

ADOPTION OF C.R. et al.

Submitted on Briefs May 30, 2019

Decided June 6, 2019

Panel: SAUFLEY, C.J., and ALEXANDER, GORMAN, JABAR, HJELM, and HUMPHREY, JJ.

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

The mother and stepfather of two children filed a petition to terminate the parental rights of the children's father as part of a proceeding in which the stepfather seeks ultimately to adopt the children. *See* 18-A M.R.S. § 9-204 (2018); 22 M.R.S. § 4055(1)(A)(2), (B)(2) (2018). Here, the father appeals from the judgment entered by the Androscoggin County Probate Court (*Dubois, J.*) granting the termination petition. The father asserts that the evidence does not support the court's determinations that he is parentally unfit and that termination of his parental rights is in the children's best interests. *See* 22 M.R.S. § 4055(1)(B)(2).

We review the factual findings supporting the court's parental unfitness and best interest determinations for clear error, and the court's ultimate decision to terminate parental rights for an abuse of discretion. *Adoption of Isabelle T.*, 2017 ME 220, ¶ 30, 175 A.3d 639. "When reviewing sufficiency challenges for clear and convincing evidence, we examine whether the trial court could have reasonably been persuaded on the basis of evidence in the record that the required factual findings were highly probable." *In re K.M.*, 2015 ME 79, ¶ 9, 118 A.3d 812 (quotation marks omitted).

During the four-day termination hearing, the parties presented their cases skillfully, and the court's judgment reflects a thoughtful analysis of the

evidence and a correct application of the law. The evidence in the record is sufficient to support both the court's finding of at least one form of parental unfitness, *see In re Children of Corey W.*, 2019 ME 4, ¶ 19, 199 A.3d 683 ("Where the court finds multiple bases for unfitness, we will affirm if any one of the alternative bases is supported by clear and convincing evidence." (quotation marks omitted)), and the court's determination that termination of the father's parental rights is in the best interests of the children, *see Adoption of Lily T.*, 2010 ME 58, ¶ 37, 997 A.2d 722. Finally, the court acted within its discretion by terminating the father's parental rights.

The entry is:

Judgment affirmed.

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