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Toddler's father says he took a polygraph exam

WATERVILLE -- The father of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds took a polygraph exam shortly after she disappeared, but neither he nor the police will say how he did.

BY [BEN MCCANNA](#)

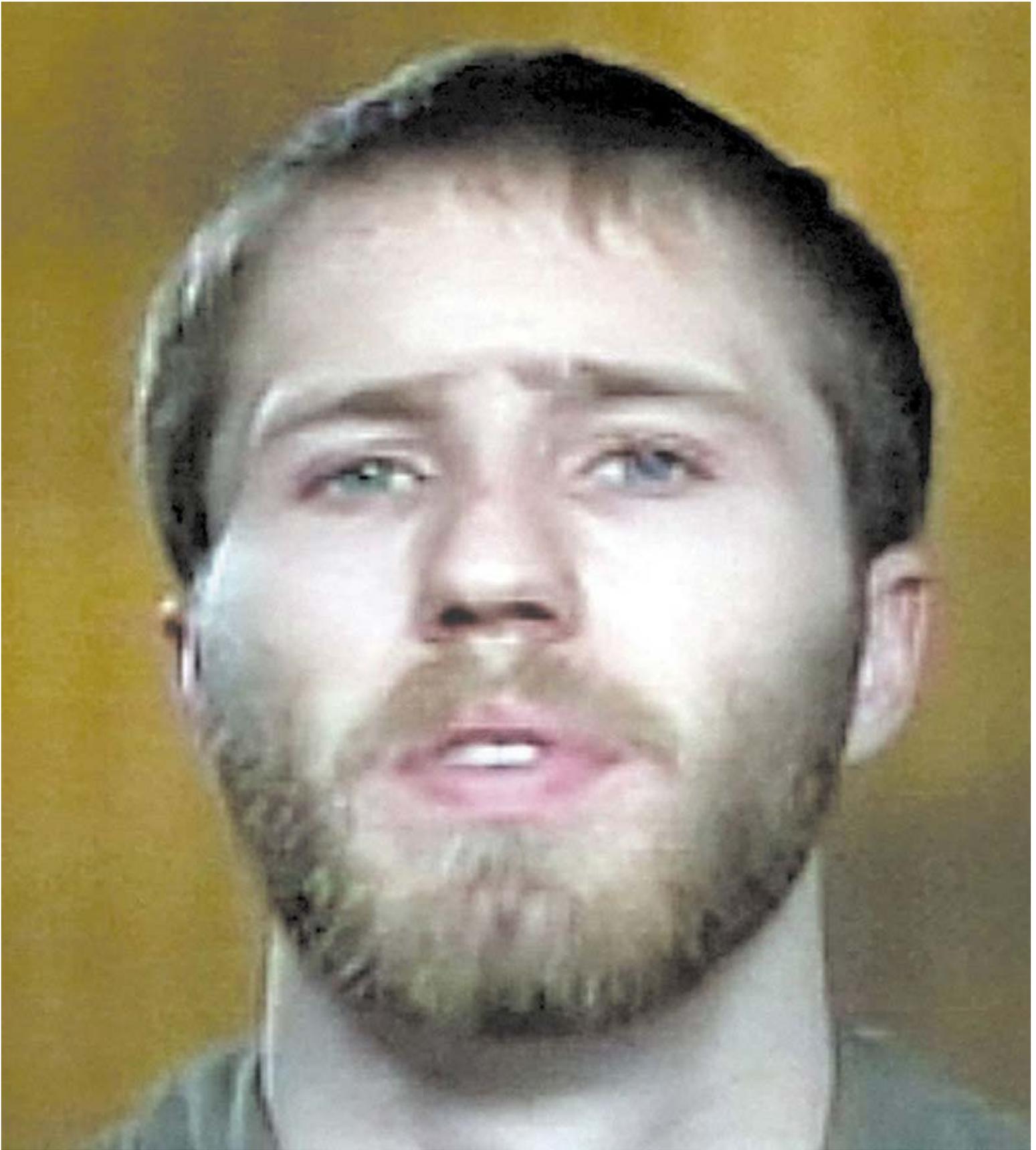


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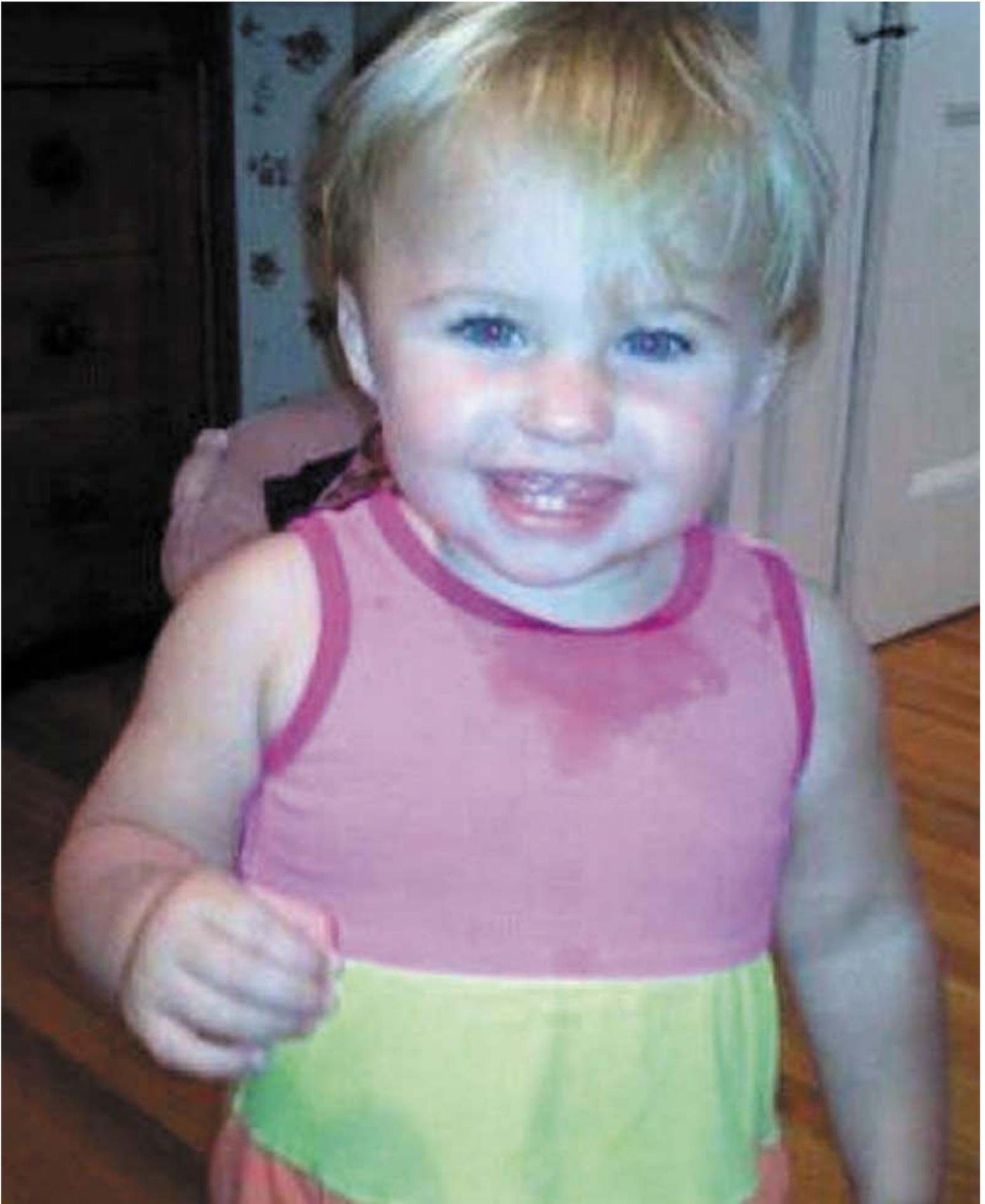
WATERVILLE — The father of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds took a polygraph exam shortly after she disappeared, but neither he nor the police will say how he did.

It was four weeks ago today that Justin DiPietro reported his 21-month-old missing.

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Justin DiPietro





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“I asked for a polygraph on day one,” DiPietro said Friday during an interview with the Morning Sentinel. “I’ve taken one, and the results, I was never allowed to see them. It’s something you’re going to have to ask law enforcement about.”

DiPietro, 24, was told how he did on the test, Steve McCausland, spokesman for the Department of Public Safety, said. He said he was baffled by DiPietro’s statement that he didn’t know the results.

“He knows how he did, because we told him,” McCausland said. “To say that he didn’t know, is just not true.”

McCausland would not say how DiPietro did. “That is something I can’t get into,” he said.

DiPietro said, “I know I went in there and smoked it. I told the truth and that’s that.”

When asked if police told him the results, DiPietro said. “They can tell me whatever they want. Again, I didn’t physically see the results.”

When asked if police told him he failed the test, DiPietro said, “That’s all irrelevant. I wanted to see the results myself. They’re not letting me see them. Why don’t they let the public see them?”

McCausland said the polygraph exam results would be difficult to read without training.

“It’s lines on a paper, similar to an electrocardiogram report,” he said. “The polygraph operator knows the results, but there’s no transcript or written text that goes with it.

“It’s very similar to doctors interpreting an EKG. Polygraph operators work in a similar fashion.”

DiPietro said he took one polygraph exam, administered by a single detective.

DiPietro wouldn’t say what he was asked, but briefly described the equipment.

“You’ve got things on your fingers, you’ve got things across your chest,” he said.

He also sat on a seat pad that was part of the polygraph exam equipment, he said.

Asked if other family members had taken a polygraph exam, DiPietro said he was not sure.

"I just know about myself," he said. "Again, anything (police have) asked us to do, we've cooperated. We've made ourselves available to them.

"Anytime they've had a question about something, if they want us to come to the station ... more than willing. We're cooperating. There's nothing to hide here."

McCausland said Maine State Police have three or more polygraph operators and the tests are used for investigative purposes and for pre-employment screening for Maine law enforcement officers.

He said the test results cannot be used as evidence in court cases.

Three kids in the house

Also on Friday, DiPietro said there were three children and three adults in his mother's home on Violette Avenue the night before Ayla was reported missing.

DiPietro said he and Ayla; his sister Elisha DiPietro, 23 and her young daughter; and his girlfriend Courtney Roberts, 24, and her young son, were all in the home. The Roberts are Portland residents.

McCausland said at a Wednesday press conference there were three adults and two children in the home. Friday he said that was a mistake.

"There were two children in addition to Ayla," McCausland said.

At that same press conference, McCausland said police encouraged the DiPietros to speak to the media.

DiPietro said Friday he felt some information should be left to the police to make public.

"I would rather let them be the ones to come out and talk about that night, if they feel it's necessary," DiPietro said of police. "I don't really feel that's up to us. If there are certain details they want to share, they should be the ones to come out and share those details."

DiPietro also clarified a comment he made Wednesday to the Morning Sentinel regarding a large scale search of the Kennebec River and Messalonskee Stream by state divers.

On Tuesday, he said investigators told told him, "Don't be alarmed."

"They said 'don't be alarmed' when you see the searches going on down there, when you see law enforcement out there," he recalled. "Obviously, I was alarmed that they were doing a river search. I mean, when you think about the possibility that your child could be down there — because it is a possibility, there's nothing that isn't a possibility right now. There's nothing that's been ruled out, nobody has been ruled out, just like (McCausland) said. It was another step in the process of eliminating

possibilities, and hopefully those possibilities have been eliminated.”

Ben McCanna — 861-9239

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