

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

In re G.P.

2026-Ohio-1874 · No. 115914 · Decided May 21, 2026

SUMMARY

The Ohio Eighth District Court of Appeals affirmed the juvenile court’s order terminating the father’s parental rights and granting permanent custody of two minor children to the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services. The court held that clear and convincing evidence supported the findings that the children could not or should not be placed with either parent within a reasonable time and that permanent custody was in their best interests. The court overruled the father’s manifest-weight-of-the-evidence challenge.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Appeals of Ohio, Eighth Appellate District, Cuyahoga County
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Eileen A. Gallagher, J.; Lisa B. Forbes, P.J.; Emanuella D. Groves, J.
JURISDICTION	Ohio Court of Appeals, Eighth Appellate District, Cuyahoga County
DECIDED	May 21, 2026
DOCKET	115914
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Father appealed the juvenile court's order terminating his parental rights and awarding permanent custody of G.P. and J.P. to the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	A juvenile court's permanent-custody decision is reviewed under the manifest-weight-of-the-evidence and/or sufficiency-of-the-evidence standards. Under manifest-weight review, the appellate court weighs the evidence and reasonable inferences, considers witness credibility, and determines whether the factfinder clearly lost its way and created a manifest miscarriage of justice; the reviewing court gives deference to the factfinder.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Ohio Court of Appeals opinion
PARTIES	M.P., Father v. Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services

TOPICS

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PRACTICE AREAS

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QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the juvenile court's findings under R.C. 2151.414(B)(1)(a) and R.C. 2151.414(E) established by clear and convincing evidence that the children could not be placed with Father within a reasonable time or should not be placed with him.
2. Whether permanent custody with CCDCFS was in the children's best interests under R.C. 2151.414(D)(1).
3. Whether the juvenile court's termination of Father's parental rights and award of permanent custody to CCDCFS was against the manifest weight of the evidence.

HOLDINGS

1. The juvenile court properly found under R.C. 2151.414(B)(1)(a) that the children could not be placed with Father within a reasonable time or should not be placed with him because the applicable R.C. 2151.414(E) factors were supported by clear and convincing evidence.
2. The juvenile court properly determined that permanent custody to CCDCFS was in the children's best interests under R.C. 2151.414(D)(1).
3. The judgment terminating Father's parental rights and awarding permanent custody to CCDCFS was not against the manifest weight of the evidence.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The best interest inquiry is focused on the children’s best interest, not the parents.”

“The court’s decision to terminate Father’s parental rights and award permanent custody to the agency is not against the manifest of the evidence.”

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The children had substantial educational, developmental, behavioral, and medical needs, including cerebral palsy, autism, ADHD, developmental delay, and the need for occupational, physical, and speech therapies. Father had a history of substance use, continued to test positive for cocaine and marijuana despite treatment, lacked stable housing and verified income, and had not completed parenting education or demonstrated that he could meet the children's special needs. Although he consistently visited the children and made some efforts toward treatment, the children continued to thrive in foster care, and the CASA, GAL, and agency specialist recommended permanent custody to the agency.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

CCDCFS filed neglect and dependency proceedings and obtained temporary custody of the children. After a permanent-custody hearing, the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas, Juvenile Division, committed the children to CCDCFS for purposes of adoption and terminated the parental rights of both parents. Father appealed, arguing that the decision was against the manifest weight of the evidence. The Eighth District affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

REMAND INSTRUCTIONS

A special mandate shall issue directing the common pleas court, juvenile division, to carry the judgment into execution.

CASES CITED

- In re H.G., 2024-Ohio-3408, ¶ 13 (8th Dist.)
- In re Z.C., 2023-Ohio-4703, ¶¶ 7, 11, 14
- Eastley v. Volkman, 2012-Ohio-2179, ¶¶ 20-21, 972 N.E.2d 517
- Seasons Coal Co., Inc. v. Cleveland, 10 Ohio St.3d 77, 80 Ohio B. 408, 461 N.E.2d 1273 (1984)
- In re A.M., 2024-Ohio-1168, ¶ 15 (8th Dist.)
- In re Awkal, 95 Ohio App.3d 309, 315 (8th Dist. 1994)
- Lansdowne v. Beacon Journal Pub. Co., 32 Ohio St.3d 176 (1987)
- In re S.C., 2015-Ohio-2410, ¶ 30 (8th Dist.)
- In re Moore, 2000 Ohio App. LEXIS 3958 (8th Dist. Aug. 31, 2000)
- In re Shaeffer Children, 85 Ohio App.3d 683 (3d Dist. 1993)