

 Posted December 31, 2011

Police log offers insight into Ayla custody issues

LEWISTON -- A dispatch log from the Lewiston Police Department sheds new light on who had custody of 20-month-old Ayla Reynolds in the months before her disappearance.

BY [BEN MCCANNA](#)



Share



 Comment

LEWISTON

LEWISTON — A dispatch log from the Lewiston Police Department sheds new light on who had custody of 20-month-old Ayla Reynolds in the months before her disappearance.

According to police, Ayla’s parents agreed that father Justin DiPietro would take custody of the toddler if mother Trista Reynolds entered rehabilitation for substance abuse. The record also indicates an intermediate step in the transfer: For several days in mid-October, Ayla stayed with her maternal grandmother and aunt in Lewiston.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS



LOOKING FOR CLUES: Maine State Police Detective Christopher Tupper, left, talks to Justin DiPietro on Dec. 18 at his home on Violette Avenue in Waterville. His daughter, 20-month-old Ayla Reynolds, has been missing since Dec. 17. *Staff photo by David Leaming*



Search photos available for purchase: [Photo Store](#) →

The matter of Ayla’s custody has recently been the subject of nationwide curiosity. During a Thursday segment on NBC’s “Today” show, host Matt Lauer attempted to clarify the confusion.

Lauer, sitting across from Trista Reynolds, of Portland, in a New York television studio, spelled out two possibilities.

“According to you, you and Justin had an agreement that he would take care of Ayla while you were in rehab back in October,” Lauer said to Reynolds. “Other reports suggest that child protective services gave Justin temporary custody of Ayla.”

According to Lewiston Police, both of Lauer’s statements are correct.

On the evening of Oct. 17, a few days after Trista Reynolds entered drug rehabilitation, DiPietro, of Waterville, arrived at the Lewiston police station.

At 6:06 p.m., a police officer spoke with DiPietro in the lobby, according to Lt. Mark Cornelio.

Police declined to release a report of the service call because it pertains to an open investigation in Waterville, but Cornelio described the dispatch log Friday in a phone interview.

“DiPietro said he was going to ... retrieve his daughter and wanted police to go,” Cornelio said. “He explained that he and the mother had an agreement that if she went into treatment, he would take custody.”

Cornelio said police called Maine Department of Health and Human Services and confirmed that the state agency had authorized DiPietro to take custody of the daughter.

Next, DiPietro and one police officer went to the Lewiston home of Jessica Reynolds, Ayla’s maternal aunt. Becca Hanson, Ayla’s maternal grandmother, was there, too.

“Ayla was in my and my daughter’s care while Trista was in rehab,” Hanson said during a recent phone interview.

Cornelio said Ayla was turned over to DiPietro without incident.

Maine Department of Health and Human Services spokesperson John Martins wouldn’t comment on the case during a Thursday phone call.

“We can’t confirm or deny whether we have any type of involvement with a child or family, based on Maine confidentiality laws,” Martins said.

During Thursday’s TV interview, Trista Reynolds said she hasn’t been able to contact DiPietro since he reported Ayla missing Dec. 17. Lauer asked Reynolds if the police could serve as intermediaries to get the parents talking.

“I’ve asked that question, and they tell me that it’s between me and him,” she said. “It’s on me and him to contact one another.”

Waterville Deputy Chief Charles Rumsey on Friday declined comment on whether Reynolds had made such a request, but he added there is “nothing stopping either one of them from contacting the other.”

At the end of the segment, Reynolds said DiPietro is the only person who can answer her questions about Ayla’s disappearance.

She said she believes he was “the last person to see her alive.”

Ben McCanna — 861-9239

READ OR POST COMMENTS

Share



Were you interviewed for this story? If so, please fill out our [accuracy form](#)

[Send questions/comments to the editors.](#)

RECENT	READ	SHARED
--------	------	--------

Kristen Cooper and Jeffrey Burr

Carmen Pelletier and Juan Loubier

**Our View: Maine must heed warnings from
lobster industry**

**Ford’s Raptor for 2017: Rough, ready, and
cushy**

**Classic Cape in Hallowell features lots of
updates**

**Skowhegan police chief relieved of duties
three weeks early**

**Warden service identifies Mount Vernon
man found dead after snowshoeing on
Rome mountain**

**Longtime central Maine radio personality
Don Brown dies**