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Bortner silent as child endangerment trial ends

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DOVER, N.H. (AP) — A woman accused of failing to protect her 21-month-old daughter from a fatal beating declined to testify in her own defense Monday during her trial on child endangerment charges.

Amanda Bortner faces up to two years in prison if convicted of two misdemeanor charges of child endangerment.

Prosecutors allege that she stood by while her daughter, Kassidy, suffered months of abuse at the hands of her boyfriend, Chad Evans, then failed to take Kassidy to a doctor after Evans beat her badly on Nov. 9, 2000.

Instead, Bortner drove Kassidy from their home in Rochester to her sister's apartment in Kittery, Maine, and asked her sister's boyfriend to babysit while she went to work. Kassidy died in a hospital later that day, after the boyfriend, Jeffrey Marshall, noticed she was having trouble breathing and called 911.

Evans is serving 28 years to life after being convicted last year of second-degree murder.

Bortner's lawyer rested her case Monday morning after calling just one witness: Travis Brown, who lived with Evans, Bortner and the toddler at the time of Kassidy's death.

According to prosecutors, Brown told police that Bortner asked Marshall to babysit that day because daycare workers would have noticed the multiple bruises left by the beating.

But on the stand Monday, Brown denied ever saying that. Instead, he implicated Marshall.

Brown said a few months before Kassidy's death, he asked Marshall about bruises on the girl's bottom. He said Marshall answered, "She was being a little bitch and I beat her ass."

During the weeklong trial, 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 she claimed to be unaware of the other bruises on Kassidy's body.