

I Support SB 2352! Allowing young children to be with their mothers at the Heart River Correctional Center, during the mother's incarceration, is not only important for the children, but also the mothers. In the first 18 months of a child's life, bonding with their mother is irreplaceable and will affect them for the rest of their life. Being able to be fed and nurtured by their own mother can never be replaced by another adult. Children know when their mother is part of their life from the first day. It may seem that a child is too young to know, but that is not the case, and the health of the child physically and emotionally will show up as they get older, if there is not a strong bond developed from Day 1. Abandonment issues are far too prevalent in our children when they have been taken from their mother during the beginning of their life.

It would be a safe environment, supervised by staff. Not only will the mother learn how to care for their child, but living together during those early months will prepare both for a life together when their mother is released. It would establish a nurturing relationship that can continue as the child grows.

As a mother of four, I can't imagine how I could recover the relationship with my children if I had been unable to live with them during their first 18 months. Being able to nurse(feed) my children at birth and during those first 18 months was important for my health and well as my child. The healing, both emotionally and physically, by having those important months caring for my child, created a relationship that continues throughout our lives. Being present during those early milestones is priceless.

In order to give the best chance to a mother and her child to have a healthy, stable life, it is necessary to be together during those first 18 months of a child's life. That is why I support SB 2352 and I ask you to support it too!!