The issue of child abuse is continually being reported in the news. Hardly a day goes by when a new situation doesn't arise. Allan Dershowitz wrote about a startling example of child abuse in his article "Birth Control as Penalty for Child Abuse" in the June 4, 1988 issue of the Los Angeles Times. According to Dershowitz, Debra Ann Forster left her two kids alone in an apartment for two days, and they almost died. Therefore, she was sentenced to jail or lifetime birth control. Dershowitz believes the sentence is too long and a violation of Forster's rights. Dershowitz is clearly mistaken. The sentence of Forster is correct because it will protect other kids, keep other parents from being abusive, force Forster to change her life, and it focuses more on the victim's rights.

Clearly, this sentence will protect any other kid from being abused by Forster. If she's forced to be in jail or take birth control for life, no other kid will be harmed. Dershowitz says Forster was emotionally unable to take care of her own kids. Now, with this sentence she won't have the chance to harm any other kids either.
This sentence will also send a clear message to other parents not to abuse their kids. While the sentence is severe, other potential abusers might think twice before they harm their children. If other parents know they could be thrown in jail or be forced to take birth control for life, maybe they'll learn to be a little more tolerant with their kids.

In addition, this sentence will force Forster to change her life. Dershowitz says that Forster was taking drugs, attempted suicide and "while in jail, Forster gave birth to another baby, a girl." This woman obviously needs to change her lifestyle. Sure, the sentence is a tough one, and Forster is going to hate it for awhile, but this situation will force her to take a look at her life. Maybe the severity of the sentence will encourage her to get some help with her drug and emotional problems.

Finally, this sentence takes a clear stand to protect the victims in this situation and not the criminal. Dershowitz says "the most offensive aspect of Judge Budzyn's sentence is its duration." However, the real offense in this situation is Forster almost let her own children die. These little kids need a voice in this situation, and that's what the sentence is giving them. Unlike Dershowitz, Judge Budzyn is more concerned with the victim, in this case Forster's kids, than the criminal.
Cases like Forster’s are always complicated. However, the sentence she received was appropriate and just. It keeps other kids from being harmed and sends a distinct message to other parents to stop hurting their children. Forster can benefit too because she still has time to change her life. The sentence also recognizes the victims in this case, which is rare in many cases these days. Although Dershowitz believes otherwise, the sentence of Debra Ann Forster for child abuse does "fit the crime."