad litem filed a petition to terminate the parental rights of Richard and Candie. Candie voluntarily agreed to the termination of her parental rights. The court terminated Richard's parental rights pursuant to sections 232.116(1)(c), (d), (e), and (g). The court found the children were at a high risk of serious physical and sexual abuse and neglect if they were placed in Richard's care. Richard has appealed.

I. The scope of review in termination cases is de novo. *In re S.N.*, 500 N.W.2d 32, 34 (Iowa 1994). The grounds for termination must be proven by clear and convincing evidence. *In re E.K.*, 568 N.W.2d 829, 830 (Iowa App. 1997). Our primary concern is the best interests of the children. *In re A.B.*, 554 N.W.2d 291, 293 (Iowa App. 1996).

II. Richard contends termination of his parental rights is not in the best interests of the children. He denies abusing the children. He points out it is unlikely the children will all be placed together. He believes it would be best to allow the children to live together with him.

We determine termination of Richard's parental rights is in the best interests of the children. The children all have special needs. Richard had not shown any interest in improving his parenting skills to address the children's special needs.

Richard had not participated in services and had not seen the children since December 1996. The children are afraid of him. We find the children would be at risk of harm if returned to Richard's care. We conclude it would not be in the best interests of the children to place them in the care of Richard.

III. Richard asks for additional time to improve his parenting skills. He states he now recognizes he should cooperate with services. He asserts he has the potential to become an adequate parent in a reasonable period of time.

We must reasonably limit the time for parents to be in a position to assume care of their children because patience with parents can soon translate into intolerable hardship for the children. *In re A.Y.H.*, 508 N.W.2d 92, 96 (Iowa App. 1996). A child should not be forced to endlessly suffer the parentless limbo of foster care. *In re J.P.*, 499 N.W.2d 334, 339 (Iowa App. 1993). The crucial days of childhood cannot be suspended while parents experiment with ways to face up to their own problems. *In re D.A.*, 506 N.W.2d 478, 479 (Iowa App. 1993). Children simply cannot wait for responsible parenting. *In re L.L.*, 459 N.W.2d 489, 495 (Iowa 1990).

Under the facts presented in this case, we determine Richard was given ample time to correct his parenting deficiencies. It would be harmful to the children to give Richard more time to improve his parenting skills. The children need stability. We find the juvenile court properly terminated Richard's parental rights.

IV. We note appellant has five case citations in his brief to an Internet search engine called Versus Law. Although computerized research is of assistance

to the bench and bar, these citations to not comply with Iowa Rule of Appellate Procedure 14(e), which requires citation to the National Reporter System. We would remind appellate counsel failure to cite adequate authority in a brief to support an issue may be deemed waiver of that issue. Iowa R. App. P. 14(a)(3).

V. We affirm the decision of the juvenile court terminating Richard's parental rights to his six children.

AFFIRMED.