

NOTICE
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2012 IL App (4th) 110773-U

Filed 1/20/12

NO. 4-11-0773

IN THE APPELLATE COURT
OF ILLINOIS

FOURTH DISTRICT

In re: Kay. W., Kri. W., Mic. G., Mor. G.,)	Appeal from
and Mir. G., Minors,)	Circuit Court of
THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,)	Champaign County
Petitioner-Appellee,)	No. 09JA48
v.)	
SHARON WALL,)	Honorable
Respondent-Appellant.)	Richard P. Klaus,
)	Judge Presiding.

JUSTICE KNECHT delivered the judgment of the court.
Justices Appleton and Pope concurred in the judgment.

ORDER

¶ 1 *Held:* The trial court properly found respondent mother unfit for failing to make reasonable progress toward the return of her children.

¶ 2 Respondent mother, Sharon Wall, appeals the orders of the Champaign County circuit court finding her an unfit parent and terminating her parental rights to Kay. W. (born September 13, 2000), Kri. W. (born December 21, 2001), Mic. G. (born July 22, 2006), Mor. G. (born January 9, 2008), and Mir. G. (born September 16, 2009). Wall argues the court's decision she failed to make reasonable progress toward the return of her children was against the manifest weight of the evidence. We affirm.

¶ 3 I. BACKGROUND

¶ 4 In May 2009, the State filed a petition for adjudication of neglect and shelter care on behalf of four of Wall's children: Kay. W., Kri. W., Mic. G., and Mor. G. According to the

petition, these children were neglected in that they resided in an environment injurious to their welfare when residing with Wall (705 ILCS 405/2-3(1)(b) (West 2008)) and Wall could not provide the children adequate shelter or remedial care (705 ILCS 405/2-3(1)(a) (West 2008)). The State asserted while residing with Wall and Mickie Glenn, the biological father of Mic. G. and Mor. G., the children were exposed to substance abuse and domestic violence and lacked adequate supervision. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) received a report the children were living in unfit conditions with roaches on the walls and trash everywhere. According to the report to DCFS, Mic. G. was seen picking up and eating old food lying on the floor, and Glenn moved the children's beds into the living room so he had a room in which to smoke marijuana.

¶ 5 In August 2009, the trial court entered an adjudicatory order, finding the children were neglected as they were in an environment injurious to their welfare (705 ILCS 405/2-3(1)(b) (West 2008)). Wall also stipulated her children were neglected because their living environment exposed the children to inadequate supervision. On September 8, 2009, the children were made wards of the court and adjudged neglected. Custody and guardianship were placed with DCFS.

¶ 6 Mir. G. was born on September 16, 2009, Mir. G. and five days later the State filed a petition for adjudication of neglect and shelter care. The State alleged Mir. G. was neglected in that she was in an environment injurious to her welfare when she resided with Wall and Glenn in that the parents failed to correct the conditions which resulted in a prior adjudication of parental unfitness (see 705 ILCS 405/2-3(1)(b) (West 2008)). In November 2009, the trial court concluded Mir. G. was neglected on the grounds alleged in the State's petition. The

court cited the earlier orders in which Mir. G.'s siblings and half-siblings were adjudged neglected and made wards of the court. The court found, while the testimony demonstrated "quite clearly that the respondent father has made no progress in complying with the court's dispositional order and DCFS's service plan[,] [Wall] has made better progress." The court noted Wall was "still engaged in counseling and services."

¶ 7 In March 2011, the State petitioned for the termination of Wall's and Glenn's parental rights, as well as the parental rights of Lamont Dent, putative father of Kay. W., and unknown fathers. Only the allegations in regards to Wall are relevant to this appeal. The State alleged Wall was an unfit parent in that she failed to (1) make reasonable progress toward the return of her children within nine months after the adjudication of neglect and abuse (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(ii) (West 2008)); and (2) make reasonable progress toward the return of Kay. W., Kri. W., Mic. G., and Mor. G., during any nine-month period after the end of the initial nine months after the neglect adjudication, specifically the nine-month period of June 6, 2010, through March 6, 2011 (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(iii) (West 2008)).

¶ 8 At the June 2011 hearing on the petition, the trial court considered Wall's response to 46 requests to admit facts. In response, Wall admitted she had been referred in May 2009 for individual counseling through Catholic Charities and began counseling with Cassandra Woolfolk in August 2009. Wall admitted she was referred for parenting classes in August 2009, and completed a parenting class in October 2009. On November 16, 2009, Wall informed Jessica Simpson, a foster-care worker for Catholic Charities, that Glenn left her home when she left for work between 9 and 10 p.m. on November 12, 2009, and after work on November 13, 2009, Wall went to a motel where Glenn was staying. Wall also told Simpson she and Glenn

were in a relationship. On November 17, 2009, Wall told Simpson and Woolfolk, Glenn was not speaking to her at that time.

¶ 9 Wall also admitted the trial court told her in December 2009 her ongoing relationship with Glenn could prevent her children from being returned to her and Glenn must engage in services or she must completely cut ties with him. Wall admitted she was with Glenn at a mall on December 16, 2009. Wall admitted in December 2009, Simpson referred her to Cognition Works for individual domestic-violence counseling and to the IMPACT program also at Cognition Works.

¶ 10 Wall admitted she called Simpson in June 2010 and told her she did not want to speak to her any longer. Wall told Simpson to contact her attorney to get any information from Wall. Wall admitted, on June 7, 2010, she called Simpson to cancel her visit for June 8, 2010, because she did not want to see Simpson. On June 15, 2010, Wall told Simpson she would attend her counseling appointment that day but would not attend her scheduled visit with Mir. G.

¶ 11 Also in her responses to the requests to admit, Wall admitted contacting Gigi Lamba, a foster care supervisor, and asking about attending Mir. G.'s birthday party on September 18, 2010. Although Wall stated she could be there, she later called Lamba to state she could not be at the birthday party. Wall also admitted visiting Kay. W. and Kri. W. at their elementary school on March 1, 2011. Wall admitted failing to submit requested drug drops on May 26, 2010, December 14, 2010, and February 16, 2011.

¶ 12 The State presented the testimony of seven witnesses at the termination hearing.

¶ 13 Debbie Nelson, an owner of and counselor at the counseling agency Cognition

Works, testified she worked with Wall when she was a group member in the Options Program, a group for women who have been in abusive relationships. The curriculum is 18 weeks long. Wall began the group sessions on June 15, 2009. Nelson testified Wall only had one absence, but her participation was inconsistent. She noted Wall was not an active or constructive participant overall. She saw no evidence Wall wanted to change her thinking patterns. She recommended Wall continue to work in a group or individual setting to encourage her to reconsider making changes.

¶ 14 On cross-examination, Nelson testified she reported Wall had completed the Options Program, but recommended follow-up services.

¶ 15 Tanisha King-Taylor, a counselor at Cognition Works, testified she worked with Wall in one-on-one counseling for approximately six months. King-Taylor testified Wall participated but was resistant to the curriculum. In counseling King-Taylor and Wall went through the same information covered in the group meetings for the Options Program. Wall was able to identify certain thinking patterns that caused problems and was sometimes able to identify ways she used to avoid accountability for her actions. However, King-Taylor saw no evidence Wall's thinking patterns were changing. King-Taylor testified in their sessions they talked "a lot" about how to use tools in difficult situations. Wall did not choose to use those tools. From February 2010 to August 2010, King-Taylor observed no change in Wall.

¶ 16 On cross-examination, King-Taylor testified she had 21 sessions with Wall. When she began working with Wall, Wall had already once completed the Options Program curriculum.

¶ 17 Queen Dixon, the foster parent for Mic. G., Mor. G., and Mir. G., testified the

children had been in her care since July 2009. Dixon knew the family before she became the children's foster mother because she provided daycare for Mic. G., Mor. G., and Mir. G. in her home. Dixon could not remember when she started providing daycare for the family. Dixon had also been involved as a third-party supervisor for Wall's visits with her children, beginning in September or October 2010.

¶ 18 Dixon testified there was a set schedule for Wall's visits. Wall met Dixon at the church at 9 or 9:30 a.m. on Sundays. The visits lasted until they left the church, any time between 1 and 2:30 p.m. Dixon watched how Wall talked to the children and played with them. The children attended Sunday school followed by a break and a snack. The break lasted about 40 minutes or more. The children then attended the 11:30 a.m. church service with Wall. During the breaks, Wall usually just sat while her children played, ate, or interacted with other children, and did not intervene when one child slapped the other or react when one of the children hit or slapped at her. Dixon testified Wall gave Mic. G. most of her attention, even when Mor. G. sought attention from her. When the visits began Wall was "really good" at being on time. As the months passed, Wall started "being late." At times, she would be an hour or two late.

¶ 19 On cross-examination, Dixon testified the behavior she observed in Wall towards her children occurred "pretty much *** all the time."

¶ 20 Cassandra Woolfolk, the clinical supervisor and a therapist at Catholic Charities, began working with Wall in August 2009. She stopped working with Wall in May 2011. Woolfolk attempted to work with Wall in establishing goals. Wall had difficulty comprehending and accepting some of the tasks she was asked to do. Woolfolk tried to use the information in

the referral. The referral indicated domestic violence and Wall's paramour's drug use were concerns.

¶ 21 Throughout the time Woolfolk worked with Wall, Wall would not discuss her relationship with Glenn. At some point, Woolfolk learned Glenn moved to Missouri. In their counseling sessions, Woolfolk and Wall spent "[q]uite a bit of the time" discussing Wall's feelings about the case and her experience with the intact-family program at Catholic Charities, the workers, and the problems she had with Simpson. Woolfolk testified two full sessions included Simpson and were dedicated to helping Wall and Simpson repair their working relationship. Woolfolk wanted Wall to work on Wall's argumentative style of relating to others and anger management. Wall often was angered when asked questions that were designed to get Wall to look at her behavior. Woolfolk testified work still needed to be done in these areas. She did, however, see an improvement in Wall over the past two to three months when Wall "was more open about some of the—the barriers that she created between herself and other people."

¶ 22 Woolfolk testified she believed Wall herself identified anger management as one of her goals. Wall was working on anger management in her one-on-one counseling at Cognition Works. She did not want to talk to Woolfolk about it. Woolfolk testified Wall "was very offended" by the dependent-personality-disorder diagnosis. Woolfolk "never felt like" she had the opportunity to discuss this issue thoroughly with Wall.

¶ 23 Several weeks before her testimony Woolfolk stopped scheduling additional sessions with Wall because she believed continuing to talk with her would be fruitless. Since Wall was unwilling to work on anything, there was no point to schedule additional appointments. Wall needed continued work in how she related to others and in parenting.

¶ 24 On cross-examination, Woolfolk testified Wall had difficulty working with other case managers while the family was part of an intact-family case. Once the case became a foster-placement case, Simpson became the caseworker. After Simpson left the agency, Jennifer Flesher, another caseworker at Catholic Charities, became the family's caseworker. Wall had problems with Flesher as well, and was unhappy with Woolfolk "from time to time."

¶ 25 Woolfolk testified Wall had a very limited support group, as most of her family lived out of state. For a while, Mir. G., a newborn, attended Wall's and Woolfolk's individual sessions as an attempt to help Wall and Mir. G. bond. Woolfolk stopped including Mir. G. in the sessions because she observed when she attempted to talk to Wall about Wall's issues, Wall became angry and agitated and less patient with Mir. G. Woolfolk was concerned this interaction would have a negative effect.

¶ 26 On redirect examination Woolfolk testified once the petition to terminate her parental rights was filed, Wall became "much more depressed" and vulnerable. Woolfolk testified although Wall began to open up a little, "it reached a point where there wasn't any more that she was willing to talk about." Wall "essentially shut down again, so that's where it felt like we really weren't working on anything." The counseling relationship subsequently ended.

¶ 27 Gigi Lamba, a foster-care supervisor at Catholic Charities, testified she worked two months on this case as a case manager, from July 2010 until mid-September 2010. On September 15, 2010, Wall called Lamba to tell her she would not be able to attend the September 17, 2010, visit because she had a hair appointment. Wall stated she wanted to go to Mir. G.'s birthday party on September 18 instead of a scheduled visit. Wall did not attend the visit. Wall told Lamba she could not attend the party because she thought it was at noon instead of at 3 p.m.

and she had plans at 3 p.m., which kept her from attending.

¶ 28 On cross-examination, Lamba testified she received a phone call from Glenn on August 13, 2010. Glenn told Lamba he was living in Milwaukee.

¶ 29 Simpson testified she worked on Wall's family's case from July 2009 through June 2010. On September 18, 2009, Simpson met with Wall and Glenn at the hospital where Mir. G. had been born two days before. They discussed the possibility Mir. G. would be taken into protective custody.

¶ 30 Simpson testified regarding her contacts with Wall. On September 24, 2009, Simpson supervised a visit involving Wall, Glenn, and Mir. G. At this visit, Glenn informed Simpson he was relocating to St. Louis. The next day, Simpson met with Wall. Wall was upset and crying because Glenn left and Mir. G. was in care. On October 29, 2009, Simpson again met with Wall to discuss the visits and the approaching administrative case review. They discussed services and Wall's progress. Simpson testified Wall "was completing her parenting class and [would] be completing her domestic-violence class within" a week. There were concerns about the individual counseling. Wall told Simpson she was attending counseling, but she was concerned any information she shared with her counselor would be used against her in court. Simpson testified Wall was ~~thus~~ not comfortable expressing what possibly needed to be expressed. Simpson testified Wall identified what she needed to work on in counseling. Wall believed she needed to discuss how her children were doing and how she was maintaining her house. Wall did not believe she needed to discuss domestic-violence issues because Glenn had moved out. Simpson testified she told Wall it was important to address all issues that contributed to the children's entering into care.

¶ 31 Simpson testified regarding a meeting she had with Wall and Woolfolk on November 3, 2009. Wall again stated she was afraid to discuss specific issues for fear the information would be used against her in court, but then said she would begin to engage in counseling. Simpson testified she again told Wall it was important for her to make progress and complete the goals identified in the service plan and to engage in counseling.

¶ 32 Simpson testified she called Wall on November 16, 2009, to discuss a visitation report stating Glenn visited or was at the home. Wall told Simpson that Glenn stopped by to give her some papers. Simpson told Wall she heard a man was yelling from the balcony, "Do you have [Glenn's] number? I hear he is back in town." Wall stated Glenn lived in St. Louis. Simpson also asked about a report Wall had a hickey on her neck. Wall confirmed she did and Glenn caused it. Simpson also asked whether Wall and Glenn shared a cell-phone plan because their cell numbers were sequential. Wall denied they did and gave Simpson a different cell number for Glenn. Simpson was able to leave a message for Glenn on the original number Simpson had.

¶ 33 Simpson testified on that same date she went to Wall's residence. They discussed the fact Glenn had been at her home on several occasions. Glenn had been at the residence at least five hours. Wall told Simpson she had met Glenn at a hotel where he was staying after she left work. Wall told Simpson she and Glenn were in a relationship.

¶ 34 Simpson testified she met with Wall on November 17, 2009, during Wall's counseling session. At this meeting, Woolfolk and Mir. G. were also present. According to Simpson, she explained Glenn was not supposed to be at Wall's home due to his domestic-violence and substance-abuse issues. Wall told Simpson if Glenn contacted her, apologized

about issues they were having, and complied with services, she might rekindle their relationship. They also discussed the negative report from Cognition Works and Wall would need to restart the domestic-violence class. Wall told Simpson there were no domestic-violence issues because Glenn "only hit her once."

¶ 35 Simpson testified, on November 23, 2009, she spoke with Wall on the telephone. Wall had fired Woolfolk as her counselor. Wall wanted to hire a private counselor and stated again she was fearful what she said would be used against her. Simpson tried to explain the information is not there to be used against her. Simpson also reminded Wall she was making good progress, but she needed progress in her individual counseling. Wall stated she would no longer speak to Woolfolk. Simpson testified Wall planned to obtain a private counselor.

¶ 36 Simpson attended a permanency hearing on December 15, 2009, to discuss Wall's progress. Simpson relayed Wall failed to make reasonable efforts to successfully complete her domestic-violence counseling. Simpson also noted Wall had contact with Glenn despite testifying she had not. Simpson reminded Wall the trial court told Wall that Glenn needed to engage in services or Wall needed to cut ties completely with him. Wall stated she would not continue contact with Glenn.

¶ 37 On December 16, 2009, she saw Wall and Glenn together at a shopping mall. Simpson went to the mall because a case assistant had informed her the two were there. Simpson saw Glenn and Wall together in the lobby area outside the family bathroom at the mall. Simpson approached them. When Wall saw Simpson, she dropped her head. Wall told Simpson they were together only because Glenn needed to get his name off the lease. Wall then stated she needed to see a doctor for postpartum depression. Simpson encouraged her to do so because the

fact she would seek treatment would be a positive for her. Simpson reminded Wall her children would not be returned to her if she continued to have contact with Glenn without his making progress.

¶ 38 Simpson testified she had contact with Wall on June 8, 2010. Wall was leaving a counseling session with Woolfolk. Simpson met with Wall to schedule an extra two hours per week with her children. Wall was to get four hours each week with her children. Simpson asked Wall how she wanted to schedule the additional hours. Wall stated she did not know how she wanted to schedule it at that time and wanted to wait.

¶ 39 On June 15, 2010, Simpson and Wall had a telephone conversation to see if Wall was going to attend a newborn visit with Mir. G. Wall stated she would not attend the visit because "she did not want to take two buses and wait outside." Simpson ~~also~~ reminded Wall about setting up a time to get the other two hours in for visits. Wall stated she would talk about that another time. On June 30, 2010, they were able to schedule the additional two hours of visitation per week.

¶ 40 On cross-examination, Simpson testified Wall did improve in maintaining the home. She also attended services. Despite having some difficulty understanding other issues needed to be addressed, Wall attended services related to domestic violence. When Wall's overall progress began to slow, their working relationship became troubled.

¶ 41 Flesher testified she was assigned to Wall's family from September 17 to May 12, 2011. Flesher testified she supervised an at-home visit between Wall and Kay. W. and Kri. W. on November 8, 2010. The visit "did not go very well." According to Flesher, Wall played a video game on her phone for part of the visit. During the visit, Wall showed the girls a new iPod

she had gotten. At some point, a piece of the iPod was missing. Wall began accusing the girls of stealing it. She told them they "had sticky fingers" and called them thieves. The girls became upset. Kay. W. asked if she could go home. Flesher then asked if Kri. W. wanted to go home as well, and she responded she did. Flesher testified Wall "said you can just take them home since they took my iPod piece or something along that line." Flesher ended the visit approximately one hour early. As Flesher and the girls were walking to the car, Wall asked Flesher to take her to Wal-Mart so she could return the iPod for a new one with all of its pieces. Flesher drove Wall to Wal-Mart, hoping Wall might talk to the girls and calm them down. Wall continued to call the girls thieves. After Wall left, Kri. W. began crying. The girls denied taking the piece.

¶ 42 Flesher testified regarding an at-home visit between Wall and Mic. G., Mor. G., and Mir. G. on November 22, 2010. While there, Mic. G. "was kind of all over the place." At some point, Flesher caught Mic. G. in the kitchen. He "had gotten underneath the sink and got some cleaning supplies out." Flesher observed Mic. G. trying to put a bottle of a cleaner into his mouth. During this time, Wall was in the living room on the couch playing a game on her phone. When Flesher told Wall Mic. G. had gotten in to the cleaning supplies, she yelled for him to stay out of the supplies, but did not get up to check on him.

¶ 43 Flesher testified Wall did not "really interact" with Mor. G. or Mir. G. If those two needed something during visits, they would often go to Flesher. Flesher testified Wall was inconsistent with Mic. G. At times, she was "really attentive towards him," but at other times, she would not pay much attention to him.

¶ 44 Flesher testified, later that same day, she supervised a visit between Wall and Kay. W. and Kri. W. Wall had no activity planned. The girls played video games and watched

television. Wall talked to Flesher or played a game on her phone. There "wasn't very much interaction."

¶ 45 Flesher testified, on November 29, 2010, she supervised a visit between Wall, Mic. G., Mor. G., and Mir. G. During the visit, the children played with toys and books in the living room. Wall played a game on the Wii. She did not play with the children; "[t]here wasn't much interaction at all." That same day, Flesher was scheduled to supervise a visit between Flesher and Kay. W. and Kri. W. Flesher took the girls to Wall's house, but no one answered the door. They waited approximately 20 or 25 minutes. Flesher took the girls home.

¶ 46 Flesher testified, on December 20, 2010, she dropped in on a visit Wall was having with all five of her children to give the children Christmas presents. A third-party supervisor, a family member, was also there with her children. According to Flesher, when she arrived, Kay. W. answered the door. She told Flesher that Wall was upstairs. Flesher observed the baby gate was not up and Mir. G. was playing on the stairs. The other children were playing in the living room. Neither Wall, nor the third-party supervisor, was playing with the children. In the 35 minutes she was there, Flesher observed no interaction between Wall and her children.

¶ 47 Flesher testified she met with Wall on January 25, 2011, to discuss the third-party visit schedule and homemaker services, which assisted with parenting abilities. Flesher wanted to set up a more consistent visiting schedule, because it was changing "pretty much weekly at that point." They did not resolve the issue. Wall needed to sleep (she worked third shift at Wal-Mart) or she did not know if the suggested times would work.

¶ 48 Flesher testified, on January 26, 2011, she performed a home safety check at

Wall's residence. Wall wanted to address concerns that arose during the visits she supervised. Flesher testified some outlets were missing the safety plugs. Wall also did not have latches on the cabinets or on the toilet. She used the baby gates for the stairs inconsistently. Flesher again raised the topic about making a consistent visit schedule. Flesher even offered to start supervising some visits so they could occur weekly. Wall said no, believing "it would be taking a step backwards."

¶ 49 Flesher testified, on February 7, 2011, she observed a visit with Wall and her children. Before the children arrived, Flesher spoke with Wall about the Internal Revenue Service problems Kay. W.'s and Kri. W.'s foster mother was having because Wall attempted to claim the girls on her taxes again. After the children arrived, Wall interacted with Mic. G., but not with the others. The children were more interested in playing with Flesher.

¶ 50 Flesher testified, on February 8, 2011, Wall called her. Wall told Flesher she "was domestically violating her by showing up at her house to talk to her about the tax situation." Wall told Flesher she was not allowed to drop in at her residence any longer, and, if she did, Wall would not open the door for her. When Flesher tried to explain, Wall hung up on her. During this conversation, Wall also stated she wanted a new caseworker and she wanted the case transferred to DCFS.

¶ 51 Flesher testified, on February 9, 2011, Wall called her to cancel her visit for the following Friday. Wall stated the third-party supervisor did not have enough seats in her car in order to complete the visit. Flesher offered a number of options in order to prevent canceling the visit. Wall continued to want to cancel the visit.

¶ 52 Flesher testified, on March 1, 2011, Wall went to Kay. W.'s and Kri. W.'s

elementary school. The principal called Flesher. Flesher attempted to reach Wall by telephone but left a voice mail message because Wall could not be reached. Wall returned the call and told Flesher if Flesher needed to talk to her any longer, she needed to go through Wall's lawyer.

¶ 53 On cross-examination, Flesher testified, while she was Wall's caseworker, Wall was participating in counseling with Woolfolk. In addition to this counseling, Wall was recommended to participate in homemaker services. Flesher did not make a referral form, but she did suggest it to Wall multiple times. Wall did state, several months after the homemaker services were recommended, she was interested in them. By that time the woman who was going to provide those services was about to go on medical leave. Flesher testified they did offer an alternative to Wall. Woolfolk proposed to stop in for visits to observe Wall's interaction with her children and provide the same homemaker services. Each of those visits was canceled.

¶ 54 Flesher testified Wall missed at least one drug drop, but she did not have any "dirty drops." Flesher believed Wall did better about calling in for drops after Flesher explained to her why she needed to do so.

¶ 55 Flesher testified Wall maintained employment. Wall worked third shift. Flesher stated she had spoken to her multiple times about switching to either first or second shift, because those shifts would allow more services and more consistent visits. Wall was not interested. Wall stated she was paid more for third shift.

¶ 56 Wall testified on her own behalf. Wall testified she had been involved with DCFS for approximately two years. Wall testified she no longer resided in the apartment she resided in when the children were taken from her custody. The caseworker had not indicated any concerns regarding the residence she resided in at that time.

¶ 57 Wall testified Simpson was her first caseworker. Simpson did not talk to her about issues that needed to be addressed in the case. Flesher was also her caseworker. Wall testified neither Flesher nor her current caseworker, Lavonia Cunningham, talked to her about issues Wall needed to address. Neither asked Wall to complete services. Simpson asked her to perform certain services: counseling, a parenting class, and drug drops. Wall completed the parenting class in October 2009. Wall agreed Cunningham and Flesher had her continue the services she had started. Wall testified she participated in counseling with Woolfolk. Counseling stopped in May 2011, because Woolfolk wanted Wall "to come to the fact that [she] was going to lose [her] rights." Wall missed a drug drop in February 2011 because she was attending her grandmother's funeral in Michigan.

¶ 58 Wall testified Flesher talked with her about changing shifts at work. The night shift sometimes made it difficult for Wall to participate in services. If she changed shifts, Wall would have received fewer hours and less pay, which would have made it difficult for her to maintain a stable apartment. More specifically, Wall would have earned \$1 less per hour and would have worked 20 less hours per week.

¶ 59 Wall testified, at the beginning of the case, the visits were supervised by a caseworker, but third-party visitation was later approved. Dixon, a foster parent, was the first third-party supervisor. Because the visits were at a church, "[t]hey said *** it couldn't work." J. J. Sullivan, Wall's coworker, next supervised the visits. Wall testified those visits went well. Sullivan stopped supervising the visits after her car broke down. Wall had difficulty finding another person to be a third-party supervisor. One wanted gas money, which Wall could not provide. The other did not have a car large enough to transport the children. Flesher suggested

supervised visits, but Wall was opposed to that.

¶ 60 Wall testified she believed the visits went well. Wall stated she tried to give attention to each child and she could manage all of the children. Wall did not find counseling helpful in regards to handling the children. The parenting classes she found helpful.

¶ 61 At the conclusion of the hearing, the trial court determined the State proved by clear and convincing evidence Wall was an unfit parent "within the meaning of the Adoption Act."

¶ 62 This appeal followed.

¶ 63 II. ANALYSIS

¶ 64 On appeal, Wall argues the trial court's decision she was an unfit parent is against the manifest weight of the evidence. Wall maintains the record shows she "was generally cooperative, made progress, attended services, [and] eventually return[ed] to counseling." Wall states the record shows, according to Simpson, she was focused on her children during the visits. Wall acknowledges the record shows some failures to interact appropriately, but emphasizes her children had been removed from her for almost two years and, as the bond strengthened between her children and the foster parents, the bond with her children would deteriorate. Wall further maintains she meets minimum parenting standards as defined in the Administrative Code:

" 'Minimum parenting standards' means that a parent or other person responsible for the child's welfare sees that the child is adequately fed, clothed appropriately for the weather conditions, provided with adequate shelter, protected from physical, mental and emotional harm, and provided with necessary medical care and

education as required by law." 89 Ill. Adm. Code 302.20 (2012).

¶ 65 A trial court may find a parent unfit when the evidence clearly and convincingly shows the parent (1) failed to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child within nine months after an adjudication of neglect (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(ii) (West 2010)) or (2) failed to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child within any nine-month period following the end of the initial nine-month period after a neglect adjudication. 750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(iii) (West 2010). When a court considers a claim of a lack of reasonable progress, that court must undertake "an objective review of the steps the parent [took] toward the goal of reunification." *In re Jordan V.*, 347 Ill. App. 3d 1057, 1067, 808 N.E.2d 596, 605 (2004), (quoting *In re B.S.*, 317 Ill. App. 3d 650, 658, 740 N.E.2d 404, 411 (2000), *overruled on other grounds by In re R.C.*, 195 Ill. 2d 291, 304, 745 N.E.2d 1233, 1241 (2001)). Reasonable progress will be found if a court finds it may in the near future return the child to the custody of the parent because that parent will have complied fully with the court's directives. See *Jordan V.*, 347 Ill. App. 3d at 1068, 808 N.E.2d at 605. On review, because the trial court is able to view witnesses and their demeanor at trial, we give great deference to its findings and will not overturn a finding of unfitness unless it is against the manifest weight of the evidence. *In re A.P.*, 277 Ill. App. 3d 592, 598, 660 N.E.2d 1006, 1010 (1996).

¶ 66 The trial court's findings are not against the manifest weight of the evidence. Wall did not successfully complete individual counseling or a domestic-violence class. Wall refused to address domestic-violence issues and other issues of concern in individual counseling. Wall apparently distrusted all those who were attempting to help her. She resisted the efforts of every caseworker and failed to make any real progress toward being able to identify and prevent

domestic violence, adequately address safety issues in her home, or address her parenting deficits. Wall's unwillingness to address these issues during two years of attempts to get her to do so, proved the court could not return the children either then or in the near future.

¶ 67 Wall's argument she meets minimum parenting standards as defined by the Administrative Code is unconvincing. One of the standards requires the parent will protect his or her child "physical, mental and emotional harm." See 89 Ill. Adm. Code 302.20 (2012). The record shows no proof Wall meets, or will meet in the near future, these standards. One of the concerns when the children entered care was domestic violence in the home. Wall admitted being hit by Glenn but denied issues of domestic violence. She refused to discuss the issue further—providing no guarantee Wall can identify, much less prevent, domestic violence in her home. The record shows Wall failed to identify other safety concerns, the needs of her children, and the effort required to ever have the children returned to her care. The manifest weight of the evidence supports the trial court's decision.

¶ 68 III. CONCLUSION

¶ 69 For the stated reasons, we affirm the trial court's judgment.

¶ 70 Affirmed.