

Posted **May 31,**
2012

Updated **December 12,**
2014

Police: Ayla Reynolds is likely dead

In Portland, Ayla's mother and other family members react with sobs and a plea for anyone with information about the toddler's disappearance to come forward.

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WATERVILLE — It is highly unlikely that missing toddler Ayla Reynolds is alive, police said today at a press conference.

A \$30,000 reward being offered in the case will be withdrawn in 30 days, said John Nale, a Waterville attorney who initially posted the money on behalf of several area businesses and individuals.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS



Trista Reynolds is comforted by her father Ron Reynolds after watching a televised press conference where police announced that they do not believe Reynolds' daughter Ayla is still alive. *Gregory Rec / Staff Photographer*





An undated photo obtained from a Facebook page of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds. Ayla was 20 months old when she was reported missing on Dec. 17 from the Waterville home of her father, Justin DiPietro. AP



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Nale and police urged anyone who knows what happened to Ayla to come forward.

“Your continued silence can only hurt,” Nale said. “This case is not going to go away. Some day you will be held accountable.”

The 20-month-old Reynolds disappeared from her Violette Avenue home Dec. 17. State and local police say they believe the three adults who were in the house the night she disappeared — her father, Justin DiPietro, his girlfriend, Courtney Roberts and his sister, Elisha DiPietro — know more than they are

saying.

Stephen McCausland, spokesman for the state Department of Public Safety, said police told Justin and Ayla's mother, Trista Reynolds, of Portland, around noon today that police think it's unlikely that their child is alive.

He said Trista Reynolds understood and was thankful for the call.

Of DiPietro's response, McCausland said, "his reaction was no reaction."

Asked if such a reaction is unusual, McCausland replied in two words. "Ask him."

Trista Reynolds, who had gathered with her parents and brother at her home in Portland to watch the Waterville news conference on television, erupted in sobs when McCausland said investigators believe Ayla is dead.

Becca Hanson, Trista's mother tried to console her while Ron Reynolds, Trista's father, cradled his head in his hands.

Ron Reynolds, his son Ronnie Reynolds Jr. and Trista hurled accusations and anger at DiPietro, who they insist bears some responsibility for her death and who they believe is not being candid with police.

"He is no father. A father would not allow this to happen to his child," Trista Reynolds said.

Reynolds said she had been feeling for some time that Ayla is dead but it was hard hearing police say so. Now, she grieves because she cannot bury her daughter.

"What hurts the most is I don't even know where she's at," Ayla's mother said.

Ron Reynolds said the family continues to suffer every day that she is gone.

"We need closure for this family. We need to know where Ayla is," he said, in a plea for whoever knows something about his granddaughter's disappearance to come forward.

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