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Minn. R. Civ. App. P. 136.01, subd. 1(c).*

**STATE OF MINNESOTA
IN COURT OF APPEALS
A25-1395
A25-1435**

In the Matter of the Welfare of the Child(ren) of:
B. L. C. and R. A. T., Parents.

**Filed March 16, 2026
Affirmed
Larkin, Judge**

Hennepin County District Court
File No. 27-JV-24-3056

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Considered and decided by Cochran, Presiding Judge; Larkin, Judge; and Segal,
Judge.*

* Retired judge of the Minnesota Court of Appeals, serving by appointment pursuant to
Minn. Const. art. VI, § 10.

NONPRECEDENTIAL OPINION

LARKIN, Judge

In these consolidated appeals, appellant-parents challenge the termination of their parental rights. We affirm.

FACTS

Appellant B.L.C. is the mother of six children born between 2014 and 2025: LC, born in 2014; JW, born in 2017; ST, born in 2021; RT, born in 2022; TC, born in 2023; and PT, born in 2025. Appellant R.A.T. is the presumed father of ST and the adjudicated father of RT, TC, and PT.¹

The children require special care. JW suffers from asthma and behavioral issues. ST shows signs of developmental delay and requires physical, occupational, and speech therapy. RT has a history of medical issues, has received physical, occupational, and feeding therapy, and sees a speech therapist. Finally, TC has received physical, occupational, and feeding therapy and wears a cranial helmet.

In June 2023, the county opened a child-protection investigation after JW was hit by a car while in mother and father's care. The case was closed with no maltreatment findings, but the county referred mother to parenting support programs. One of those programs discontinued services due to mother's nonengagement.

¹ LC's father is unknown. YSW is the adjudicated father of JW, but his parental rights were involuntarily terminated by default in 2018.

Two months later, the county sought to hold RT for 72 hours based on an allegation that the parents had provided inadequate food. RT was weak, thin, and suffering from developmental delays. The parents interfered with RT's medical care by refusing to permit the administration of intravenous fluids. They reported feeding RT table foods, despite the child's young age. Concerns also arose regarding the care of ST, who was nonverbal. The county determined that there was evidence of maltreatment and neglect of RT, and it began working with the family. Father disclosed that he has a cognitive disability, and the county suspected that mother might have a similar disability.

Over the following months, the county's concerns regarding the care of the other children grew, as did concerns regarding mother's cognitive abilities. On October 23, 2023, the county filed a child-protection petition regarding LC, JW, ST, and RT (TC and PT were not yet born). The county sought to address the inadequate care of ST and RT and supervision of JW. The county then learned about domestic violence between the parents, and this became another area of concern. Father had been charged with assault and domestic assault after allegedly threatening to stab mother and kill JW. Mother obtained an order for protection against father, and father was later charged with violating that order. The four children remained with mother, under protective supervision. The county offered the parents services to address parenting, mental-health, and domestic-violence issues.

Approximately one month later, the county received a report that father and ST had slept in a car for the past two nights. When the county asked mother why they were not staying in a shelter with her, she reported that father was banned from all Minneapolis

shelters. The county directed mother to have ST stay with her due to the cold. Mother later shared with the county texts between herself and father in which father threatened that mother would not see ST again. The county asked mother if ST was with her, and she replied, “[You] don’t need [to] know if I [got] my baby . . . [you] can’t tell me I can’t have my kids around [father].”

On November 17, 2023, the county placed JW, ST, RT, and TC on a 72-hour hold. RT had been seen at the hospital, and a head scan showed a skull fracture. The parents denied physical abuse, and the doctors did not believe the injury was intentional. But the family had recently been living in a shelter and were asked to leave due to father’s violent behavior. Also, TC was admitted to the hospital for failure to thrive. The county filed an amended child-protection petition adding TC as a subject of the petition. TC gained weight while hospitalized, which indicated that the failure to thrive was likely due to insufficient caloric intake. Indeed, the parents showed confusion regarding how to feed the children. On November 21, the district court ordered that JW, ST, RT, and TC be placed outside the parental home.² A week later, the county received a report of educational neglect regarding LC and JW; both had 26 full days of unexcused absences during the 2023-2024 school year.

On February 5, 2024, the district court adjudicated the children in need of protection or services based on mother’s admissions to ongoing domestic violence, failure to meet the children’s medical needs, and housing instability. The court ordered mother to complete a

² LC was in the care of the maternal grandmother at this time.

mental-health evaluation, parenting assessment or education, and domestic-violence programming, to meet the children's basic needs, to attend medical appointments and follow all medical recommendations, to cooperate with the county, to maintain safe and stable housing, to comply with contact orders concerning father, and to consistently engage in supervised visitation. The court ordered father to, among other things, cooperate with the county, demonstrate knowledge concerning the developmental needs of his children, undergo a psychological evaluation and engage in services to cope with identified mental or emotional issues, engage in domestic-violence programming, address his issues with anger and violence, engage in supervised visitation, and maintain safe and stable housing. At that time, father could not care for the children, and he insisted that the county communicate with him through his attorney.

In March 2024, mother was civilly committed due to mental illness, specifically, unspecified psychosis. Because of the commitment, she made only minimal progress on her case plan. She was provisionally discharged in April and entered a residential crisis-stabilization home.

On July 25, 2024, both parents appeared at a review hearing. Mother had maintained contact with the children and was making progress on her case plan, but the county believed that she had resumed her relationship with father. The district court granted mother's request for in-person visitation, and the court indicated it would consider father's request for in-person visitation when he engaged in his case plan.

On October 16, 2024, the county petitioned to terminate mother's parental rights to LC, JW, ST, RT, and TC, and father's parental rights to ST, RT, and TC.³ Both parents appeared for a permanency hearing. The court suspended father's in-person visits until he could demonstrate stable mental health because he had recently been discharged from two visitation providers due to his behavior. Father reported that he was scheduled to complete a mental-health assessment that afternoon.

In December 2024, father completed a combined psychological and parenting assessment. Father requested visits with his children, and the court indicated it would consider his request when he had completed a mental-health assessment or demonstrated mental-health stability. Father reported that he had found his own therapist.

On February 6, 2025, both parents appeared for a pretrial hearing. The county reported that it continued to receive reports that the parents were having contact with each other and that the parents were residing at the same shelter. Father again requested visits with his children, but the district court deferred ruling on this request pending receipt of his psychological-evaluation report. The court ordered the county to provide information regarding whether father had engaged in mental-health services.

PT was born in February 2025, and the county filed an amended termination petition adding PT as a subject of the petition. The amended petition alleged that after the February 6 hearing, father reported that he was seeing a mental-health provider at a clinic, but the county contacted the clinic and was informed that the alleged provider was not an

³ Again, LC's father is unknown, and the parental rights of JW's father were terminated in 2018.

employee. The district court ordered PT into out-of-home placement. Mother was granted supervised visitation, and father was granted supervised virtual visits.

The district court held a three-day trial on the termination petition in April, May, and July of 2025. Evidence showed that the county made persistent efforts to help both parents to complete their case plans, but the parents only sporadically and partially complied. The guardian ad litem recommended that the parents' rights be terminated.

The district court terminated mother's parental rights to the six children and father's parental rights to ST, RT, and TC, and PT. The court determined that the county proved multiple statutory grounds for termination including, as is relevant here, that mother and father had substantially, continuously, or repeatedly refused or neglected to comply with the duties imposed on them by the parent-child relationship.⁴ The court also determined that the county made reasonable reunification efforts, and that termination was in the children's best interests.

Mother and father separately appealed, and we consolidated the appeals.

DECISION

Minnesota courts will terminate parental rights "only for grave and weighty reasons." *In re Welfare of M.D.O.*, 462 N.W.2d 370, 375 (Minn. 1990). The petitioner "bears the burden of producing clear and convincing evidence that one or more of the statutory termination grounds exists." *In re Welfare of C.K.*, 426 N.W.2d 842, 847 (Minn. 1988). A district court's decision in a termination proceeding must be based on evidence

⁴ The district court relied on a separate statutory ground to terminate the parental rights of LC's unknown father.

concerning the conditions that exist at the time of the termination. *In re Welfare of Child of T.D.*, 731 N.W.2d 548, 554 (Minn. App. 2007), *rev. denied* (Minn. July 17, 2007). Termination of a parent’s rights is intended for those situations in which it appears “that the present conditions of neglect will continue for a prolonged, indeterminate period.” *In re Welfare of Chosa*, 290 N.W.2d 766, 769 (Minn. 1980).

In a termination appeal, we determine whether the district court addressed the appropriate statutory criteria. *In re Welfare of D.L.R.D.*, 656 N.W.2d 247, 249 (Minn. App. 2003). We review the underlying findings of fact for clear error, and we review a determination that a statutory ground for termination exists, as well as the court’s ultimate decision to terminate parental rights, for an abuse of discretion. *In re Welfare of Child of J.H.*, 968 N.W.2d 593, 600 (Minn. App. 2021), *rev. denied* (Minn. Dec. 6, 2021). “A district court abuses its discretion by making findings of fact that are unsupported by the evidence, misapplying the law, or delivering a decision that is against logic and the facts on record.” *Woolsey v. Woolsey*, 975 N.W.2d 502, 506 (Minn. 2022) (quotation omitted).

We will affirm a termination order if at least one statutory ground for termination is supported by clear and convincing evidence and termination is in the best interests of the child, so long as the county made reasonable efforts to reunite the family if reasonable efforts were required. *In re Child. of T.A.A.*, 702 N.W.2d 703, 708 (Minn. 2005); *see* Minn. Stat. § 260.012(a) (2024) (addressing circumstances when a county need not make reasonable efforts); *see also* Minn. Stat. § 260C.301, subd. 8 (2024) (noting reasonable efforts may not be required in some circumstances). Ultimately, the party challenging a termination must show error and prejudice to obtain relief. *See Midway Ctr. Assocs. v.*

Midway Ctr., Inc., 237 N.W.2d 76, 78 (Minn. 1975) (stating that to prevail on appeal, an appellant must show both error and prejudice resulting from the error); *In re Welfare of Child. of J.B.*, 698 N.W.2d 160, 171 (Minn. App. 2005) (applying *Midway* in a termination-of-parental-rights case), *petition for rev. dismissed* (Minn. May 3, 2005).

I.

Mother contends that the district court abused its discretion in determining that the county made reasonable efforts to rehabilitate her and reunify the family. Mother does not challenge the statutory grounds on which the district court relied to terminate her parental rights or its best-interests determination.

As a threshold matter, LC, who filed a brief with this court, argues that mother forfeited her argument by failing to file a posttrial motion. But in the absence of a posttrial motion, we review whether the evidence sustains the findings of fact and whether those findings sustain the conclusions of law. *Prahmcoll Props. v. Sanford*, 474 N.W.2d 639, 642 (Minn. App. 1991). We can also review legal questions properly raised at trial. *Alpha Real Est. Co. of Rochester v. Delta Dental Plan of Minn.*, 664 N.W.2d 303, 310 (Minn. 2003). Because the district court was required to make a reasonable-efforts determination, the issue is properly before us. *See* Minn. Stat. § 260.012(h) (stating that in a termination proceeding, the district court “shall make findings and conclusions as to the provision of reasonable efforts”).

Moving to the merits, when reasonable efforts are required, the district court must consider whether the services offered were:

- (1) selected in collaboration with the child's family and, if appropriate, the child;
- (2) tailored to the individualized needs of the child and child's family;
- (3) relevant to the safety, protection, and well-being of the child;
- (4) adequate to meet the individualized needs of the child and family;
- (5) culturally appropriate;
- (6) available and accessible;
- (7) consistent and timely; and
- (8) realistic under the circumstances.

Id.

The district court must also consider how long the county was involved and the quality of its efforts. *In re Welfare of Child of A.M.C.*, 920 N.W.2d 648, 655 (Minn. App. 2018). But what constitutes “reasonable efforts” depends on the facts of each case. *Id.* at 663. We review a district court’s reasonable-efforts determination for abuse of discretion. *See In re Welfare of Child of D.L.D.*, 865 N.W.2d 315, 323 (Minn. App. 2015) (“The reasonable-efforts finding was not an abuse of discretion.”), *rev. denied* (Minn. July 20, 2015).

The record supports the district court’s determination that the county made reasonable efforts. The county developed case plans with mother to address the issues that led to the children’s out-of-home placements, met with her on numerous occasions to discuss those plans, and regularly communicated with her. The county provided mother services to address her mental health, parenting skills, and domestic violence and maintained contact with all of her providers. The county also assisted mother with housing, a phone, and transportation. In addition, the record reflects that mother received assistance

from a mental-health case worker and her probation officer during the pendency of the case.

Mother argues that the county failed to provide her with sufficient supportive services to address her mental health and cognitive limitations. Specifically, she asserts that the county failed to obtain a “CADI worker” for her, referring to Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) services. But as found by the district court, the county and the court were aware of the need to accommodate mother’s specific cognitive needs early in the proceedings. The county met with mother and attempted to connect her with the CADI service. Despite the county’s substantial efforts, numerous complications prevented timely provision of this service, which were not attributable to the county. Indeed, the district court made extensive findings explaining that the county repeatedly attempted to get the requested CADI service in place. However, the record shows that the CADI service is provided by the state, that it takes many months to put the service into place, and that it was not within the county’s power to unilaterally provide that service.

As to the CADI service, and a similar personal-care-assistant (PCA) service, the district court reasoned as follows:

The Court does not believe additional services would be likely to bring about lasting parental adjustment enabling a return of the children to the parents within an ascertainable time. The Court has considered whether PCA services or CADI waiver services would change the outcome in this matter. [Mother] declined PCA services. [She] was [father’s] PCA, and the record is unclear what assistance [mother] could have even provided to [father] in that role. . . . Even assuming PCA services or CADI waiver services would help the parents attend service appointments, the parents repeatedly expressed disbelief that they and their children needed services. This

belief appeared very engrained and unlikely to change, even after completing programming. The parents both completed parenting education but still did not believe at trial that their children required services. [Mother] completed eight sessions of domestic violence programming but remained in a relationship with [father] in violation of court orders. Even if the parents received additional supportive services, they would be unlikely to bring about lasting parental adjustment enabling a return of the children to the parents within an ascertainable time.

The record supports the district court's reasoning, reflecting mother's unwillingness to utilize the services of a PCA. For example, mother testified, "I don't need [a] PCA." And when testifying that a social worker told her that she needed the CADI service, mother stated, "the [social worker] don't even know me." The record also reflects mother's inability to internalize the information she received in her programming. Mother's testimony showed her unwillingness to recognize parental shortcomings regarding the feeding and care of her children despite receiving related programming. Thus, as found by the district court, although the CADI service may have helped mother attend programming, that programming "would be unlikely to bring about lasting parental adjustment enabling a return of the children to the parents within an ascertainable time." In sum, we are not persuaded that the district court abused its discretion in determining that the county's efforts were reasonable even though it was unable to provide the CADI service.

Mother argues that the "reasonableness of the [county's] efforts cannot be focused on their efforts to obtain a service that never came to be." Essentially, she challenges the district court's consideration of the county's failed efforts to obtain CADI services. Mother cites *In re Children of T.R.*, 750 N.W.2d 656 (Minn. 2008) as support. In *T.R.*, the supreme

court held that “[t]esting for substance use alone does not constitute the provision of services ‘realistic under the circumstances’ to rehabilitate a parent who suffers from chemical dependency.” 750 N.W.2d at 658. But, as mother concedes, *T.R.* is factually distinguishable. Here, the county repeatedly met with mother to work through the elements of her case plan and connected her with services to address her mental-health, domestic-violence, and parenting issues.

Mother also argues that the county’s efforts did not satisfy the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and that the ADA is applicable under *In re Welfare of K.D.W.*, No. C5-93-2262, 1994 WL 149450, at *1 (Minn. App. Apr. 19, 1994), *rev. denied* (Minn. June 29, 1994). But *K.D.W.* is nonprecedential and therefore may offer only persuasive value. *See* Minn. R. Civ. App. P. 136.01, subd. 1(c) (“Nonprecedential opinions and order opinions are not binding authority except as law of the case, res judicata or collateral estoppel, but nonprecedential opinions may be cited as persuasive authority.”). Moreover, in *K.D.W.*, this court merely noted that “[t]he ADA requires the public entity to make reasonable accommodation to allow the disabled person to receive the services or to participate in the public entity’s programs.” 1994 WL 149450, at *2. Presuming that the ADA is applicable, the district court’s findings that the county was aware of and reasonably attempted to address mother’s cognitive issues imply that the county made a reasonable accommodation.

Lastly, mother argues that the county failed to assist her with other case-plan requirements, such as housing issues, inability to meet her children’s needs, and domestic-

violence issues. But the record shows that the county offered services to address these issues.

In sum, the district court did not abuse its discretion in determining that the county made reasonable efforts to reunify mother with her children.

II.

Father assigns error to the district court's determinations that the county made reasonable efforts to reunite him with his children, that the county proved at least one statutory ground for termination, and that termination was in his children's best interests.

Reasonable Efforts

Father contends that the district court abused its discretion in determining that the county made reasonable efforts to rehabilitate him and to reunite the family. Specifically, he argues that there is no evidence that the county collaborated with him when selecting his case-plan elements and that the elements were inadequate to meet his needs. We disagree. Although father complains that he was not allowed to participate in the selection of his case-plan elements, father's court-authorized case plan in the termination case was the same as his case-plan component in his children's out-of-home placement plans. He signed those plans and they were filed with the court on January 25, 2024.

Father also argues that the county's efforts were insufficient because they failed to account for his cognitive needs. But the district court essentially reasoned that father's cognitive impairments did not render him unable to comply with his case plan. Instead, the district court reasoned—and the record shows—that father's failure to complete his case plan was due to his combative nature and his unwillingness to cooperate with services.

The district court explained that “additional supports are voluntary services, and the record repeatedly shows that [father] declined voluntary services” and that “[t]here is nothing to suggest that he would have engaged with additional services if offered.” The court found that father’s compliance with his case plan was “largely thwarted” by his “combative” and “threatening” behaviors and his unwillingness to consistently engage in services. The record supports that reasoning.

Father argues that “domestic violence between the parents was not the condition that led to removal, and it doesn’t appear to be related to a current safety concern impacting the parent-child relationship.” We disagree. Domestic violence was a concern early in this case. The district court found that the domestic-violence concern continued at the time of trial and that it was directly related to the safety and well-being of the children.

Father also argues that the county failed to facilitate sufficient contact with his children, thereby preventing him from demonstrating improved parenting skills. The district court found, and the record shows, that consistent, supervised parent-child visitation was part of father’s case plan. Between November 2023 and October 2024, the county made efforts to facilitate supervised visits for father. But his visitation was sporadic because he did not respond to the service providers’ attempts to contact him. And when he did respond, he was often hostile, behaved inappropriately, and refused to comply with rules for visitation. As a result, father was discharged from two supervised-visitation programs. Yet the county made new referrals after each discharge.

Father’s visitation was suspended by the district court at a hearing on October 21, 2024. This decision was based on concerns regarding father’s unstable mental health and

the best interests of the children. At subsequent hearings, the court denied father's request for visitation due to ongoing concerns regarding his mental health. The court explained that it needed to see the results of a mental-health assessment and father's engagement in mental-health services prior to resuming visitation.

In sum, father's visitation with the children was controlled by the district court. And the court's decisions were based on father's own behaviors. Thus, father's argument that the county failed to facilitate sufficient contact between father and his children is not persuasive, and the district court did not abuse its discretion in determining that the county made reasonable efforts to reunify father with his children.

Statutory Ground for Termination

Father contends that the county failed to prove a statutory ground for termination of his parental rights. Again, we may affirm a termination of parental rights if, among other things, at least one statutory ground for termination is supported. *T.A.A.*, 702 N.W.2d at 708. Here, the district court found and the record supports termination based on Minn. Stat. § 260C.301, subd. 1(b)(2) (2024), which permits termination if

the parent has substantially, continuously, or repeatedly refused or neglected to comply with the duties imposed upon that parent by the parent and child relationship, including but not limited to providing the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, education, and other care and control necessary for the child's physical, mental, or emotional health and development, if the parent is physically and financially able, and either reasonable efforts by the social services agency have failed to correct the conditions that formed the basis of the petition or reasonable efforts would be futile and therefore unreasonable[.]

A court can infer that a parent will not be able to parent his child in the foreseeable future if the county has made reasonable efforts and the parent has failed to comply with his case plan. *See In re Child of Simon*, 662 N.W.2d 155, 163 (Minn. App. 2003) (holding that the parent’s failure to satisfy key elements of the case plan provides “ample evidence of his lack of compliance with the duties and responsibilities of the parent-child relationship”).

The district court made the following findings to support the termination of fathers’ parental rights. During the nearly 18 months that the case had been open, father failed to demonstrate an ability to provide the children with food, clothing, shelter, and other care and control necessary for their wellbeing. The county made reasonable case-planning efforts for father “to address the safety concerns present when the case opened: parental neglect, unmanaged mental health/cognitive concerns, and domestic violence.” The county “also offered multiple family group meetings to facilitate case plan understanding/compliance due to the potential cognitive limitations.” Despite these efforts, father “failed to correct the conditions that formed the basis of the petition,” and father to substantially engage in or complete his case plan, despite the county’s “multiple referrals for parenting education, domestic violence programming, supervised visitation, parenting assessments, and psychological evaluations.” Finally, the district court found that the parents’ continued contact with one another hindered their ability to fully comply with their case plans. The court relied on testimony that the parents’ “chaotic lifestyle, erratic behavior, continued violations of court orders, and limited insight into their

neglectful parenting continued throughout the pendency of this case.” The record supports the district court’s findings.

Father’s only argument challenging the district court’s termination under subdivision 1(b)(2) is that the county failed to make reasonable efforts to correct the conditions that necessitated his children’s out-of-home placement. He emphasizes his cognitive issues and asserts that the county did not sufficiently address them. He also argues that he was denied visitation, which prohibited him from demonstrating his parenting skills. But, for the reasons set forth in section II of this opinion, the county’s reunification efforts were reasonable.

In sum, the record supports termination under Minn. Stat. § 260C.301, subd. 1(b)(2). Because at least one statutory ground for termination is supported, we do not review the other grounds on which the district court relied.

Best Interests

Finally, father contends that the district court abused its discretion in determining that termination of his parental rights was in the best interests of his children.

If a statutory ground for termination of parental rights is proved, “the best interests of the child must be the paramount consideration.” Minn. Stat. § 260C.301, subd. 7 (2024). Thus, a district court’s order terminating parental rights must include a finding that termination is in the child’s best interests. *D.L.D.*, 771 N.W.2d at 545, 547. “The ‘best interests of the child’ means all relevant factors to be considered and evaluated.” Minn. Stat. § 260C.511(a) (2024).

In assessing a child's best interests, the district court must balance "(1) the child's interest in preserving the parent-child relationship; (2) the parent's interest in preserving the parent-child relationship; and (3) any competing interest of the child." *In re Welfare of Child of W.L.P.*, 678 N.W.2d 703, 711 (Minn. App. 2004) (quotation omitted); see Minn. R. Juv. Prot. P. 58.04(c)(2)(ii) (requiring the district court to analyze these factors in a termination proceeding). Although the interests of the parent and child must be balanced, they are not "weighed equally." *In re Welfare of Udstuen*, 349 N.W.2d 300, 304 (Minn. App. 1984). Instead, if the district court rules that a basis to terminate parental rights exists, the best interests of the child are the paramount concern. Minn. Stat. § 260C.301, subd. 7; *In re Welfare of Child of P.T.*, 657 N.W.2d 577, 583 (Minn. App. 2003), *rev. denied* (Minn. Apr. 15, 2003). We review the district court's determination that termination is in the child's best interests for an abuse of discretion. *J.H.*, 968 N.W.2d at 600.

Here, the district court weighed the relevant factors. The court determined father's children were too young to express a preference, that father wished to preserve his parental rights and loved his children, and that his children "have an interest in stability, having their basic and medical needs met, and living in an environment free of domestic violence." The court found that father would not be able to care for his children for the reasonably foreseeable future, that placing the children with father would place them at significant risk for instability, harm, and further neglect, and that it was "in the children's best interests to have a caretaker [who] is devoted to ensuring that they have stability/consistency and [who] is connected with their siblings in a safe home free from domestic violence." The court ultimately concluded that father's "interest in retaining the parent-child relationship is

strongly outweighed by the children's need for stability, consistency, and safe and mentally stable caregivers who can meet their daily needs." We discern no abuse of discretion in the district court's best-interests determination.

Father argues that the county withheld visitation and that, therefore, there was no evidence on which to base a determination regarding his children's interest in maintaining the parent-child relationship. But the district court did not rely on a lack of contact between father and his children when assessing the children's interest in preserving the parent-child relationship. Indeed, the district court found that father's children were too young to express a preference. Father does not challenge that finding, and additional contact between father and his children would not have somehow changed their inability to state a preference. Moreover, presuming that there was an interest in maintaining the parent-child relationship, as found by the district court, that interest was outweighed by the children's interest in a placement that would provide them with safety, consistency, and stability.

In sum, the district court's best-interests determination was not an abuse of discretion.

Affirmed.