

An unpublished opinion of the North Carolina Court of Appeals does not constitute controlling legal authority. Citation is disfavored, but may be permitted in accordance with the provisions of Rule 30(e)(3) of the North Carolina Rules of Appellate Procedure.

IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF NORTH CAROLINA

No. COA23-1136

Filed 6 August 2024

New Hanover County, No. 20JT240

IN THE MATTER OF:

K.C.,

A Minor Child.

Appeal by respondent-father from order entered 12 September 2023 by Judge J.H. Corpening, II, in New Hanover County District Court. Heard in the Court of Appeals 17 April 2024.

Jill Cairo for petitioner-appellee New Hanover County Department of Social Services.

N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts, Guardian ad Litem Division, by Matthew D. Wunsche, for Guardian ad Litem.

Robinson & Lawing, LLP, by Christopher M. Watford, for respondent-appellant-father.

PER CURIAM.

Respondent-father seeks appeal from the order terminating his parental rights of Kristen.¹ Counsel for respondent-father filed a no-merit brief pursuant to Rule

¹ Pseudonym used to protect the identity of the individual.

3.1(e) of the North Carolina Rules of Appellate Procedure. Having reviewed the briefs and the record, we affirm.

Counsel for respondent-father filed a no-merit brief pursuant to Rule 3.1(e) and listed three issues for this Court to independently review in accordance with Rule 3.1(e). Additionally, counsel fully complied with the requirements under Rule 3.1(e) by providing respondent-father with all required documentation and giving him information about his ability to file a pro se brief “within thirty days after the date of the filing of [counsel’s] no merit brief.” N.C.R. App. P. 3.1(e) (2023). Respondent-father did not file any pro se brief.

Counsel for respondent-father identified the following three issues for our independent review: (1) whether the trial court erred by determining the existence of a ground for termination of his parental rights pursuant to section 7B-1111(a)(1); (2) whether the trial court erred by determining the existence of a ground for termination pursuant to section 7B-1111(a)(2); and (3) whether the trial court erred by determining it was in the best interest of Kristen to terminate respondent-father’s parental rights. Accordingly, we independently reviewed each issue addressed in the no-merit brief. *See In re K.M.S.*, 380 N.C. 56, 59 (2022) (cleaned up) (requiring appellate courts to “conduct a careful review of the issues identified in the no-merit brief in light of its consideration of the entire record”).

Having conducted an independent review of the record, we determine the trial court’s order terminating respondent-father’s parental rights contains findings of fact

that are supported by the evidence in the record, and that the findings of fact in turn support the conclusions of law. The trial court established grounds for termination pursuant to sections 7B-1111(a)(1) and (a)(2), and the trial court properly determined it was in the best interest of Kristen to terminate respondent-father's parental rights pursuant to section 7B-1110(a). Therefore, we affirm the trial court's order terminating respondent-father's parental rights.

AFFIRMED.

Panel consisting of:

Judges CARPENTER, WOOD, and GORE.

Report per Rule 30(e).