

IN RE CRYSTALANN D.

Submitted on Briefs May 17, 2001
Decided June 15, 2001

Panel: WATHEN, C.J., and CLIFFORD, RUDMAN, DANA, SAUFLEY,
ALEXANDER, and CALKINS, JJ.

MEMORANDUM OF DECISION

The mother of Crystalann D. appeals from a judgment entered in the District Court (Augusta, *French, J.*) terminating her parental rights. Contrary to the mother's contentions, the court acted well within its discretion in declining to bifurcate the termination hearing so that consideration of whether termination was in the best interest of the child would be determined in a separate hearing following a determination of parental unfitness. *See* 22 M.R.S.A. § 4055 (1992); *see also In re Ashley A.*, 679 A.2d 86, 89 (Me. 1996). In addition, the record discloses that the court correctly determined that there was parental unfitness prior to addressing whether termination was in the child's best interest. *See In re David G.*, 659 A.2d 859, 860-61 (Me. 1995).

The entry is:

Judgment affirmed.

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