

Woman who abused son receives 90-day sentence

BY JON FRANK THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT • Reach Jon Frank at (757) 222-5122 or jon.frank@pilotonline.com.

VIRGINIA BEACH — A mother who pleaded guilty to child abuse after police accused her of trying to suffocate her 4-year-old son in a car at Mount Trashmore in January was sentenced to 90 days in jail Tuesday.

Robin P. Brown, 27, pleaded guilty in June. She was originally charged with attempted murder, but that charge was reduced when she agreed to plead guilty.

On Tuesday, Circuit Judge A. Joseph Canada Jr. suspended a five-year prison sentence as part of his ruling. Canada also ordered Brown to continue receiving mental health counseling and prohibited Brown from having unsupervised visits with her child.

The incident happened Jan. 3 in the back seat of a car. The child, now 5, is in his father's custody. Brown testified Tuesday that she was overwhelmed with college studies, her job and a failing relationship with her child's father when the incident occurred. She has a history of mental health problems, including two suicide attempts, she said.

On Tuesday, the child's father, Joe D. Williams, 31, testified that he now trusts Brown and believes she will not harm their son again. Brown's attorney, **Benjamin H. Hamlet**, said his client will receive credit for already serving 19 days in jail. That leaves her with 71 days to serve, he said.

Canada said Brown will have to show that she no longer poses a threat to the boy before she can be fully reunited with her son. "This child was almost smothered to death by the mother," Canada said. "Will that happen again? That is the question."