

COURT OF APPEALS OF OHIO, EIGHTH APPELLATE DISTRICT,
CUYAHOGA COUNTY

In re C.K.

2026-Ohio-357 · No. 115324 · Decided February 5, 2026

SUMMARY

The Ohio Eighth District Court of Appeals affirmed judgments awarding permanent custody of three minor children to the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services and terminating the parents’ parental rights. The court held that clear and convincing evidence supported the findings under R.C. 2151.414 and that the juvenile court’s decisions were not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Appeals of Ohio, Eighth Appellate District, Cuyahoga County
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Sean C. Gallagher; Eileen T. Gallagher; Emanuella D. Groves
JURISDICTION	Court of Appeals of Ohio, Eighth Appellate District, Cuyahoga County
DECIDED	February 5, 2026
DOCKET	115324
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Father appealed the juvenile court's judgments awarding permanent custody of his three minor children to the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services and terminating all parental rights. He challenged the judgments as unsupported by sufficient evidence and against the manifest weight of the evidence.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For sufficiency, the appellate court examines whether the record contains sufficient evidence to satisfy the clear-and-convincing standard. For manifest weight, the court weighs the evidence and reasonable inferences, considers witness credibility, and determines whether the juvenile court clearly lost its way and created a manifest miscarriage of justice.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Ohio Court of Appeals opinion
PARTIES	M.K., Father v. Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services

TOPICS

termination of parental rights child custody parental rights family law procedure appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

juvenile law family law child welfare termination of parental rights appellate review

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the juvenile court had sufficient clear-and-convincing evidence to grant CCDCFS permanent custody under R.C. 2151.414.
2. Whether the juvenile court's permanent-custody judgments were against the manifest weight of the evidence.
3. Whether the juvenile court properly considered the statutory best-interest factors and the factors under R.C. 2151.414(E).

HOLDINGS

1. The juvenile court's permanent-custody determinations were supported by sufficient clear-and-convincing evidence.
2. The juvenile court was not required to expressly discuss each best-interest factor in R.C. 2151.414(D)(1) (a) through (e); consideration of the factors is sufficient.
3. The juvenile court's judgments were not against the manifest weight of the evidence.
4. A parent's successful completion of case-plan services does not preclude an agency from obtaining permanent custody.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“A parent’s successful completion of a case plan does not preclude a grant of permanent custody to a social-services agency.” (2026-Ohio-357)

“We conclude that the juvenile court’s judgment is not against the manifest weight of the evidence.” (2026-Ohio-357)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The father and mother were the biological parents of three children. Two children were adjudicated neglected and dependent in 2023, and the third was adjudicated dependent in 2024; all were placed in CCDCFS's temporary custody. The record showed that the mother suffered serious mental-health problems, including hallucinations and periodic hospitalizations, while the father minimized those problems and continued to live with and support her. Although the father completed case-plan services and maintained visitation, the evidence showed that the parents required assistance during visits and could not provide a safe, stable, and permanent home; the children were doing well in secure relative placements.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

CCDCFS filed neglect, dependency, and temporary-custody complaints concerning the children in 2023 and 2024. After the children were adjudicated neglected or dependent and placed in the agency's temporary custody, CCDCFS moved to modify temporary custody to permanent custody. Following a June 2025 hearing, the juvenile court granted permanent custody to CCDCFS and terminated parental rights. Father timely appealed; the appellate court affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

No substantive remand was ordered. The court directed that a special mandate issue to the common pleas court, juvenile division, to execute the judgment.

CASES CITED

- In re C.F., 2007-Ohio-1104
- Troxel v. Granville, 530 U.S. 57, 66 (2000)
- In re B.C., 2014-Ohio-4558
- In re Cunningham, 59 Ohio St. 2d 100, 106 (1979)
- In re A.B., 2006-Ohio-4359
- In re Z.C., 2023-Ohio-4703
- Cross v. Ledford, 161 Ohio St. 469 (1954)
- Eastley v. Volkman, 2012-Ohio-2179
- In re Schaefer, 2006-Ohio-5513
- In re E.W., 2025-Ohio-5052 (8th Dist.)
- In re A.M., 2020-Ohio-5102
- In re A.T., 2021-Ohio-4306 (8th Dist.)
- In re C.C., 2010-Ohio-780 (8th Dist.)
- In re J.L., 2004-Ohio-6024 (8th Dist.)