

405/2-3 (West 2006). H.B. was placed in the temporary custody of the Department. On April 25, 2006, the court held a hearing on the petition and found, by the stipulation of both Robin and Travis, that H.B. was neglected.

¶ 5 At a hearing on June 15, 2006, both parents stipulated that it was in the best interest of H.B. that the Department retain temporary custody and guardianship. The Department was ordered to develop a service plan containing a permanency goal. Both parents were advised by the court that they would have to abide by the terms of service plans or risk a termination of parental rights. H.B. has resided with her paternal grandmother, Melba Beam, since June 2006.

¶ 6 Robin voluntarily surrendered her parental rights. On August 25, 2008, Robin signed an affidavit of identification and a Department form for a consent for an adoption that stated it was her intention that H.B. be adopted by Melba and Mark Beam.

¶ 7 Travis's parental rights were the subject of numerous hearings. Travis points to comments by the court during a hearing on September 3, 2008. During the hearing, the court commented as follows:

"Well, back in March of '08, based on the recommendation of the caseworker, Bessie Eathersby, the Court entered a goal of still—they still had a goal of return home in 12 months. I think everybody will admit here that's in court, [Travis has] made more progress in the last six months than he had in the prior 18 months because at least he's got a place of his own right now and he's got a full-time job. That's something he never had before. And I don't think there's ever been a problem with him visiting the child. I think he's visited the child on a regular basis all along. And [the Department] or whoever, Hoyleton, never set—had six months to think about doing the screening on Mr. Baughman and never did it. Mother has given up her parent rights, surrendered them."

¶ 8 Travis also points to the testimony of caseworkers. Specifically, Travis notes the testimony of Karen Roberson, a case manager for Hoyleton Youth Family Services, at a hearing on March 4, 2009. At that hearing, Roberson testified that she had been H.B.'s caseworker for about three months and that Travis was complying with her requests, including undergoing a psychological evaluation. Roberson testified that there had been no other types of evaluations or assessments required of Travis between the end of 2006 and the end of 2008. Roberson testified that it was possible that Travis could perform well enough on the service plan over the following six months so that she would recommend the return of H.B.

¶ 9 At the conclusion of the hearing, the court lectured Travis for procrastinating in his adherence to the service plan, ordered that Travis be subject to random drug testing, and set the matter for a review hearing in six months.

¶ 10 Travis was eventually found to be an unfit parent after a hearing on December 14, 2010. Roberson was a central witness at that hearing. According to Roberson, Travis was not in compliance with several components of the service plan and had never been in compliance with the housing portion of the plan. Travis was required to provide physically safe and adequate stable living quarters. Roberson described Travis's housing history. Roberson testified that Travis had previously rented an apartment but was currently living with his grandmother. Roberson disputed Travis's description of why he was no longer renting the apartment and testified that Travis never verified that he had the apartment as required by the plan.

¶ 11 Roberson also described Travis's history regarding other portions of the plan. Roberson testified that Travis had never been able to financially provide for both himself and H.B. Roberson testified that Travis had been terminated from his last job for calling in sick. Travis was receiving \$180 every two weeks for unemployment benefits and was more than

\$2,600 behind in child support. Travis had also been required to attend counseling as a part of the service plan but had attended only 2.5 hours before quitting.

¶ 12 Roberson testified that Travis had partially complied with some parts of the plan. Travis had been compliant with required drug screening for the previous six months. Travis had also complied with the visitation portion of the plan by visiting every week for a couple of hours over the previous year.

¶ 13 At the conclusion of the hearing, the court found Travis to be an unfit parent. On February 23, 2011, the court held a hearing on the best interests of H.B. On February 28, 2011, the court entered an order finding that it was in the best interests of H.B. that the rights of Travis be irrevocably terminated.

¶ 14 Travis appeals.

¶ 15 ANALYSIS

¶ 16 The Adoption Act lists several grounds for a finding of unfitness. The Adoption Act provides that after a finding of neglect a parent can be found unfit for a failure to make reasonable progress towards the return of a minor. 750 ILCS 50/1 (West 2010). In particular, the Adoption Act provides as follows:

"If a service plan has been established as required under Section 8.2 of the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act to correct the conditions that were the basis for the removal of the child from the parent and if those services were available, then, for purposes of this Act, 'failure to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child to the parent' includes (I) the parent's failure to substantially fulfill his or her obligations under the service plan and correct the conditions that brought the child into care within 9 months after the adjudication under Section 2-3 or 2-4 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 and (II) the parent's failure to substantially fulfill his or her obligations under the service plan and correct the conditions that brought the child

into care during any 9-month period after the end of the initial 9-month period following the adjudication under Section 2-3 or 2-4 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987." 750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m) (West 2010).

¶ 17 Travis contends that the trial court erred by finding a failure to make reasonable progress towards the return of H.B. Travis asserts that he attempted individual counseling, engaged in counseling for substance abuse, and participated in visitation throughout the proceedings. Travis further contends that the testimony and reports of caseworkers and comments of the court support this conclusion. The record reveals otherwise.

¶ 18 Contrary to Travis's assertions, the court never indicated that Travis was near compliance. The most favorable comments were arguably those of September 3, 2008. The comments, read in context, are best seen as holding a glimmer of hope in an otherwise dismal history. This is a far cry from the claim by Travis that the court saw him make extensive improvements on the service plan. Although the court was less disparaging at times than at others, it never made any findings that would support a conclusion that Travis was making reasonable progress.

¶ 19 Nor do the comments of caseworkers support a claim that Travis was ever in substantial compliance. Specifically, Travis points to the testimony of Roberson at a hearing on March 4, 2009. Again, this testimony does not support a finding of substantial compliance with the service plan. Roberson did not indicate that the terms of the service plan had been met, but she did hold out the possibility that Travis might be progressing towards a stable environment. As Roberson's testimony at later hearings reflects, this stability never came to fruition.

¶ 20 Travis failed to substantially fulfill his obligations under the service plan. The service plan had several components. Roberson acknowledged that Travis had complied with visitation and drug screening portions of the plan in the months leading to the hearing at

which he was found unfit. Nonetheless, the record indicates that he had failed to comply with any other portions of the plan. Roberson testified that Travis had never been in full compliance with the counseling, housing, or financial requirements of the plan.

¶ 21 Travis asserts that the trial court limited its consideration of the conditions that were the reason for the removal in the first place. This assertion is without merit. The trial court entertained testimony on the entirety of Travis's conduct and his relationship with H.B. The record strongly supports both conclusions: Travis made no reasonable efforts to correct the conditions that led to the removal, and he had not substantially fulfilled the obligations addressed by the service plan. See 750 ILCS 50/1 (West 2010). Travis fails to point to any significant factor that the trial court did not consider. Travis's failure to comply with the service plan was strong evidence of his failure to meet the statutory definition of reasonable progress. See *In re S.J.*, 233 Ill. App. 3d 88, 121, 598 N.E.2d 456, 477 (1992).

¶ 22 Travis failed to meet the statutory requirement of reasonable progress. In order for a parent to make "reasonable progress" toward the return of a child, he or she must make " 'a minimum measurable or demonstrable movement toward that goal.' " *In re Sheltanya S.*, 309 Ill. App. 3d 941, 953-54, 723 N.E.2d 744, 751 (1999) (quoting *In re Boolman*, 141 Ill. App. 3d 508, 511-12, 491 N.E. 2d 1, 3 (1986)). Travis emphasizes the minimal nature of the required progress, but the record indicates that even the lowest threshold was not met.

¶ 23 Accordingly, the judgment of the circuit court of Randolph County is hereby affirmed.

¶ 24 Affirmed.