

Abuse details released

Evans allegedly beat toddler for months before her death

EDITOR'S NOTE: Graphic content in the following story may be unsuitable for some readers.

By **KIMBERLY HOUGHTON**
Democrat Staff Writer

ROCHESTER — Chad E. Evans allegedly assaulted 21-month-old Cassidy Bortner several times over a three-month period — beating the child and throwing her into walls — before she died Nov. 9, according to indictments released Tuesday.

The court documents state that the Rochester man, indicted on a charge of second-degree murder, also continuously grabbed and squeezed Cassidy's face, and fractured her leg and arm during separate incidents this fall and summer.

But it was multiple blows to the girl's head and abdomen that resulted in her death, the indictments state.

Evans is also accused of preventing Cassidy from seeking proper medical treatment for the injuries he allegedly inflicted, said the indictments, which were handed up Thursday by a

Stafford County grand jury and released this week.

"Evans bruised Cassidy's body and fractured her bones by repeatedly grabbing Cassidy by the face, throat, arms and legs by propelling Cassidy into the walls of the home, causing Cassidy to strike the walls," the court documents state.



CHAD EVANS
Accused of
toddler's murder

Evans, 29, of 191 Milton Road, Rochester, has also been indicted on two felony counts of first-degree assault and six felony counts of second-degree

assault.

In addition, he has been charged with one count of endangering the welfare of a child and one count of simple assault against his girlfriend, Amanda

☆ **Evans**

Please turn to Page 2

.H.,
kid-
it in
to ten-

hat
ent
ent.

ine
of
lent
girl-
his
d...
ourt
ges
ed-
nty
9:30

on
inal
ult.
of
ury
ove
ber,
the
her

2
3
7
3
3

Evans

Continued from Page 1

Bortner — Cassidy's mother. Evans lived with Bortner and her daughter at the time of the girl's death.

Kassidy was repeatedly assaulted from about Aug. 1 until her death, the indictments said.

The young girl died shortly after being transported by ambulance to York Hospital in York, Maine. That morning, Cassidy was taken by her mother to her aunt's home in Kittery, Maine.

About four hours later, Jeffrey Marshall, the boyfriend of Cassidy's aunt, Jennifer Conley, called Kittery police to request help for the child after she was found to be unresponsive.

She was pronounced dead shortly after 1 p.m.

"Evans recklessly caused the death of Cassidy Bortner ... under circumstances manifesting an extreme indifference to the value of human life," state the indictments, adding that he was "purposely violating a duty of care."

Although Evans is free after his \$100,000 bail was posted anonymously at Rochester District Court last month, he is scheduled to be arraigned in Strafford County Superior Court at 3 p.m. on Jan. 2. Additional bail could be requested at that time or following the court

hearing, according to a court clerk.

"Evans caused a fracture to Cassidy's arm by grabbing and pulling on her arms. Evans caused a fracture to Cassidy's leg by grabbing and pulling on her legs. Evans caused bruising to Cassidy by grabbing and squeezing her face," state the assault indictments.

The second-degree murder indictment claims that Evans "inflicted multiple blows to Cassidy's head and abdomen, thereby causing her death."

Evans was originally charged in Rochester District Court with manslaughter on Nov. 16 following the first week of a joint investigation by Maine and New Hampshire state police, Kittery and Rochester police, and the New Hampshire attorney general's office. Evans spent several days behind bars at the Strafford County House of Corrections before his bail was posted.

On Thursday, Evans' manslaughter charge was upgraded to second-degree murder by a grand jury indictment. An indictment is not an indication of guilt; rather it means a grand jury found there was sufficient evidence to warrant a trial.

Evans faces up to life in prison if convicted on the second-degree murder charge.

Officials at the Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Children, Youth and Families have said the agency is involved in the investigation of Cassidy's death. However, the agency has not confirmed or denied if it was contacted prior to the girl's death.

In addition, one state official has said there are several roadblocks that make it difficult for the Division of Children, Youth and Families to prevent children from being abused.

One roadblock includes an overwhelming number of child abuses cases assigned to a limited number of social workers, according to Joan Whitfield, child protective administrator for the agency.

On Tuesday, the state agency issued a press release regarding a previous finding by the Eric L. Oversight Panel that claimed certain areas within the Division of Children Youth and Families were deficient, specifically citing a serious staff shortage.

"DCYF is making efforts to improve its assessment and family services programs and to address the concerns raised by the oversight panel," states the release. "... Safety of children is the utmost concern of the department ..."

Love

Continued from Page 1

A Kittery resident for 20 years, the
ference." Nancy added