FILED
AUG 29 1985
CLERK SUPREME COURT

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF IOWA

IN THE INTEREST OF C.R.B., A Minor Child.	)	
A.F.,	)	Filed August 29, 1985
Petitioner,	)	
K.M.B., Natural Mother,	)	5-351 / 85-211
Appellant.	)	

Appeal from the Iowa District Court for Black Hawk County - Robert E. Mahan, Judge.

The natural mother of a five-year-old boy appeals from the juvenile court order terminating her parental rights pursuant to Iowa Code section 600A.8(3) on the ground of abandonment. **AFFIRMED.**

Sharon B. Briner, Cedar Falls, Iowa, for appellant.

Thomas W. Langlas of Gallagher, Langlas & Gallagher, Waterloo, Iowa, guardian ad litem for appellee C.R.B.

John W. Pieters, Waterloo, Iowa, for appellee A.F.

Considered by Donielson, P.J., Schlegel, and Hayden, JJ.

The natural mother of a five-year-old boy appeals from the juvenile court order terminating her parental rights pursuant to Iowa Code section 600A.8(3) on the ground of abandonment. The natural mother asserts that there was not sufficient evience that she intended to abandon the boy. We affirm.

C.R.B., a boy, was born April 11, 1980, while his mother, Kathy, was in prison. Kathy made arrangements for Alvesta, a woman she knew, to care for C R.B. until her release. In April 1981, after her release, Kathy went to live in Waterloo with C.R.B. In July 1981, Kathy filed a petition for appointment of a guardian for C.R.B., because her probation officer told her there was a possibility her probation would be revoked. The petition was granted and Alvesta was appointed C.R.B.'s guardian. Kathy's probation was not revoked; Alvesta, however, continued to have physical custody of C.R.B.

Kathy became pregnant, and she moved in with Alvesta. When the baby was born, Kathy moved into her own apartment. Both C.R.B. and the baby initially lived with Alvesta. After some time, Kathy took C.R.B. and the baby to live with her. Alvesta, however, disapproved of Kathy's lifestyle and took them back. In September 1982, the baby was hospitalized. Kathy removed the baby from the hospital; she has had physical custody of the baby since. Alvesta continued to have physical custody of C.R.B. That same month Kathy filed an application to terminate C.R.B.'s guardianship; the application was denied. From April to October 1983, Kathy was in jail. In January 1984, she moved to Des Moines; Alvesta remained in Waterloo with C.R.B.

In July 1984, Alvesta filed a petition to terminate Kathy's parental rights with respect to C.R.B. on the ground of abandonment. Trial was held before a juvenile referee. The referee found that Kathy had initiated almost no contact with C.R.B. and had not inquired about him in the previous 22 months. The

referee granted Alvesta's petition and terminated Kathy's parental rights pursuant to Iowa Code section 600A.8(3) on the ground of abandonment. Kathy requested a review of the referee's decision. On review, the district court affirmed the decision. Kathy has appealed.

Our review of proceedings to terminate a parent-child relationship is de novo. In re Goettsche, 311 N.W.2d 104, 106 (Iowa 1981). We give weight to the fact findings of the trial court, but we are not bound by them. Iowa R. App. P. 14(f)(7). The best interests of the child are central to our determination. In re Dameron, 306 N.W.2d 743, 745 (Iowa 1981).

Iowa Code section 600A.8(3) provides that parental rights may be terminated when there is clear and convincing evidence that the child has been abandoned. Abandonment, as the term is defined in section 600A.2(16), requires a relinquishment of parental rights and responsibilities accompanied by an intent to forego them. In re Goettsche, 311 N.W.2d at 106. The supreme court has recognized that "[p]arental responsibilities include more than subjectively maintaining an interest in a child. The concept requires affirmative parenting to the extent that it is practical and feasible in the circumstances." Id.

Our careful review of the record convinces us that the decision of the trial court should be affirmed. The evidence indicates that Kathy has demonstrated little, if any, interest in the welfare of her child. In fact, she has failed to assume any of the responsibilities inherent in a parent-child relationship. We recognize that Kathy has been incarcerated several times during the child's life. Certainly, this would add to the difficulty of establishing any sort of relationship with C.R.B. However, we cannot ignore the fact that when Kathy was free and able to make contact with the child she made only a feeble attempt to do so.

In late 1983 and early 1984, Kathy lived in close proximity to C.R.B., yet made no significant effort to visit with him or inquire about his welfare. Kathy later moved to Des Moines leaving no forwarding address with her child's guardian During that time, she made no attempts to contact C.R.B. or his guardian by telephone. Furthermore, although Kathy frequently went to Waterloo to visit her boyfriend's relatives, she failed to demonstrate any interest in her son and usually did not contact him at all.

Kathy claims her lack of contact with C.R.B. was largely attributable to her deteriorating relationship with Alvesta. However, we do not believe this factor alone excuses Kathy's general indifference to her son.

Clear and convincing evidence supports the conclusion that Kathy abandoned her son and intended to do so. While we do not reach our decision lightly, it is apparent that the best interests of the child require that parental rights be terminated.

Accordingly, we affirm.

AFFIRMED.