

STATE/NATION

Prosecution rests its case in Bortner child abuse trial

By **STEPHEN FROTHINGHAM**
Associated Press

DOVER — Even a 4-year-old wondered what was going on in the apartment where 21-month-old Kassidy Bortner spent the last six months of her life.

“What’s Daddy doing to Kassidy?” Kyle Evans would ask, according to testimony Friday by the final witness called by the prosecution in the trial of Amanda Bortner, Kassidy’s mother.

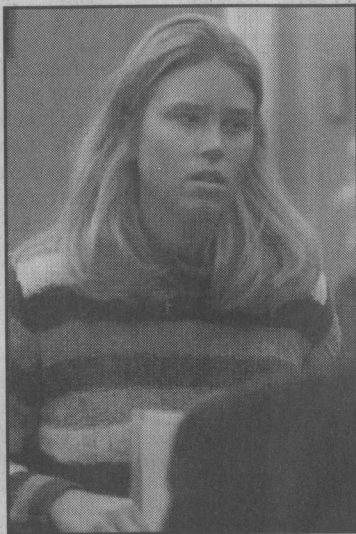
Bortner, who was 19 when Kassidy died in 2000, faces up to two years in jail if a jury convicts her on misdemeanor child endangerment charges.

Her boyfriend, Kyle’s father Chad Evans, is serving 28 years to life in prison after being convicted of second-degree murder last December.

Prosecutor David Ruoff of the state attorney general’s office rested his case Friday. His final witness was James White, a New Hampshire State Police detective who interviewed Bortner several times after Kassidy’s death. He said Bortner told him about Kyle’s question in an interview at the state Attorney General’s office in Concord.

Bortner may take the stand in her defense Monday morning; closing arguments are expected Monday afternoon.

Kassidy died Nov. 9, 2000, after Bortner drove her from Evans’ apartment in Rochester



ASSOCIATED PRESS

BORTNER TRIAL — Amanda Bortner leaves the courtroom at Stratford County Superior Court in Dover, Friday.

to her sister’s apartment in Kittery, Maine. Her sister’s boyfriend, Jefferey Marshall, who baby-sat Kassidy while the women went to work, called 911 several hours later when he saw Kassidy was having trouble breathing. She died that afternoon at York Hospital.

In five days of testimony, police investigators recounted interviews with Bortner in the days and weeks after Kassidy’s death. They said Bortner initially claimed to have no idea how or why Kassidy died. She

told investigators the bruising on Kassidy’s face the day she died came from an accident with a plastic baseball and claimed to be unaware of bruising on Kassidy’s body.

Evans and Marshall would often yell at Kassidy, but “I wouldn’t let anyone touch her,” she told Angela Blodgett, a Maine State Police Detective. Blodgett testified Friday.

In interviews a few weeks later, however, Bortner told Blodgett and White that the bruises resulted from Evans’ temper and his attempts to discipline Kassidy.

“She described to me how he would pick up Kassidy by the arm and/or by the face and throw her into the corner hard enough that she would hit her head sometimes,” Blodgett said.

Bortner and Evans came up with a story to explain Kassidy’s bruises so that Bortner could take Kassidy with her when she took a friend to a doctor’s appointment, White testified. Evans didn’t want Bortner to take Kassidy because someone might notice her bruises. But Bortner insisted on taking her daughter and told Evans “you better come up with something,” White testified.

“So he said he was bouncing on the trampoline and had to reach out and grab Kassidy by the face to keep her from falling off,” White testified.