NOTICE
This order was filed under Supreme Court Rule 23 and may not be cited as precedent by any party except in the limited circumstances allowed under Rule 23(e)(1).

2019 IL App (4th) 180803-U

NO. 4-18-0803

FILED
April 9, 2019
Carla Bender
4th District Appellate
Court, IL

IN THE APPELLATE COURT

OF ILLINOIS

FOURTH DISTRICT

In re Jad. B., Jay. B., Jam. L., and Jal. L., Minors	)	Appeal from the
	)	Circuit Court of
(The People of the State of Illinois,	)	Champaign County
Petitioner-Appellee,	)	No. 16JA30
v.	)	
Jamie B.,	)	Honorable
Respondent-Appellant).	)	Brett N. Olmstead,
	)	Judge Presiding.

JUSTICE TURNER delivered the judgment of the court.
Justices Knecht and Harris concurred in the judgment.

ORDER

¶ 1 *Held*: The circuit court's findings respondent was unfit under section 1(D)(m)(ii) of the Adoption Act and it was in the minor children's best interests to terminate respondent's parental rights were not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

¶ 2 In April 2018, the State filed a motion for the termination of the parental rights of respondent, Jamie B., as to her minor children, Jad. B. (born in 2009), Jay. B. (born in 2010), Jam. L. (born in 2015), and Jal. L. (born in 2016). After a lengthy hearing, the Champaign County circuit court found respondent unfit. In November 2018, the court concluded it was in the minor children's best interests to terminate respondent's parental rights.

¶ 3 Respondent appeals, asserting the circuit court erred by finding (1) her unfit and (2) it was in the minor children's best interests to terminate her parental rights. We affirm.

¶ 4 I. BACKGROUND

¶ 5 Jad. B.'s and Jay. B.'s father is Darryl D. Jam. L. and Jal. L's father is Jamar L.

The minor children's fathers are not parties to this appeal.

¶ 6 In August 2016, the State filed a petition for the adjudication of wardship as to all four of the minor children. The State's petition alleged the minor children were neglected pursuant to section 2-3(1)(b) of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 (Juvenile Court Act) (705 ILCS 405/2-3(1)(b) (West Supp. 2015)), in that their environment was injurious to their welfare when they reside with respondent and Jamar because that environment exposes them to domestic violence.

¶ 7 In September 2016, respondent and Jamar stipulated the minors were neglected under section 2-3(1)(b) of the Juvenile Court Act as alleged in the wardship petition. Darryl D. waived adjudication. The circuit court entered an adjudicatory order finding the minor children were neglected as alleged in the wardship petition. After an October 2016 dispositional hearing, the court entered a dispositional order (1) finding respondent and the minor children's fathers were unfit and unable to care for, protect, train, educate, supervise, or discipline them; (2) making the minor children wards of the court; and (3) placing their custody and guardianship with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

¶ 8 In April 2018, the State filed a motion to terminate respondent's, Jamar's, and Darryl's parental rights to the minor children. The motion asserted respondent was unfit because she failed to make reasonable progress toward the minor children's return during any nine-month period after the neglect adjudication, specifically July 16, 2017, to April 16, 2018 (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(ii) (West Supp. 2017)).

¶ 9 On July 24, 2018, the circuit court commenced the fitness hearing. The State presented the testimony of (1) James Warren, a Champaign police officer; (2) Gregory Manzana, a Champaign police sergeant; (3) Isidro Briceno-Garcia, a Champaign police officer; (4) Mason

Voges, a Champaign police officer; (5) Jacque Chase, an employee at Cognition Works; (6) Renee Eifert, a former counselor at the Center for Youth and Family Services; (7) Debbie Nelson, the director of services at Cognition Works; (8) Grace Mitchell, the executive director of the Family Advocacy Center; (9) Alyssa Dent, a foster care supervisor at the Center for Youth and Family Service; (10) Syreeta Butler, a foster care caseworker; (11) Mayra Burke, an employee at Cognition Works; (12) Conrad Hayes, an employee at Cognition Works; and (13) Christopher Young, a former Champaign police officer. At the State's request, the circuit court took judicial notice of the petitions and orders in the following: (1) this case, (2) two order of protection cases (Champaign County case Nos. 17-OP-421 and 17-OP-470), and (3) Jamar's criminal case (Champaign Co. case No. 17-CF-1121). Respondent did not present any evidence.

¶ 10 Officer Warren testified he met with respondent on August 10, 2017. Respondent reported Jamar woke her up in the middle of the night and accused her of being adulterous. Respondent denied the allegation and stated she was going to leave. To prevent her from leaving, Jamar wrapped his arms around respondent's waist, picked her up, and body-slammed the left side of respondent's face into the floor. Officer Warren observed respondent's left eye was darkened and swollen. Respondent also had bruising below the left side of her eye. Respondent further reported Jamar verbally berated her and attempted to strangle her during the incident. She was unable to call the police right away because Jamar took her cellular telephone (cell phone). Additionally, respondent stated she and Jamar were both living at the home on Kirby Street where the incident took place.

¶ 11 Officer Young testified that, on November 23, 2017, he responded to a call for a violation of an order of protection at the Kirby Street home. Respondent reported she pulled into her driveway after working the night shift and Jamar exited her residence. Jamar then entered

her vehicle and took her cell phone and the keys to the car. Respondent exited the car and went to a home across the street where she called the police. Officer Young did not find any signs of forced entry into respondent's residence, and respondent reported Jamar still had a key to the residence.

¶ 12 Sergeant Manzana testified that, on December 1, 2017, the dispatcher received a call from a female at the Kirby Street home who was in some sort of struggle and said she "can't breathe" and "get off me." When he arrived on the scene, two other officers were already present but unable to get a response from someone inside the Kirby Street home. Eventually, the police forced the screen door open. Respondent, topless and unresponsive, was lying on the floor near the front door. Respondent eventually stated Jamar forced her to drink. The police questioned respondent about Jamar's location, and she eventually said he was in the bedroom. The officers removed respondent from the home, and Sergeant Manzana found Jamar hiding under the bed in the bedroom.

¶ 13 Officer Briceno-Garcia spoke with Jamar after his arrest on December 1, 2017. Officer Briceno-Garcia gave the following summary of Jamar's description of the incident:

> "[He] and [respondent] got together at some point during the night because their—I believe one of their kids had a birthday party the next day. They had been on good terms and they knew that there was an order of protection between them, but they believed or thought that their child's birthday was covered as a time they could be together. And again since they were on good terms they didn't think anything of it, and he said at some point during the night she started drinking. She drank excessively. She eventually called 911 and passed out on the phone I believe and then that's when he I believe called 911 but the phone died.

When they hear it—police knock on the door they were scared due to the order of protection that's in—or, that was in place between them two and she told him to hide and she went to the front door."

Jamar reported he did not have anything to drink that night. He also said respondent gave him a ride to her house that night. According to Jamar, he and respondent were on good terms and were looking into getting the order of protection dropped. Jamar also stated respondent was not feeling well and called 9-1-1 to get an ambulance. When respondent passed out or her cell phone got disconnected, Jamar called 9-1-1.

¶ 14 Officer Voges spoke with respondent in the ambulance on December 1, 2017. He testified respondent's speech was slurred and she was mumbling. According to Officer Voges, respondent's statements were incoherent and did not make sense. Based on his experience, Officer Voges believed respondent was under the influence of alcohol or drugs or both. He was able to understand her say Jamar was inside the residence when she came home. Respondent stated Jamar did not live there but must have acquired a key. She asked Jamar to leave, but he refused. Respondent stated he forced her to drink something but did not specify what she drank. She reported Jamar punched her in the shoulder and face and stomped on her stomach while she was on the ground. Officer Voges did not observe any injuries, but respondent claimed her stomach hurt.

¶ 15 Nelson, the director of services at Cognition Works, testified she first had contact with respondent when respondent was referred in 2015 for a domestic-violence risk assessment. DCFS referred respondent for a domestic-violence program, which respondent completed on October 11, 2017. After her completion of the program, DCFS referred respondent for another domestic-violence assessment.

¶ 16 Chase, an employee of Cognition Works, testified he first met respondent in August or September 2017 when she was a member of the Options group, a female-only program for victims of domestic violence. The program had 24 sessions, and the sessions were once a week for 90 minutes. Respondent started the program for the sixth time in February 2017 and finished it in October 2017. At the time of completion, respondent reported she was not involved in a romantic relationship. After the December 2017 domestic-violence incident, respondent was referred back to Cognition Works to see if it would benefit respondent to attend the Options group again. Chase conducted the reevaluation in January 2018 and determined the Options program had nothing more to offer respondent. Chase noted respondent had already attended many more than 24 sessions, knew the material, and was able to relate the group information back to Chase. Chase discussed the December 2017 incident with respondent. Chase testified respondent followed the safety plan she developed to protect herself and her children and did contact the police when she was able to get to a telephone. Chase discussed parenting classes with respondent, and respondent was willing to attend.

¶ 17 Eifert testified she was a therapist at the Center for Youth and Family Solutions and respondent was one of her clients. Eifert began providing individual counseling to respondent in January 2017 and released her in December 2017 for nonattendance. Eifert testified respondent had a job that required her to travel on short notice but noted respondent's attendance was inconsistent even before she had the job. In October 2017, respondent began family counseling with her two older children. Respondent's family counseling was also suspended in December 2017 for nonattendance. Additionally, Eifert testified she had established several treatment goals for respondent, none of which respondent achieved.

¶ 18 Mitchell testified respondent completed a parenting class at the Family Advocacy

Center in January 2017. Respondent also had her supervised visitation with the minor children at the Family Advocacy Center, and Mitchell supervised the visits. According to Mitchell, the visits were switched to in-home visits in December 2017. Mitchell did not have any real concerns about respondent's parenting. Mitchell noted the older children were having emotional problems and needed counseling. She also testified respondent would occasionally have trouble keeping all four children under control and Mitchell would need to intervene. According to Mitchell, respondent took directions well and learned from the directions given. Respondent made progress in her visits by learning to engage the children in activities in which all four children could participate. Respondent was unable to engage in individual counseling at the Family Advocacy Center in late 2017 due to her job at the railroad.

¶ 19 Dent was the caseworker in this case until July 25, 2017, and thus she was involved for a very short time during the relevant time period. Dent testified respondent was still involved in individual counseling with Eifert throughout the time Dent was the caseworker. Respondent also maintained contact with Dent while Dent was the caseworker. Dent testified respondent had difficulty properly supervising and engaging all four children by herself during visits. Additionally, Dent testified respondent reported in the middle of July 2017 she felt unsafe around Jamar and was looking to stay with family until she could get an order of protection against him.

¶ 20 Butler received the case from Dent and was the current caseworker at the time of fitness hearing. When Butler took over the case, respondent's tasks were the following: (1) parenting classes, (2) individual counseling, (3) domestic-violence counseling, (4) family counseling, (5) attending visitation, and (6) completing drug screens. Respondent had already completed a parenting class. Respondent was engaged in individual counseling with Eifert but

was later released for nonattendance. When respondent mentioned moving back to Champaign in February 2017, Butler made a referral for individual counseling at the Center for Youth and Family Services, but respondent was put on a waitlist. Eventually, respondent did attend individual counseling at Cognition Works. Butler further testified respondent was also released from family counseling in December 2017 for nonattendance.

¶ 21 As to domestic-violence counseling, respondent completed the program. However, Butler referred respondent again in December 2017 and February 2018 because of domestic-violence incidents in December 2017 and February 2018. The latest referrals determined respondent did not need domestic-violence services.

¶ 22 The drug screens required respondent to call in daily, and Butler told respondent she needed to be consistent about calling in daily before Butler could look at possibly stopping the drug screens. Butler testified she had to have this conversation with respondent about once a month.

¶ 23 As to visitation, Butler testified respondent was not visiting with the minor children on a consistent basis. Respondent's visits were once a week for two hours with all four children. Butler and respondent talked about increasing her visitation to two days a week, but it did not work with respondent's work schedule. While respondent only missed a few visits between July 2017 and October 2017, she started missing a lot more visits around late October 2017. Respondent did not have any visits with the children in January and February 2018 because she moved north to Markham, Illinois. In fact, respondent was out of touch with the agency from December 14, 2017, until February 26, 2018, except for canceling her visits with the children. Respondent did start having visits again in March 2018 and did cancel some visits in March and April 2018.

¶ 24 Additionally, Butler testified respondent started working for the railroad around November 2017, and that job often took respondent out of town. Respondent was not allowed to use her employer's vehicle for her DCFS services. Respondent was given a bus pass for local transportation but was not provided transportation when she was out of town.

¶ 25 Burke and Hayes testified about matters related to Jamar.

¶ 26 At the conclusion of the hearing, the circuit court found respondent unfit based on her failure to make reasonable progress toward the minor children's return during the nine-month period of July 16, 2017, to April 16, 2018. The court also found the fathers unfit.

¶ 27 On November 26, 2018, the circuit court held the best-interests hearing. The only evidence was the reports of the caseworker and the court-appointed special advocate (CASA). The caseworker's report noted Jad. B. and Jay. B. resided with their paternal grandmother, Janice D., in Louisiana. Jad. B. had lived with Janice since August 2016, and Jay. B. had lived with her since June 2017. Jad. B. and Jay. B. were doing well in their placement and thriving in school. Janice had signed a permanency commitment for both children.

¶ 28 Jam. L. and Jal. L lived together in the same foster home since the case was opened in August 2016. Both boys are bonded with their foster parents and were comfortable in their surroundings. Jal. L. had not known any other home environment besides his foster home. The foster parents were willing to provide permanency for Jam. L. and Jal. L.

¶ 29 The report noted respondent had a residence where she lived alone. Respondent had a job since October 2018 that she enjoyed very much. Respondent did not report being in a romantic relationship. However, she was pregnant and refused to provide the name of the father of her unborn child. Moreover, respondent was not currently visiting the minor children on a regular basis. She had not seen Jad. B. and Jay. B. since September 10, 2018, and Jam. L. and

Jal. L. since October 18, 2018. The report concluded by recommending respondent's parental rights be terminated.

¶ 30 The CASA report also recommended the termination of respondent's parental rights. It noted Jad. B. had expressed a preference to remain living with his grandmother Janice. Moreover, Jay. B.'s behavior had improved since being placed with Janice and Jad. B. During Jay. B.'s last visits with respondent, he no longer mentioned living with her. The report further noted Jam. L. and Jal. L. did not recognize respondent as their mother.

¶ 31 At the conclusion of the November 26, 2018, hearing, the circuit court entered a written order finding it was in the minor children's best interests to terminate respondent's parental rights. The court also terminated the parental rights of Darryl and Jamar.

¶ 32 On December 6, 2018, respondent filed a timely notice of appeal in sufficient compliance with Illinois Supreme Court Rule 303 (eff. July 1, 2017). See Ill. S. Ct. R. 660(b) (eff. Oct. 1, 2001) (providing the rules governing civil cases govern appeals from final judgments in all proceedings under the Juvenile Court Act, except for delinquency cases). Thus, this court has jurisdiction of this appeal pursuant to Illinois Supreme Court Rule 307(a)(6) (eff. Nov. 1, 2017).

¶ 33 II. ANALYSIS

¶ 34 Under section 2-29(2) of the Juvenile Court Act (705 ILCS 405/2-29(2) (West 2016)), the involuntary termination of parental rights involves a two-step process. First, the State must prove by clear and convincing evidence the parent is "unfit," as that term is defined in section 1(D) of the Adoption Act (750 ILCS 50/1(D) (West Supp. 2017)). *In re Donald A.G.*, 221 Ill. 2d 234, 244, 850 N.E.2d 172, 177 (2006). If the circuit court makes a finding of unfitness, then the State must prove by a preponderance of the evidence it is in the minor

children's best interests that parental rights be terminated. *In re D.T.*, 212 Ill. 2d 347, 366, 818 N.E.2d 1214, 1228 (2004).

¶ 35 Since the circuit court has the best opportunity to observe the demeanor and conduct of the parties and witnesses, it is in the best position to determine the credibility and weight of the witnesses' testimony. *In re E.S.*, 324 Ill. App. 3d 661, 667, 756 N.E.2d 422, 427 (2001). Further, in matters involving minors, the circuit court receives broad discretion and great deference. *E.S.*, 324 Ill. App. 3d at 667, 756 N.E.2d at 427. Thus, a reviewing court will not disturb a circuit court's unfitness finding and best-interests determination unless they are contrary to the manifest weight of the evidence. See *In re Gwynne P.*, 215 Ill. 2d 340, 354, 830 N.E.2d 508, 516-17 (2005) (fitness finding); *In re J.L.*, 236 Ill. 2d 329, 344, 924 N.E.2d 961, 970 (2010) (best-interests determination). A circuit court's decision is against the manifest weight of the evidence only where the opposite conclusion is clearly apparent. *Gwynne P.*, 215 Ill. 2d at 354, 830 N.E.2d at 517.

¶ 36 A. Respondent's Fitness

¶ 37 Respondent first contends the circuit court's unfitness finding was against the manifest weight of the evidence. The State disagrees.

¶ 38 Section 1(D)(m)(ii) of the Adoption Act (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(ii) (West Supp. 2017)) provides a parent may be declared unfit if he or she fails "to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child to the parent during any 9-month period following the adjudication of neglected or abused minor under Section 2-3 of the Juvenile Court Act." Illinois courts have defined "reasonable progress" as "demonstrable movement toward the goal of reunification." (Internal quotation marks omitted.) *In re Reiny S.*, 374 Ill. App. 3d 1036, 1046, 871 N.E.2d 835, 844 (2007) (quoting *In re C.N.*, 196 Ill. 2d 181, 211, 752 N.E.2d 1030, 1047 (2001)). Moreover,

they have explained reasonable progress as follows:

> " '[T]he benchmark for measuring a parent's "progress toward the return of the child" under section 1(D)(m) of the Adoption Act encompasses the parent's compliance with the service plans and the court's directives, in light of the condition which gave rise to the removal of the child, and in light of other conditions which later became known and which would prevent the court from returning custody of the child to the parent.' " *Reiny S.*, 374 Ill. App. 3d at 1046, 871 N.E.2d at 844 (quoting *C.N.*, 196 Ill. 2d at 216-17, 752 N.E.2d at 1050).

Additionally, this court has explained reasonable progress exists when a circuit court "can conclude that *** the court, in the *near future*, will be able to order the child returned to parental custody. The court will be able to order the child returned to parental custody in the near future because, at that point, the parent *will have fully complied* with the directives previously given to the parent in order to regain custody of the child." (Emphases in original.) *In re L.L.S.*, 218 Ill. App. 3d 444, 461, 577 N.E.2d 1375, 1387 (1991). We have also emphasized " 'reasonable progress' is an 'objective standard.' " *In re F.P.*, 2014 IL App (4th) 140360, ¶ 88, 19 N.E.3d 227 (quoting *L.L.S.*, 218 Ill. App. 3d at 461, 577 N.E.2d at 1387).

¶ 39 In determining a parent's fitness based on reasonable progress, a court may only consider evidence from the relevant time period. *Reiny S.*, 374 Ill. App. 3d at 1046, 871 N.E.2d at 844 (citing *In re D.F.*, 208 Ill. 2d 223, 237-38, 802 N.E.2d 800, 809 (2003)). Courts are limited to that period "because reliance upon evidence of any subsequent time period could improperly allow a parent to circumvent her own unfitness because of a bureaucratic delay in

bringing her case to trial." *Reiny S.*, 374 Ill. App. 3d at 1046, 871 N.E.2d at 844. In this case, the petition alleged the relevant nine-month period was July 16, 2017, to April 16, 2018.

¶ 40 Respondent points out the circuit court found she made reasonable progress in a permanency review order during the relevant time period. However, the court only made that finding at the October 10, 2017, permanency review hearing, which was the first one during the relevant nine-month period (the July 11, 2017, permanency review hearing was before the relevant period). The court found respondent did not make reasonable progress at the two later permanency review hearings on January 1, 2018, and April 16, 2018. Those findings are consistent with the evidence presented at the fitness hearing.

¶ 41 Butler, who was the caseworker for almost the entire nine-month period, testified respondent had to complete the following services: (1) parenting classes, (2) individual counseling, (3) family counseling, (4) attending visitation, (5) completing drug screens, and (6) domestic-violence counseling. Respondent had completed a parenting program before the relevant nine-month period. As to the other services, Butler testified respondent did not engage in any services from December 14, 2017, through February 26, 2018. With individual counseling, Butler testified respondent was engaged in individual counseling with Eifert when Butler took over the case. Eifert testified respondent was released from individual counseling in December 2017 for nonattendance. Eifert described respondent's attendance as "sporadic" and also noted respondent had not met her treatment goals. Butler did provide another individual-counseling referral for respondent in February 2018, and at some point, respondent did resume individual counseling at Cognition Works.

¶ 42 Regarding family counseling, Eifert testified respondent started family counseling with the two older children in fall 2017. Eifert testified respondent was more consistent with

attending family counseling than individual counseling. However, in December 2017, respondent stopped attending the family-counseling sessions.

¶ 43 Moreover, while respondent consistently attended visitation from July to October 2017, respondent started missing a lot more visits in November 2017 and stopped visits altogether for two months. In March and April 2018, respondent did resume visits with the minor children but still had cancellations. Butler testified she was never able to increase respondent's visitation beyond two hours a week. Additionally, Butler testified respondent never complied with the drug-screen requirement.

¶ 44 As to domestic-violence counseling, respondent did complete it on her sixth try in October 2017. However, she continued to be the victim of domestic violence. During the relevant nine-month period, the police were called for incidents between her and Jamar in August 2017, November 2017, and December 2017. While Jamar no longer lived with respondent in December and November 2017, he was still able to gain access to her home with a key.

¶ 45 Thus, while respondent at times made progress during the nine-month period, she did not engage in any services for more than two months, including visiting her four children. Even when respondent resumed visitation, she still missed visits with the children. At the end of the nine-month period, respondent still had not completed individual counseling or family counseling and provided consistent drug screens. Moreover, concerns about domestic violence still existed given the numerous incidents during the nine-month period. Respondent was never close to having the minor children returned to her care during the relevant nine-month period.

¶ 46 Accordingly, we conclude the circuit court's finding respondent was unfit based on section 1(D)(m)(ii) of the Adoption Act was not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

¶ 47 B. Minor Children's Best Interests

¶ 48 Respondent also challenges the circuit court's finding it was in the minor children's best interests to terminate her parental rights. The State contends the court's finding was proper.

¶ 49 During the best-interests hearing, the circuit court focuses on "the child[ren]'s welfare and whether termination would improve the child[ren]'s future financial, social and emotional atmosphere." *In re D.M.*, 336 Ill. App. 3d 766, 772, 784 N.E.2d 304, 309 (2002). In doing so, the court considers the factors set forth in section 1-3(4.05) of the Juvenile Court Act (705 ILCS 405/1-3(4.05) (West Supp. 2017)) in the context of the children's age and developmental needs. See *In re T.A.*, 359 Ill. App. 3d 953, 959-60, 835 N.E.2d 908, 912-13 (2005). Those factors include the following: the children's physical safety and welfare; the development of the children's identity; the children's family, cultural, and religious background and ties; the children's sense of attachments, including continuity of affection for the children, the children's feelings of love, being valued, and security and taking into account the least disruptive placement for the children; the children's own wishes and long-term goals; the children's community ties, including church, school, and friends; the children's need for permanence, which includes the children's need for stability and continuity of relationships with parent figures, siblings, and other relatives; the uniqueness of every family and child; the risks attendant to entering and being in substitute care; and the wishes of the persons available to care for the children. 705 ILCS 405/1-3(4.05) (West Supp. 2017).

¶ 50 We note a parent's unfitness to have custody of his or her children does not automatically result in the termination of the parent's legal relationship with the children. *In re M.F.*, 326 Ill. App. 3d 1110, 1115, 762 N.E.2d 701, 706 (2002). As stated, the State must prove

by a preponderance of the evidence the termination of parental rights is in the minor children's best interests. See *D.T.*, 212 Ill. 2d at 366, 818 N.E.2d at 1228. "Proof by a preponderance of the evidence means that the fact at issue *** is rendered more likely than not." *People v. Houar*, 365 Ill. App. 3d 682, 686, 850 N.E.2d 327, 331 (2006).

¶ 51 Respondent asserts the State failed to prove it was in the minor children's best interests to terminate her parental rights because, with more time, it was foreseeable she would be able to provide a safe and loving environment for the children, which would allow the children to stay together. However, at the time of the best-interests hearing, the minor children had been living apart for over two years. The two youngest children, Jam. L. and Jal. L. recognized their foster parents as their parents, and all of their ties and bonds were with the foster family. Both Jam. L. and Jal. L. were doing well in their placement. Jad. B. and Jay. B. were also doing well in their placement with their paternal grandmother. Jad. B. preferred living with his grandmother and was doing well in her care. As the case progressed, Jay. B., who was the closest with respondent, no longer expressed a desire to live with her. His behavior had improved since moving in with his brother and grandmother. With all four children, the best-interests factors overwhelmingly favored the termination of respondent's parental rights.

¶ 52 Accordingly, we find the circuit court's conclusion it was in the minor children's best interests to terminate respondent's parental rights was not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

¶ 53 III. CONCLUSION

¶ 54 For the reasons stated, we affirm the Champaign County circuit court's judgment.

¶ 55 Affirmed.