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STATE OF MICHIGAN

COURT OF APPEALS

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In re CRANDALL, Minors.

No. 378821
Kent Circuit Court
Family Division
LC Nos. 24-050339-NA;
24-050340-NA

Before: M. J. KELLY, P.J., and O'BRIEN and LIEVENSE, JJ.

PER CURIAM.

Respondent-father appeals by right the trial court's order terminating his parental rights to the minor children, CC and SC, under MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(*i*) (conditions that led to adjudication continue to exist and are unlikely to be rectified within reasonable time) and (j) (reasonable likelihood of harm if returned to parent).[1] On appeal, respondent argues the trial court erred by finding (1) that petitioner, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), made reasonable efforts toward reunification, (2) that statutory grounds existed to terminate respondent's parental rights under MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(*i*) and (j), and (3) that it was in the children's best interests to terminate his parental rights. We affirm.

I. FACTUAL AND PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

A. THE PETITION

This case arose after Children's Protective Services (CPS) received a complaint on February 5, 2024, alleging that mother and her boyfriend engaged in a physical altercation in front of the children, which ultimately led to the boyfriend's arrest.

[1] The order also terminated the parental rights of the children's mother. She is not a party to this appeal.

On February 6, 2024, DHHS petitioned the trial court alleging that the children came within the court's jurisdiction under MCL 712A.2(b)(1) and (2). While respondent was not implicated in the February 5 incident, he also had a long history with CPS and other issues included in the petition. The petition alleged that respondent owed over $7,000 in child support, had a criminal history including third-degree felony child abuse of CC from 2015, had another pending charge for misdemeanor domestic violence stemming from a domestic-violence incident in December 2023, and had admitted to abusing crack cocaine and alcohol. At the time the petition was filed, the children were living with mother. Respondent could not be located and had been homeless for a while.

At the preliminary hearing on February 9, 2024, respondent waived probable cause and requested that petitioner explore relative placement. The trial court found probable cause that one or more of the allegations in the petition were true and that it was contrary to the children's welfare to remain placed with either parent "due to substance abuse, homelessness, and ongoing domestic violence." The trial court authorized the petition and placed the children with DHHS. It also ordered that DHHS was required to make reasonable efforts to reunify the family.

Following respondent's plea of admission at a combined adjudication and dispositional hearing on April 5, 2024, the trial court found statutory grounds to exercise jurisdiction over the children. The trial court determined that the "continual exposure of [the] children to neglect by domestic violence and drug use" made respondent's plea appropriate. The children were jointly placed in a licensed, but not preadoptive, foster care home, and respondent was granted supervised visitation. The court also ordered respondent to cooperate with DHHS services. Over respondent's objection, it determined that petitioner had been making reasonable efforts toward reunification, even though there was a delay in DHHS completing the paperwork for services.

B. ADJUDICATIVE PHASE

At a dispositional review hearing in June 2024, respondent continued to struggle with substance abuse, and he was on a waitlist for substance-abuse counseling. Respondent had begun participating in weekly counseling sessions for domestic violence issues and participated in 12 of the 16 weekly sessions. He also attended four out of eight available sessions in a "Men Choosing Alternatives to Violence" group. Regarding housing and employment, respondent found employment doing handyman work but was living with his boss and being paid under the table. DHHS shared housing resources with him and reported he was working toward saving enough money for a security deposit on an apartment. Petitioner reported "[p]arenting times go very well. The kids are always very excited to see him. He's very engaged throughout the whole visit. He's very affectionate. Very loving. Visits go very well." Respondent had attended all parenting time visits, and despite being late numerous times, always let caseworkers know when he was running late.

Following these updates, petitioner recommended, and the trial court ordered, continued reunification efforts for another 90 days, that the children remain in foster care, and that parenting time remain supervised. The trial court found, however, that "progress toward alleviating the conditions that cause[d] the children to be placed were minimally made by both parents," and that "[i]f there continues to be a lack of full engagement . . . and I hear that there's a lot of missed appointments and a lot of missed drug screens, I may take that away and say that progress is not

being made." Another dispositional review hearing was scheduled for September 2024, but for unknown reasons, it did not occur.

A permanency planning hearing or dispositional review hearing occurred in December 2024, though there was some confusion on the record as to the type of hearing it was. A caseworker provided updates that the children were "both doing very well" in foster care. CC was now in sixth grade, doing well in school, was "processing her trauma" in therapy, and was "very engaged" in visits with respondent. CC expressed an interest in living with respondent. However, SC was "slightly behind emotionally, socially, and in language," but looked forward to seeing respondent as well during parenting time. The caseworker reported there were no appropriate in-state placements available with relatives, and DHHS continued looking for preadoptive foster homes for the children.

Regarding housing and employment, respondent was still living with his boss and working under the table. However, he was also working with petitioner to find a job where he could receive a pay stub and save money for a security deposit for an apartment. He had completed a monthly budget with the caseworker, was participating weekly in therapy, but was "kicked out" of the Men Choosing Alternative's to Violence group. Respondent had made no progress with substance abuse—he only completed 7 of 28 required drug screens and tested positive in all of them. He expressed interest in going to in-patient rehabilitation for 90 days, which the caseworker could arrange for January 2025, and upon release, he could obtain housing and a new job. Respondent was participating in parenting time without issue. The caseworker reported CC "adores and loves him so much," and SC "feels the same way."

The trial court remarked that the children had now been in foster care for ten months, "and we have lack of housing, no improvement with regard to domestic relations, substance abuse is a significant issue. So, a lot of stuff needs to be done for [respondent] as well for reunification to occur . . . . " Petitioner recommended at the December 2024 hearing that reunification remain the goal, and to continue as is with supervised parenting time. The trial court adopted the recommendation but remarked "you've got 90 days to get it together," and that had this been a permanency planning hearing, the trial court would have ordered that adoption be the goal, and that a termination hearing be scheduled. Petitioner then informed the court that the current hearing should have been a permanency planning hearing because one was required within one year of the children entering care. As such, petitioner recommended that termination proceedings begin and that the permanency goal should be changed to adoption. The caseworker remarked that respondent's success in rehab would be "tremendous progress" that would "give him that chance to . . . continue with reunification . . . . " Respondent objected to the recommendation. The trial court allowed for reunification to remain the goal but scheduled a termination hearing for March 19, 2025 "because of the permanency for the children . . . ."

In January 2025, petitioner filed a supplemental termination petition alleging that the children came within the provisions of MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(*i*), (g), and (j) and requesting the trial court to terminate the parental rights of respondent and mother. With respect to respondent, the DHHS alleged that he "expresses strong desire to work [with] services but makes little progress." Regarding domestic violence, the supplemental petition alleged respondent participated in counseling and "made some progress in addressing this barrier," but continued to deny a history of domestic violence which caused petitioner concern of repeated domestic violence due to lack

of accountability. The supplemental petition alleged respondent attended weekly counseling and discussed inpatient treatment, but missed several drug screens, and when he did screen, he tested positive for cocaine and had made little progress. Concerning employment and housing, the supplemental petition alleged respondent lived with his employer and was paid in cash, so he was unable to verify his income. Respondent continued to struggle with inappropriate housing and had no verifiable income. Based on these allegations, and the allegation that that respondent had made little progress toward saving money for a security deposit on an apartment, petitioner alleged employment and housing continued as barriers to reunification.

A termination hearing occurred on February 6, 2025, only 45 days after the last hearing. Respondent stated that he began participating in a 90-day in-patient rehabilitation program on January 23, 2025, where he was able to continue supervised parenting time, and requested an adjournment. Petitioner opposed an adjournment and argued that respondent had only entered rehab "less than a week or two ago," and that the same barriers remained that caused the children to enter care. Petitioner stated that it did not foresee a change in circumstances based on the history of the case "and how the parents have progressed throughout their treatment plan." The lawyer-guardian ad litem for the children also opposed adjourning the termination hearing, arguing respondent would not have independent housing when he left rehab and that "[t]hese children need stability. They're young children . . . . They weren't in a preadoptive home before, they are now. It's time to move forward. From my perspective, these parents have made no progress and an adjournment will not change anything that they haven't done in the past year, which is nothing." The trial court reminded petitioner "that the overarching goal in the beginning is reunification" and adjourned the termination hearing to give respondent an opportunity to achieve sobriety and obtain housing and a verifiable income. However , the court emphasized the children's need for permanence and finality as part of its ruling.

At a continued termination hearing in March 2025 to check on respondent's progress, respondent's counsel requested another adjournment to give respondent time to complete the in-patient program. Caseworkers provided an update that the children were in a new preadoptive placement as of February 28, 2025, because CC was not doing well in the prior placement, and that parenting time with respondent was still "going well." The trial court granted the adjournment and remarked "I am cautiously optimistic that [respondent and mother] will overcome their barriers so that their children can have permanency with clean and sober parents," and "I do think that the parents are, at this time, making a concerted effort to try to be just that."

At the third continued termination hearing in May 2025, which the parties agreed to treat as a consolidated review hearing, petitioner informed the trial court that respondent completed rehab in late April 2025, achieved sobriety, was living in a Sober Living House, attending AA and NA meetings four times a week, and had just begun attending weekly domestic violence counseling. The court heard testimony from caseworkers that CC, then 12 years old, was "thriving" in her new placement, was "asking for this to be over," but felt "the stress of the foster care case and what her parents are going through." The caseworker reported CC wanted to either "be returned home or stay where she's at," and not "continue to be in the limbo." SC, then three years old, was exhibiting "explosive" and "aggressive" behaviors, and caseworkers were seeking to get her started in play therapy and occupational therapy. Housing and employment remained barriers to reunification despite the caseworker submitting 11 housing applications for respondent

and a referral to Michigan Works for employment, and respondent was applying to jobs on his own.

Respondent had achieved sobriety for about four to five months by May 2025, but the trial court continued to be concerned with the length of time the children had been in care, and the fact that respondent had still not found appropriate housing and or provided verifiable income. However, it acknowledged respondent was still earning money under the table and was still "doing something [] positive to try to . . . make a difference." Petitioner agreed to adjourn the request for termination with the expectation that respondent continue engaging in all services, find a job and housing, and act "as a father to his children, as opposed to . . . a more friend relationship . . . . " Petitioner agreed to not seek termination if respondent complied with those directives.

The trial court acknowledged respondent had "stepped up," "albeit late," and said it could not expect more from him because he was "doing everything." The trial court addressed respondent: "Do I expect perfection? Not in all areas. But I do expect to continue progress." The trial court stated the next hearing would either be for termination "or we're heading back in the other direction," and remarked that termination depended on respondent making progress toward employment and housing. The trial court found DHHS had made reasonable efforts toward reunification and that respondent made progress toward alleviating or mitigating the conditions that led to the children's removal but ordered that DHHS initiate termination proceedings.

C. TERMINATION PHASE

Termination proceedings began in August 2025. At that hearing, petitioner reported that respondent had found a job, was providing paystubs as verifiable income, and had completed a 16-week supportive visitation course to prepare him to be the children's primary parent upon reunification. But, according to petitioner, respondent was still living in a Sober Living Home where rent cost $600 a month, which was an unsuitable place for the children to reside. Respondent was now "very inconsistent" with attendance at parenting time, and petitioner believed he could not financially support the children if they were returned to his care, and that he was not ready to be reunified with them. The termination hearing itself was adjourned to a later date for reasons unrelated to respondent's appeal.

In September 2025, the children underwent trauma assessments. CC was diagnosed with generalized anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder with dissociative symptoms which impacted her functioning, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, indicated "low levels of hope," and exhibited parentification[2] when caring for SC While testimony on SC's trauma assessment was limited, other testimony showed SC was experiencing significant stress, so much she was experiencing regressions in behavior, including in potty training, despite being three and a half years old.

[2] "Parentification" is a type of behavior that is a "role reversal between parent and child—when a child takes on responsibility that's not developmentally appropriate for their age." Cleveland Clinic, *What is Parentification?* <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/parentification> (accessed August 24, 2026).

The next termination hearings occurred over three dates beginning on October 3, 2025 and concluding on December 1, 2025. The trial court heard from several witnesses during these hearings, including respondent. At that time, respondent was still living in the Sober Living Home, had been sober for over eight months and was attending domestic violence counseling. He was still on a waiting list for housing and was filling out housing applications. However, he struggled to save money to secure housing and admitted he had "been purchasing things that are scams" that "wipe[d] out [his] bank account." Respondent was attending domestic violence counseling, although caseworkers testified that he had not benefited because he had still not taken accountability for his past actions and began associating with individuals with a criminal history that included domestic violence. Specifically, respondent began a relationship with a woman he met in rehabilitation—the woman had her parental rights terminated, was convicted of domestic violence and prostitution, and, at the time of the termination hearings, was incarcerated and "looking at a felony for possession of cocaine." Respondent "lack[ed] an understanding of what having her involved in his life will affect the [children] negatively." Respondent believed he benefited more from counseling because he was sober, but when asked if he thought he could benefit from additional services, respondent said he did not know.

Respondent also did not know whether CC exhibiting parentification was positive or negative and caseworkers testified he never asked about the children's progress in therapy or attended their medical appointments. Caseworkers testified he had not taken full responsibility for what brought the children into care. They believed CS was "trauma-bonded" to respondent father, was eager to please him out of fear, and was afraid of disappointing him. They also testified the reason respondent never progressed to unsupervised parenting time was "[d]ue to inappropriate conversations that continued to be had." This included respondent mentioning ex-girlfriends to CS during parenting time, as well as mentioning to the children he could attend events like trick-or-treating outside of parenting time when he did not yet have permission. The children's foster parent testified that the children were dysregulated when they returned from supervised parenting time with respondent.

After hearing testimony, the trial court found that 182 days had elapsed since the initial disposition. The trial court stressed that it did not have more time for respondents, acknowledged the age difference between the children, and found that the children faced a reasonable likelihood of harm if returned to respondent. Ultimately, the trial court found that reasonable efforts had been made to preserve and reunify the family, and that clear and convincing evidence established a statutory basis to terminate the parental rights of both respondents under MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(i) and (j). The court found that termination of parental rights was in the children's best interests and ordered that respondent's parental rights be terminated.

Respondent now appeals.

II. REASONABLE EFFORTS

Respondent argues that the trial court erred by finding that petitioner made reasonable efforts toward reunification. We disagree.

Generally, this Court "review[s] for clear error a trial court's decision regarding reasonable efforts." *In re Fried*, 266 Mich App 535, 542-543; 702 NW2d 192 (2005). A decision is clearly

erroneous when, although there is evidence to support it, the reviewing court is left with the definite and firm conviction that a mistake has been made. *In re Williams*, 286 Mich App 253, 271; 779 NW2d 286 (2009).

"Reasonable efforts to reunify the child and family must be made in *all* cases except those involving aggravated circumstances under MCL 712A.19a(2)." *In re Rippy*, 330 Mich App 350, 355; 948 NW2d 131 (2019). "[T]ermination is improper without a finding of reasonable efforts." *In re Hicks/Brown*, 500 Mich 79, 90; 893 NW2d 637 (2017). "As part of these reasonable efforts, [DHHS] must create a service plan outlining the steps that both it and the parent will take to rectify the issues that led to court involvement and to achieve reunification." *Id*. at 85-86. To prove a claim of lack of reasonable efforts, a respondent must show that he or she would have fared better had petitioner offered other services. See *In re Fried*, 266 Mich App at 543. Though the DHHS "has a responsibility to expend reasonable efforts to provide services to secure reunification, there exists a commensurate responsibility on the part of respondents to participate in the services that are offered." *In re Frey*, 297 Mich App 242, 248; 824 NW2d 569 (2012). "Not only must respondent cooperate and participate in the services, [the respondent] must benefit from them." *In re TK*, 306 Mich App 698, 711; 859 NW2d 208 (2014).

In this case, petitioner made reasonable efforts to provide services to secure reunification. See *In re Frey*, 297 Mich App at 248. In its supplemental termination petition, DHHS alleged that respondent's barriers included "domestic violence, substance use, housing, and resource management/availability." DHHS provided services to address each barrier, and the court adjourned hearings several times to allow "the parents time because [the court] saw potential."

Although DHHS had a duty to provide respondent services, he had a corresponding duty to participate in those services when offered. *Id*. A full review of the record reveals that respondent was offered many services but only intermittently complied with those services between the initial disposition and the commencement of termination proceedings. The petition filed in February 2024 stated that respondent was unable to be located and was homeless. By December 2025 he still had not found housing where the children could live with him. Foster-care case manager Lena Sparks testified that she referred respondent to "Family Promise, Salvation Army, Hope Network," in addition to completing 11 housing applications for respondent and following up with the family-unification program. Respondent also had not made progress in the eight months after achieving sobriety to save money toward a security deposit on an apartment. Sparks testified that he also still lacked insight into why domestic violence was a barrier to reunification despite attending many counseling sessions. Moreover, Sparks testified that a substance-abuse referral program contacted respondent "in the middle or end of July," and respondent relayed that he was "sober and did not need the service." On a positive note, with respect to parenting, Sparks confirmed that respondent was referred for, and successfully completed, a supportive visitation course to prepare for being the children's primary parent.

DHHS provided respondent numerous services over the course of these proceedings, but respondent failed to timely complete and/or benefit from many of those services, and he likewise failed to establish that he would have fared better if additional services had been offered. When asked at the termination hearing if he thought he could benefit from additional services, he answered that he did not know. Respondent did not benefit from, or sufficiently cooperate and participate in, many of the services provided. See *In re TK*, 306 Mich App at 711. The trial court

did not clearly err in finding, by clear and convincing evidence, that the DHHS made reasonable efforts to reunify respondent with the children before his rights to them were terminated. See *In re Fried*, 266 Mich App at 542-543.

III. STATUTORY GROUNDS

Respondent- next argues that the trial court clearly erred by finding statutory grounds for termination under MCL 712A.19b(3)(c)(*i*) and (j). We disagree.

"This Court reviews for clear error the trial court's ruling that a statutory ground for termination has been established and its ruling that termination is in the children's best interests." *In re Mota*, 334 Mich App 300, 320; 964 NW2d 881 (2020) (quotation marks and citation omitted).

To terminate parental rights, a trial court must first find by clear and convincing evidence that at least one of the statutory grounds for termination in MCL 712A.19b(3) has been met. *In re VanDalen*, 293 Mich App 120, 139; 809 NW2d 412 (2011). At the termination hearing, the trial court "may take into consideration any evidence that had been properly introduced and admitted at the adjudication trial, MCR 3.977(E), along with any additional relevant and material evidence that is received by the court at the termination hearing, MCR 3.977(H)(2)." *In re Mota*, 334 Mich App at 316.

The trial court found statutory grounds to terminate respondent's parental rights existed under MCL 712A.19b(3)(j), which is proper when there is clear and convincing evidence that "there is a reasonable likelihood, based on the conduct or capacity of the child's parent, that the child will be harmed if the child is returned to the home of the parent." "The harm contemplated under MCL 712A.19b(3)(j) includes emotional harm as well as physical harm." *In re Sanborn*, 337 Mich App 252, 279; 976 NW2d 44 (2021).

In making its findings, the trial court stated:

> I saw potential and I gave the parents time because I saw potential. . . . I don't have the luxury of time. And I understand that the progress that was made and I recognize that there is significant progress and I'm not taking anything away from that, was made in this case.
>
> * * *
>
> There is a reasonable likelihood of harm in that neither of you yet have adequate housing for me to return the children to.
>
> Section 19(b)(3)(j) says that there's a reasonable likelihood based upon the . . . conduct or capacity of the children's parents that the children will be harmed if they are returned to the home of the parent. That piece is a significant piece, and . . . despite the fact that there [were] efforts, sir, to try to gain housing . . . the kids were in care for almost a year before you started making some significant progress towards a stage where you are now. So I find that there is a reasonable likelihood of harm if they are returned. There are still some barriers in the case that still exist. And housing is one of them. Parenting skills still need to be sharpened

> a little. Domestic violence, and I think you could overcome that with time, and that would have more to do with who you associated with more so than anything.

The trial court did not err in this regard. The record demonstrates the children were not in respondent's home or physical custody at the time the children were removed from mother's care as he was homeless and unreachable. He also was unable to find proper housing in the 20 months since the children entered care. While he had achieved sobriety, provided verifiable income, and filled out many housing applications, respondent had not made progress toward saving money for a security deposit for an apartment. This indicates that even if respondent got off a waitlist for housing, he could not have moved into an apartment. His parenting time never progressed to unsupervised because, while many visits went well, issues with his parenting came to light during the proceedings. For example, respondent mentioned things petitioner explicitly told him not to mention to protect the children emotionally. Respondent also had not made meaningful progress in addressing his domestic violence issues and had begun a new relationship during the termination proceedings with someone who had substance abuse, prostitution, and domestic violence issues of her own. Caseworkers opined respondent did not understand how this relationship could negatively affect his children.

"[A] parent's failure to comply with the terms and conditions of his or her service plan is evidence that the child will be harmed if returned to the child's home." *In re White*, 303 Mich App 701, 711; 846 NW2d 61 (2014). In more than 20 months since the children's removal, respondent failed to accomplish meaningful change to his housing situation, in resource management, and in addressing his domestic violence issues. These issues, along with others, are what led to the trial court taking jurisdiction over the minor children. *In re Williams*, 286 Mich App at 272. Despite making significant and commendable progress in achieving sobriety, the trial court did not clearly err in finding that these other unaddressed barriers would likely harm the children if they were returned to respondent's care. Because the trial court's findings were supported by the record, there was no clear error in its conclusion that termination was proper under MCL 712A.19b(3)(j).

IV. BEST INTERESTS

Respondent argues that the trial court clearly erred by finding that it was in the children's best interests to terminate his parental rights. We disagree.

A trial court's best-interest determination is also reviewed for clear error. MCR 3.977(K). "If the court finds that there are grounds for termination of parental rights and that termination of parental rights is in the child's best interests, the court shall order termination of parental rights and order that additional efforts for reunification of the child with the parent not be made." MCL 712A.19b(5). "Best interests are determined on the basis of the preponderance of the evidence." *In re LaFrance*, 306 Mich App 713, 733; 858 NW2d 143 (2014). The focus of the best-interest inquiry is on the child, not the parent. *In re Moss*, 301 Mich App 76, 87; 836 NW2d 182 (2013). "The trial court may also consider a parent's history of domestic violence, the parent's compliance with his or her case service plan, the parent's visitation history with the child, the children's well-being while in care, and the possibility of adoption." *In re White*, 303 Mich App at 714. When siblings are not similarly situated, the trial court is "obligated to consider each child individually and assess the best interests of the children separately." *In re TK*, 306 Mich App at 711.

Caseworkers testified it would take a year or more for respondent to complete services and provide permanent stability and finality for the children. Regarding the children's need for permanence, stability, and finality, caseworkers opined:

> [CC] and [SC] have been in care for 21-and-a-half months. [CC] is begging for this to be done and get permanency. It is affecting [CC]'s schoolwork and how she's able to function at school, at home. She's depressed. She's stressed out. Feels responsible. She needs the weight taken off of her shoulders.

Caseworkers also said parenting time caused CC stress due to the inappropriate conversations respondent had with her, treating her more like a friend than a child. The trial court also heard from the children's foster parent, who said SC was "wound up" after parenting time. SC was becoming "increasingly more aggressive physically, verbally, throwing things, hitting, biting, saying awful things to caregivers, teachers, peers at school." Caseworkers believed it would be healthier for both children in the long run to not have a bond with respondent. Regarding the advantages of a foster home over respondent's home, the children were "thriving" in foster care:

> The foster home has been able to continue to provide consistency, structure, security, love, affection for the girls. They've been able to maintain all of their medical, dental, occupational therapy, and counseling appointments. In the home, there's not substance use concerns, domestic violence. There's not any resource availability concerns.

The trial court did not clearly err by determining that termination of respondent's parental rights was in the children's best interests. In making its best-interest determination, the trial court noted that it would keep the children's best interests "front and center." See *In re Moss*, 301 Mich App at 87. Respondent still lacked child-appropriate housing and lived at a sober-living facility with no expected time frame of when he would secure housing. The court considered the history of domestic violence, considered that the children were bonded to each other, and considered each child individually. See *In re TK*, 306 Mich App at 711. The court explicitly mentioned that SC was about preschool age and CC was "a middle schooler." The court added that SC had "been in care for half of her life pretty much" and that CC exhibited trauma from witnessing domestic-violence incidents when she was younger, and "really struggled." The trial court considered CC's expressed desire to return home, and this preference "weighed heavily" on the court. Nonetheless, the court did not "believe that it's in her best interest, so [it was] not going to give in to her preference." Even though the children had a "significant" and "strong" bond to respondent, and he made some progress in addressing the barriers that brought the children into care, the court gave greater weight to the children's need to permanence, stability, and finality.

Considering the foregoing evidence, the trial court did not clearly err when it found, by a preponderance of the evidence, that termination of respondent's parental rights was in the children's best interests. See MCR 3.977(K); *In re Frey*, 297 Mich App at 248-249.

Affirmed.

/s/ Michael J. Kelly
/s/ Colleen A. O'Brien
/s/ Andrew J. Lievense