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Ayla's father: 'Where's my daughter?'

Justin DiPietro, the father of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds, said that's the only question he has for police.

BY BEN MCCANNA MORNING SENTINEL

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WATERVILLE — The father of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds said he has just one question for police.

“The only question I have is ‘Where is my daughter?’ ” Justin DiPietro said.

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DiPietro's remark was in response to Department of Public Safety Spokesman Steve McCausland, who recently said that communication between investigators and Ayla's paternal family had "basically stopped" — that police expect the family to ask them more questions.

DiPietro said if communication has stopped, it's because the questions he, his mother and sister ask investigators do not get answered.

"If I'm not calling them, it's for good reason," DiPietro said.

Unanswered questions

DiPietro said he is cooperating with the investigation.

“(Investigators) have my phone number, they know where I live. I’ve made myself available to them and accessible at any point in time they’ve asked me or called me. As far as ‘no communication,’ I do not understand where that’s coming from.”

DiPietro said he has offered tips and theories about Ayla’s whereabouts to investigators. His attempts to follow up with investigators on those tips go nowhere, he said.

“You can try and try, but if you’re not getting anything in return ... It’s like (McCausland) said, communication is a two-way street.”

His mother, Phoebe DiPietro, agreed.

“Any time we’ve asked them any questions, we never get any answers. (Police) say, ‘it’s part of the investigation’ or they never get back to us.”

She added that she and her son want police to release the 911 call that Justin DiPietro placed on Dec. 17 when he realized his daughter was missing.

“Why not release the 911 tape? Who is that going to hurt?” she said.

Public statements

Justin DiPietro contended that McCausland’s most recent statements are among several inaccurate ones by investigators.

DiPietro cited a January statement by McCausland that there were three adults and two children in the house the night before Ayla was reported missing, which McCausland later clarified to say there were three children in the home, “two besides Ayla.”

“That’s a little detail that they’re getting wrong at the beginning of this investigation, so how many other things?” he said.

His mother added, “I think Mr. McCausland is very full of himself, and he should check his facts before he goes out and makes statements.

“In my opinion, he is not giving my family any hope that they are looking for a live Ayla,” she said. “And his statements are leading people to stop looking for her. I plead, I beg the public to continue to look for

her.”

Three adults, blood in basement

Police have disclosed few details on the ongoing investigation, but they have said Ayla was not kidnapped, her blood was found in the basement of the home at 29 Violette Ave., and the three adults who were with Ayla the night before she was reported missing — Justin DiPietro; DiPietro’s girlfriend, Courtney Roberts, of Portland; and his sister, Elisha DiPietro — aren’t telling the full truth.

Elisha DiPietro said the public statement about the three adults knowing more than they are saying differs from what she was told in private.

“I’ve had a detective tell me multiple times that he thinks I’m telling the truth. And then to have Steve McCausland publicly say he doesn’t think I am,” she said. “I’m not the person you’re trying to paint me out to be, and I don’t appreciate it.

Justin DiPietro wouldn’t speak at length about the discovery of blood. He said police showed him evidence of “a few drops.”

“It is a fact that her blood was found in my house. Yes, it is a fact that she broke her arm in my house. But, it is not a fact that any of it was intentional.

“My daughter did not come to her demise down in my house. Nothing bad ever happened to my daughter in my house. She never got anything but love from the people in this house,” he said.

DiPietro acknowledged that the majority of public opinion is against him, but said it doesn’t matter.

“People who know me, know me,” he said. “They know I love my daughter, and I just want her home.”

Ben McCanna — 861-9239

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