

for the record

CITY WOMAN GETS 17 MONTHS FOR SELLING COCAINE

A Lynchburg woman authorities say was dealing crack out of her home while sitting on the couch with her three-day-old baby was sentenced to 17 months in prison Friday.

Julian Jodian James, 22, pleaded guilty to two counts of cocaine distribution and one count of felony child neglect in early December.

Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Chuck Felmlee said he had hoped for a stiffer penalty.

"This kind of conduct, selling cocaine with an infant child lying in the middle of all of the drug paraphernalia, was unconscionable," Felmlee said.

He said James, who went by the nickname "Jamaica," told her probation officer that she dropped out of college last year after she found out she was pregnant.

In July, he said, when the woman was eight months pregnant, a police informant bought \$60 worth of crack. Again in August, three days after the woman's child was born, the informant visited her house to buy \$100 worth of crack.

"According to the informant, in addition to having (a) very large bag of crack cocaine sitting on the floor next to her newborn infant child, the defendant had a set of digital weighing scales also sitting on the sofa besides the infant child," Felmlee wrote in his summary of evidence to the court.

"It was almost as if the defendant had been sitting there weighing out and dividing up her crack cocaine waiting for all of her customers to come and make the drug buys, all the while, the infant child was lying there in the middle of the drugs and drug paraphernalia."