



created an environment which was injurious to his health and welfare. Specifically, the petition alleged that Elizabeth H. had refused any monitoring of the infant during labor and had made a statement that she did not care if the child lived or died. The petition also alleged that Elizabeth H. had refused to feed the infant and had refused to allow the medical staff at the hospital to feed him. It further alleged that the hospital staff had concerns about Elizabeth H.'s mental health and her ability to care for the infant. G.H.'s father was listed as unknown on the petition. Following a shelter care hearing, the trial court entered a temporary custody order, placing temporary custody of G.H. with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Thereafter, DNA testing confirmed that Gerald H. was the father of G.H.

¶ 4 On January 25, 2010, the circuit court entered a dispositional order finding that G.H. was a neglected minor as defined by section 2-3 of the Juvenile Court Act of 1987 (the Act) (705 ILCS 405/2-3 (West 2010)) because his environment was injurious to his welfare. Specifically, the court found that the minor was neglected because Elizabeth H. had refused monitoring of the infant during labor. The court found that Elizabeth H. was unfit and that Gerald H. was unwilling to care for the minor child. The court placed custody and guardianship with DCFS.

¶ 5 On October 4, 2012, the State filed a motion for termination of parental rights and for appointment of guardian with power to consent to adoption, alleging that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. were unfit because they (1) failed to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility as to G.H.'s welfare (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(b) (West 2012)), (2) failed to make reasonable efforts to correct the conditions that were the basis for G.H.'s removal within nine months after an adjudication of neglect (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(i) (West 2012)), and (3) failed to make reasonable progress toward G.H.'s return within any nine-month period after the end of the initial nine-month period following an adjudication of neglect (750

ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(iii) (West 2012)).

¶ 6 In June 2013, the trial court conducted a hearing on the State's motion to terminate parental rights. Lynneshea Morrow, a foster care caseworker at Christian Social Services, testified that she initially became involved in the case in July 2011. She explained that Crystal Jefferson was the permanency caseworker from 2009, the inception of the case, until July 2011. Morrow had reviewed Jefferson's entries in the case file and had relied on these entries in her position as the new caseworker. As part of her responsibilities as the caseworker, she was required to review service plans with the parents every six months. Morrow explained that the service plans established particular goals for the parents to achieve and each goal had specific interventions that were intended to help the parents achieve the particular goals. Elizabeth H.'s service plan had the following components: a psychological evaluation; substance abuse assessment; parenting; housing; income; follow recommendations from the psychiatrist; and visitation.

¶ 7 A service plan evaluation performed on April 29, 2010, by Jefferson indicated that Elizabeth H. had received an overall unsatisfactory rating. She had received a satisfactory rating on the following individual goals in the plan: psychological evaluation; substance abuse assessment; and mental health screen. She had received unsatisfactory ratings for the following goals: completing parenting classes; adequate housing and income; and visitation. Morrow explained that Elizabeth H. had attended parenting classes, but she was given an unsatisfactory rating because she had not completed the classes. Morrow acknowledged that Jefferson had rated herself unsatisfactory for her duty to access available community resources to assist Elizabeth H. with locating appropriate housing. She did not know the reasoning behind the caseworker's rating herself unsatisfactory, but explained that a caseworker cannot release information without a parent's consent and Morrow did not know if Jefferson had Elizabeth H.'s consent. Elizabeth H. was rated satisfactory for substance

abuse assessment. A second service plan evaluation performed by Jefferson on October 29, 2010, indicated that Elizabeth H. had received an overall rating of unsatisfactory and had received an unsatisfactory rating for psychological evaluation, parenting class, housing, income, and psychiatric assessment. She was rated satisfactory for visitation. According to the service plan evaluation, Elizabeth H. had missed numerous appointments with the psychiatrist and was not compliant with her medication. She had completed the drug and alcohol assessment and had received a satisfactory rating for substance abuse assessment. A third service plan evaluation performed by Jefferson on May 4, 2011, revealed that Elizabeth H. had again received an overall rating of unsatisfactory and had received an unsatisfactory rating for psychological evaluation, parenting class, obtaining adequate housing and income, and psychiatric assessment. She was rated satisfactory for visitation, and it was noted that she had improved with visitation. She was drug tested and received a satisfactory rating for substance abuse assessment.

¶ 8 A November 15, 2011, service plan evaluation given by Morrow indicated that Elizabeth H. had received an overall unsatisfactory rating. Morrow explained that Elizabeth H. had received an unsatisfactory rating for psychological evaluation and psychiatric assessment because she had not been taking her prescribed medication regularly, was not regularly meeting with her psychiatrist, and had refused to sign a consent to allow Morrow to speak with her doctors. Morrow further explained that Elizabeth H. was rated unsatisfactory for parenting class because she had not been engaged in her parenting classes that she had attended prior to Morrow being assigned the case. She testified that Elizabeth H. had been unable to demonstrate what she had learned in the prior parenting classes. Elizabeth H. was rated unsatisfactory for obtaining adequate housing and income. Morrow testified that Elizabeth H. was no longer living at the address that she had given for her current address. Morrow explained that she had received returned mail from the post office

saying that Elizabeth H. no longer lived at that address. She attempted to obtain Elizabeth H.'s current address, but was unsuccessful. Elizabeth H. was rated satisfactory for visitation, and it was noted that she visited consistently and had improved with visitation. She was also rated satisfactory for substance abuse assessment.

¶9 Another service plan evaluation performed by Morrow on May 17, 2012, revealed that Elizabeth H. was rated unsatisfactory for overall progress and was also rated unsatisfactory for psychological evaluation, parenting class, obtaining adequate housing and income, and psychiatric assessment. The reasons for the unsatisfactory ratings were the same ongoing reasons. Elizabeth H. had also received an unsatisfactory rating for substance abuse assessment because she had refused to complete a second assessment, which included a drug screen. Morrow explained that Elizabeth H. had been showing up late for visitation and did not appear focused during visitation. Morrow requested that Elizabeth H. complete a drug screen because Morrow wanted to make sure that she was still sober. However, Elizabeth H. did not complete the assessment. She had received a satisfactory rating for visitation, and the service plan indicated that she had visited consistently. The plan also indicated that she needed to learn "how to engage her son age appropriately." Morrow explained that Elizabeth H. had not participated in parenting classes as required under the service plan. According to Morrow, the individual in charge of the counseling and parenting classes had left the agency and Elizabeth H. needed to sign a new consent form to begin classes with a new instructor. Elizabeth H. never signed the consent form and therefore did not reengage in classes.

¶10 On November 21, 2012, another service plan was evaluated by Morrow, and Elizabeth H. was rated unsatisfactory for overall progress and was rated unsatisfactory for psychological evaluation, parenting class, obtaining adequate housing and income, substance abuse assessment, and psychiatric assessment. She was again rated satisfactory for visitation.

Another service plan was created on April 18, 2013, but Elizabeth H. was not evaluated under that plan. Elizabeth H.'s parental rights had been terminated by default on November 19, 2012, and she was not a participant in services during the six-month period covered by the April service plan. According to Morrow, services and interventions are discontinued when parental rights are terminated. The default judgment was vacated on January 25, 2013, and Elizabeth H. was eligible to reengage in services after that date. Immediately after the January 2013 hearing, Morrow told Elizabeth H. to contact her to reestablish visitation with G.H. Morrow had previously given Elizabeth H. her contact information, but Elizabeth H. never contacted her. Elizabeth H.'s last visit with G.H. was November 26, 2012, which was her final visit following the termination of her parental rights and termination of services. Morrow acknowledged that Elizabeth H. had consistently attended visitation with G.H. until her rights were terminated. Morrow explained that she did not have the correct contact information for Elizabeth H. and was therefore unable to contact her after her parental rights were reinstated. Morrow attempted to locate her by driving on a street where she was normally seen, but Morrow was unsuccessful. She explained that she had also done "diligent searches" for Elizabeth H., a system that DCFS uses involving a local address and a certified letter. She had sent letters requesting that Elizabeth H. contact her to Elizabeth H.'s last known address, but most of the letters were returned by the post office. Elizabeth H. had said that she was employed as a hairdresser at a salon in East St. Louis, but she had never provided proof of income. Morrow did not recall Elizabeth H. giving her the name of the salon where she was employed, but if Elizabeth H. had done so, Morrow would have visited or contacted the salon. Morrow never asked her the name and address of the salon.

¶ 11 Morrow believed that Elizabeth H. demonstrated a consistent lack of progress with visitation, parenting class, obtaining stable housing and income, and compliance with medication. Elizabeth H. had not participated in parenting classes since Morrow's

involvement with the case. Morrow expressed concern that Elizabeth H. was unable to parent G.H. properly. She had observed Elizabeth H.'s interactions with G.H. during visitation and noted the following: "Most days she would play a movie which is calming and she would rock him to sleep. She'll just put him to sleep if he was sleepy or not. And other days it would be that [G.H.] is playing by himself and mom is either reading a magazine or focused on herself."

¶ 12 According to Morrow, the goals on Gerald H.'s service plan were paternity testing, psychological evaluation, substance abuse assessment and treatment, housing, and income. Gerald H. completed paternity testing, and that goal was marked as achieved and removed from the service plan. A service plan evaluated on April 29, 2010, indicated that Gerald H. was rated unsatisfactory for his overall progress and was also rated unsatisfactory for psychological evaluation and drug and alcohol assessment and treatment. Morrow did not know why Gerald H. was required to complete a psychological evaluation, but explained that a requirement would remain on the service plan until it was completed. Gerald H. was rated unsatisfactory for psychological evaluation and a satisfactory rating for substance abuse assessment on an October 29, 2010, service plan evaluation. He was rated unsatisfactory on the May 4, 2011, service plan evaluation for psychological evaluation and substance abuse assessment. He was also rated unsatisfactory for overall progress. A service plan evaluation performed by Morrow on November 15, 2011, indicated that Gerald H. had received a satisfactory overall rating and an unsatisfactory rating for psychological evaluation. Morrow explained that a client must be "clean for over sixty days" for a caseworker to make a referral for a psychological evaluation and that she did not have any reports indicating that Gerald H. had achieved this goal. Although Gerald H. had not met this goal, he was rated satisfactory for substance abuse assessment because he had been following his treatment plans by engaging in treatment services.

¶ 13 A service plan evaluation dated May 17, 2012, revealed that Gerald H. had received an unsatisfactory overall progress rating and also had received an unsatisfactory rating for maintaining legal income, psychological evaluation, and substance abuse assessment. Morrow explained that Gerald H. had not provided her with proof of income and that he had "relapsed and wasn't doing so well in treatment at that time." She further explained that Gerald H. had tested positive for cocaine and that she was unable to make a referral for a psychological evaluation. A service plan evaluation completed on November 21, 2012, indicated that Gerald H. had received an overall progress rating of unsatisfactory and also had received an unsatisfactory rating for maintaining legal income, psychological evaluation, and substance abuse assessment. The unsatisfactory ratings were based on the same circumstances as the previous service plan. A service plan evaluation performed on April 18, 2013, indicated that Gerald H. had again received an unsatisfactory rating for overall progress and also had received an unsatisfactory rating for maintaining legal income, psychological evaluation, and substance abuse assessment. Morrow explained that Gerald H. was not consistent with his substance abuse treatment. Although Gerald H. told her that he had worked some temporary jobs, he had failed to produce proof of income. Morrow had never been to Gerald H.'s residence, but she noted that Gerald H. had previously said that his apartment was too small for him and G.H. He resided in a studio apartment.

¶ 14 Morrow believed that Gerald H. demonstrated a consistent lack of progress with his substance abuse, income, and psychological evaluation. She expressed concern that Gerald H. would be unable to parent because of his substance abuse issues. She explained that there were times when Gerald H. appeared to be "doing well" with his substance abuse treatment, but that had changed due to his issues with alcohol. Morrow explained that on two occasions, she had observed Gerald H. in the visitation room with G.H. smelling of alcohol. Gerald H. was involved in a drug and alcohol outpatient treatment program at ARTS when

Morrow was assigned to the case. He had reengaged the services at ARTS and was attending classes on a regular basis, but his counselor had noted that "some days he's all about treatment and some days he's focused on everything but treatment." Morrow explained that Gerald H. had supervised visitation for four hours per week with G.H. and that he had attended more than 80% of those visits. Morrow described the visits as overall satisfactory and noted that Gerald H. engaged G.H. with talk and play. Gerald H. had brought G.H. presents or cards for Christmas or his birthday, and he had brought snacks and drinks for G.H. on regular visits.

¶ 15 Elizabeth H. testified that she has been employed at First Choice Beauty Salon in East St. Louis for 12 years. She was not offered any assistance with finding housing. She completed a psychological evaluation in 2010, and it was recommended that she see a psychiatrist and take prescribed medication. She had been seeing a psychiatrist regularly in East St. Louis, but had not been since January 2013 because she never rescheduled her appointment. She was prescribed medication, but was not taking it regularly. Her psychiatrist changed her medication, and she has taken "some of the pills." She explained that she still had the medicine and she would take it when she felt it was necessary. She had been regularly attending parenting classes, but the person in charge of the parenting classes quit doing them. She explained that she was told that she had completed the parenting course, but that she still needed to complete the service plan. She never refused to continue with parenting classes. She consistently attended visitation until her parental rights were terminated. Morrow never told her that she could have visitation reinstated and that she needed to contact Morrow to resume visitation.

¶ 16 Gerald H. testified that he has lived in a studio apartment for three years. He was unemployed, but did approximately eight hours of maintenance work monthly in return for subsidized rent. He did not learn that he was the father of G.H. until late May 2009, and he

was not involved with Elizabeth H. at the time of G.H.'s birth. He began visitation with G.H. once he learned that he was G.H.'s father. Initially, his visitation was two hours per week supervised. The visits were eventually increased to four hours per week supervised. He relied on public transportation to travel to the visits. Gerald H. interacted with G.H. by doing the following activities during the visits: watching movies; coloring; and working with colors, letters, and numbers. He regularly brought toys and snacks for G.H. and also brought him gifts on his birthday and Christmas. He completed a required parenting class as part of his service plan and also completed two parenting classes that he found on his own. He had previous employment at "some temporary companies" and had taken forklift certification and food service sanitation classes at Southwestern Illinois College. He was actively searching for employment. He attended outpatient drug and alcohol treatment at Gateway in 2009, but was discharged for failing a Breathalyzer test. In 2010, he entered residential treatment at the SMARTS program and completed over 30 days of treatment before he was discharged for having an excess of contraband in the form of material items in his room. In 2011, he entered the ARTS outpatient treatment program and attended three days per week. He had not successfully completed the program, but was currently attending classes. He tested positive for alcohol in April 2013, but his drug tests had been clean since November 2011.

¶ 17 After hearing the evidence, the trial court made the following findings: the State had proven that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. had failed to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility as to G.H.'s welfare and that both failed to show sufficient concern for the minor through noncompliance with the service plan; that the State had proven that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. had failed to make a reasonable effort to correct the conditions that were the basis of G.H.'s removal; and that the State had failed to prove that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. had not made reasonable progress toward G.H.'s return within any nine-month period after the end of the initial nine-month period following an adjudication of neglect.

Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. appeal.

¶ 18 Initially, Elizabeth H. argues that the trial court committed an abuse of discretion by allowing Morrow to testify to inadmissible hearsay. Specifically, Elizabeth H. argues that Morrow was allowed to testify regarding service plan evaluations performed on April 29, 2010, October 29, 2010, and May 4, 2011, by Jefferson, the initial caseworker. Elizabeth H. argues that these service plan evaluations were conducted before Morrow's involvement with the case and that Morrow had no personal knowledge regarding the contents of the plans. She acknowledges that the service plans prepared by Jefferson are admissible under section 2-18(4)(a) of the Act (705 ILCS 405/2-18(4)(a) (West 2012)), but notes that the State did not have the service plan evaluations admitted into evidence. In response, the State acknowledges that the service plans were not formally admitted into evidence, but notes that the trial court had agreed to take judicial notice of the court's entire case file, which included the service plans.

¶ 19 A trial court may take judicial notice of matters of record in its own proceedings. *In re J.G.*, 298 Ill. App. 3d 617, 627 (1998). "However, taking judicial notice of matters of record in a court's own proceedings cannot result in admitting hearsay evidence where it would otherwise be prohibited." *In re A.B.*, 308 Ill. App. 3d 227, 237 (1999). Pursuant to section 2-18(4)(a) of the Act (705 ILCS 405/2-18(4)(a) (West 2012)), the service plans prepared by DCFS in termination proceedings are admissible as business records when the proper foundation is laid. *In re A.B.*, 308 Ill. App. 3d at 234-35. Specifically, section 2-18(4)(a) of the Act provides as follows:

"Any writing, record, photograph or x-ray of any hospital or public or private agency, whether in the form of an entry in a book or otherwise, made as a memorandum or record of any condition, act, transaction, occurrence or event relating to a minor in an abuse, neglect or dependency proceeding, shall be admissible in evidence as proof of

that condition, act, transaction, occurrence or event, if the court finds that the document was made in the regular course of the business of the hospital or agency and that it was in the regular course of such business to make it, at the time of the act, transaction, occurrence or event, or within a reasonable time thereafter." 705 ILCS 405/2-18(4)(a) (West 2012).

¶ 20 Here, Morrow testified that the service plan evaluations were prepared in the regular course of business, that they were maintained for the parents, and that she was responsible for maintaining the service plans in the case file as part of her duties as the caseworker on this case. Consequently, an adequate foundation was laid for the admission of the service plans into evidence under section 2-18(4)(a) of the Act and, therefore, the court taking judicial notice of the service plans in the file would not result in "admitting hearsay evidence where it would otherwise be prohibited."

¶ 21 During the fitness hearing, the State attempted to question Morrow concerning the initial allegations against Elizabeth H. that brought G.H. into shelter care. Elizabeth H.'s counsel objected, arguing that Morrow was not involved in the initial investigation and any testimony from her regarding the investigation would be hearsay. Gerald H.'s counsel agreed, noting that the court file probably reflected the reasons for why G.H. was placed in shelter care. The circuit court overruled the objection, allowing Morrow to review her notes and to answer the question. As Morrow was answering the question, Elizabeth H.'s counsel again objected to the testimony based on hearsay. Counsel noted that the court's file contained the orders entered in the case and that the orders would indicate the reasons why certain actions were taken by the caseworkers, which included the reason why G.H. was originally placed in shelter care and the reason why the court found that G.H. was neglected. In response, the State requested that the court take judicial notice of the "court file." Elizabeth H.'s counsel responded as follows: "And, Your Honor, in light of that I would ask

that the prior testimony regarding what her notes reflect be stricken."

¶ 22 We recognize that the State failed to employ the proper procedure when it requested the trial court take judicial notice of evidence at the fitness hearing. See *In re A.B.*, 308 Ill. App. 3d at 238 (the suggested procedure for the State to employ when requesting a court take judicial notice of portions of the court file in an unfitness proceeding is to make a proffer of the material requested to be noticed because taking wholesale judicial notice of all matters that happened prior to a fitness hearing is unnecessary and inappropriate). However, assuming *arguendo* that the service plan evaluations performed by Jefferson were not properly noticed by the court and that Morrow's testimony with regard to the evaluations performed by Jefferson was improper, we conclude that there was more than sufficient evidence of Elizabeth H.'s unfitness properly admitted at the hearing to support the trial court's determination of unfitness. Although the State presented testimony from Morrow concerning service plan evaluations performed by Jefferson on April 29, 2010, October 29, 2010, and May 4, 2011, the State also presented testimony from Morrow concerning the contents of service plans evaluations performed by Morrow on November 15, 2011, May 17, 2012, and November 21, 2012, after she was assigned as a caseworker on this case. Morrow's testimony concerning the contents of the service plans that she had performed was sufficient to establish at least one ground of parental unfitness, *i.e.*, that Elizabeth H. failed to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility as to G.H.'s welfare.

¶ 23 Under the Act, the involuntary termination of parental rights involves a two-step process. *In re Tiffany M.*, 353 Ill. App. 3d 883, 889 (2004). First, the State must prove by clear and convincing evidence that the parent is unfit, as defined in section 1(D) of the Adoption Act (750 ILCS 50/1(D) (West 2012)). *In re Tiffany M.*, 353 Ill. App. 3d at 889. Section 1(D) of the Adoption Act lists various grounds under which a court may make a finding of unfitness, any of which standing alone may support such a finding. *Id.* "A

determination of parental unfitness involves factual findings and credibility assessments that the trial court is in the best position to make." *Id.* at 889-90. The reviewing court will defer to the trial court's factual findings and will not reverse that court's decision unless the findings are against the manifest weight of the evidence. *Id.* at 890. "A factual finding is against the manifest weight of the evidence only if the opposite conclusion is clearly evident or if the determination is unreasonable, arbitrary, and not based on the evidence." *Id.*

¶ 24 Section 1(D) of the Adoption Act contains the following three separate grounds, any one of which may be the basis for a finding of parental unfitness: (1) failure to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility for the child's welfare (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(b) (West 2012)), (2) failure to make reasonable efforts to correct the conditions that were the basis for the removal of the child from the parent (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(i) (West 2012)), and (3) failure to make reasonable progress toward the return of the child to the parent during any nine-month period after the end of the initial nine-month period following an adjudication of neglected minor (750 ILCS 50/1(D)(m)(iii) (West 2012)).

¶ 25 Here, the trial court found that the State had proven by clear and convincing evidence that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. had not made reasonable efforts to correct the conditions that had led to G.H.'s removal and that they had also failed to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility as to G.H.'s welfare. The trial court further found that the State failed to prove by clear and convincing evidence that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. had made reasonable progress toward the goal of returning G.H. during any nine-month period after the end of the initial nine-month period following the adjudication of neglect. "When parental rights are terminated based upon clear and convincing evidence of a single ground of unfitness, the reviewing court need not consider additional grounds for unfitness cited by the trial court." *In re Tiffany M.*, 353 Ill. App. 3d at 891. Because we conclude that the trial court's findings that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. had failed to maintain a reasonable degree

of interest, concern, or responsibility as to G.H.'s welfare, we need not consider whether Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. were unfit based upon the trial court's findings that they had failed to make reasonable efforts to correct the conditions that had led to G.H.'s removal.

¶ 26 The Adoption Act provides that a court may find a parent unfit if the parent fails to maintain reasonable concern, interest, or responsibility for the welfare of the minor child. 750 ILCS 50/1(D)(b) (West 2012). "This section of the Adoption Act is disjunctive and failure to show any one of the three elements (interest, concern, or responsibility) may be considered on its own as a basis for unfitness." *In re Jacorey*, 2012 IL App (1st) 113427, ¶ 28. In evaluating the three elements, the court is to consider the parent's conduct in the context of the parent's circumstances. *In re T.D.*, 268 Ill. App. 3d 239, 246 (1994). The court must focus on the reasonableness of the parent's efforts and not the parent's successes and must also consider any circumstances that made it difficult for the parent to show interest, concern, or responsibility for the well-being of the minor child. *In re Katrina R.*, 364 Ill. App. 3d 834, 842 (2006). However, a parent is not fit merely because she had demonstrated some interest in or affection for the child. *In re Daphnie E.*, 368 Ill. App. 3d 1052, 1064 (2006). "Completion of service plan objectives can also be considered evidence of a parent's concern, interest, and responsibility." *Id.* at 1065. Further, this ground of unfitness is not subject to the nine-month time limitation contained in section 1(D)(m) of the Adoption Act. See 750 ILCS 50/1(D)(b) (West 2012); *In re Alexander R.*, 377 Ill. App. 3d 553, 556 (2007). Therefore, the parent's conduct during the entire postadjudication period is relevant. *In re Jason U.*, 214 Ill. App. 3d 545, 552 (1991).

¶ 27 Here, the record supports the trial court's findings that Elizabeth H. and Gerald H. failed to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility as to G.H.'s welfare. As previously stated, completion of the service plan objectives can be considered evidence of a parent's concern, interest, or responsibility. Elizabeth H. argues that she has

complied with the service plan objectives in the following manner: she had consistently exercised her visitation with G.H. until her parental rights were terminated in November 2012; her caseworker never informed her that she could have visitation reinstated in January 2013; she was never offered any assistance with finding housing; she had been employed at a beauty salon in East St. Louis for 12 years; she had attended parenting classes; she had never refused to engage in parenting classes; she had received satisfactory ratings for substance abuse; she had obtained a psychological evaluation as requested; and she had met with her psychiatrist numerous times.

¶ 28 Morrow testified that Elizabeth H. had received unsatisfactory ratings for psychological evaluation and psychiatric assessment because she was not compliant with her medication and failed to regularly attend meetings with her psychiatrist. Elizabeth H. acknowledged that she had not been to her psychiatrist since January 2013 and that she was not taking her medicine regularly. Although Morrow testified that Elizabeth H. had exercised her visitation rights consistently until November 2012, Morrow also testified that Elizabeth H. had not visited with G.H. after her parental rights were reinstated. Morrow explained that she had told Elizabeth H. to contact her in order to resume visitation, but Elizabeth H. never contacted her. Morrow further explained that she did not have current contact information for Elizabeth H., and mail sent to Elizabeth H.'s last known address was returned. Morrow expressed concern that Elizabeth H. was unable to parent G.H. properly based on her observations of Elizabeth H.'s interactions with G.H. during visitation. Morrow noted that Elizabeth H. would let G.H. play by himself while she was "reading a magazine or focused on herself." Morrow's May 2012 service plan evaluation indicated that Elizabeth H. needed to learn "how to engage her son age appropriately." Elizabeth H. testified that she had been employed at a hair salon for 12 years; however, Morrow testified that Elizabeth H. had never provided Morrow with the required proof of income. Elizabeth H. had received

unsatisfactory ratings for parenting classes because she had not completed the classes, and she had not participated in any parenting classes since Morrow was assigned to the case. Elizabeth H.'s failure to complete the service plan objectives is evidence of her failure to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility as to G.H.'s welfare. Therefore, we conclude that the trial court's finding of unfitness based on section 1(D)(b) of the Adoption Act as it pertained to Elizabeth H. was not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

¶ 29 Gerald H. argues that he has complied with the service plan objectives in the following manner: he had attended more than 80% of his weekly visits with G.H.; he normally brought snacks, toys, or gifts to the visits and engaged with G.H. by coloring or watching movies; his visits were increased by the court from two to four hours per week; he had maintained regular contact with the caseworker and informed her of his living, employment, and substance abuse treatment statuses; and he had completed his required parenting class as well as two parenting programs independent of the service plan. Contrary to Gerald H.'s arguments, the record supports the circuit court's finding that he had failed to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility. Morrow expressed concern that Gerald H. would be unable to parent G.H. because of his substance abuse issues. Morrow testified that Gerald H. had been inconsistent with his substance abuse treatment and had smelled of alcohol on two occasions during visitation with G.H. Morrow further testified that Gerald H.'s May 2012 service plan indicated that he had tested positive for cocaine and was not doing well with treatment. Gerald H. acknowledged that he had been discharged from outpatient drug and alcohol treatment in 2009 because he had failed a Breathalyzer test. In 2010, he was discharged from a residential inpatient treatment program for having an excess of material items in his room. In 2011, he attended an outpatient drug and alcohol treatment program at ARTS, but he has yet to successfully complete this program. Although

his drug tests have been clean since November 2011, he had tested positive for alcohol in April 2013. Morrow explained that Gerald H. had resumed substance abuse services and was attending classes, but expressed concern that some days he appeared to be "focused on everything but treatment." According to Morrow, he had never successfully completed a treatment program aimed at treating his substance abuse problem. Morrow further testified that he lived in a studio apartment and that it was not adequate housing for him and G.H. Gerald H.'s failure to complete the service plan requirements which were aimed at treating his substance abuse problem and enabling him to parent with income and stable housing is evidence of his failure to maintain a reasonable degree of interest, concern, or responsibility for G.H. Therefore, we conclude that the trial court's finding of unfitness based on section 1(D)(b) of the Adoption Act was not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

¶ 30 For the foregoing reasons, the judgment of the circuit court of St. Clair County is hereby affirmed.

¶ 31 Affirmed.