

Posted February 11, 2013

Updated December 12, 2014

Police to relatives: Evidence exists Ayla Reynolds is not alive

WATERVILLE -- The maternal family of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds has broken its silence regarding a January meeting with investigators.

BY BEN MCCANNA



Share

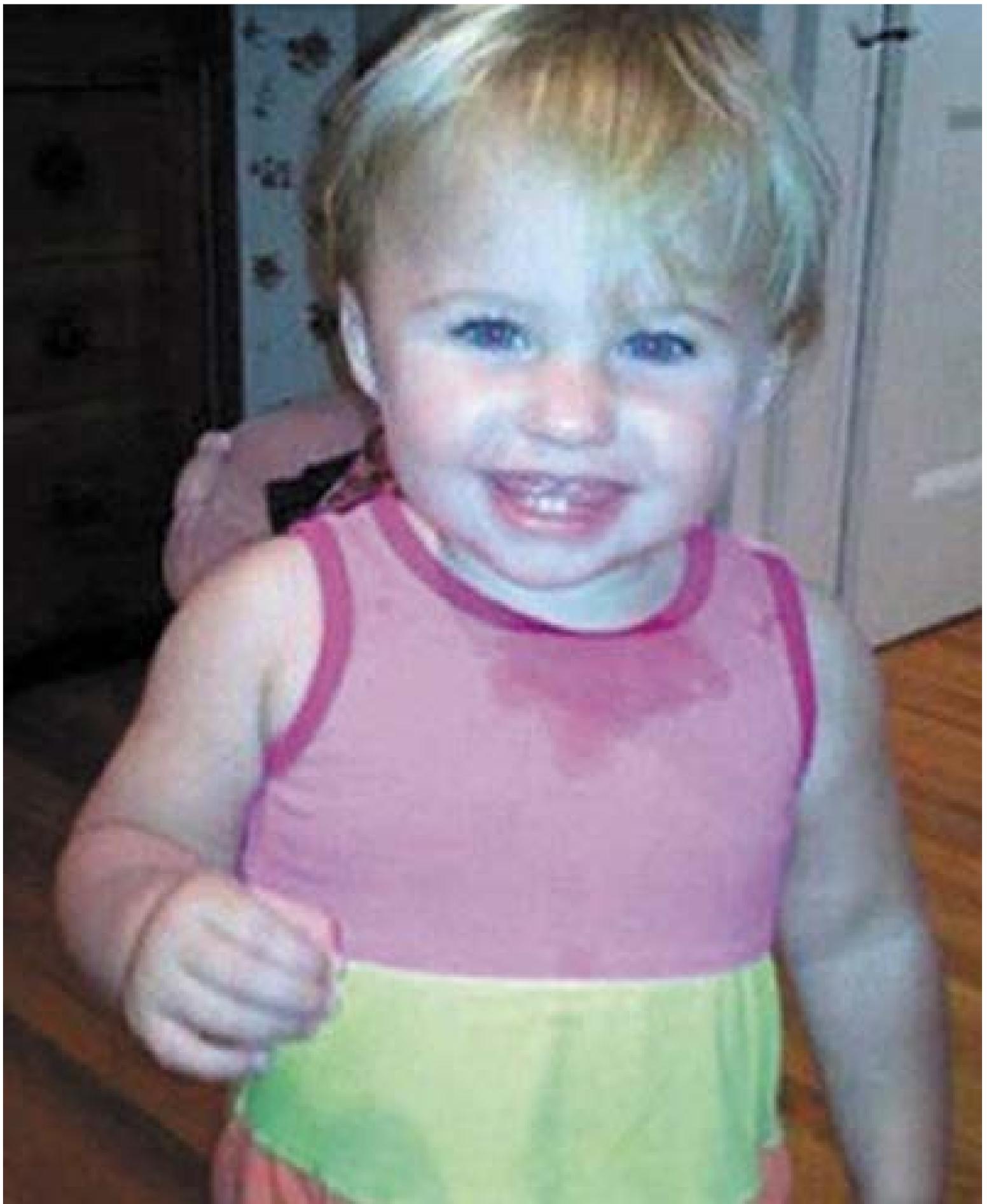


Comment

WATERVILLE — The maternal family of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds has broken its silence regarding a January meeting with investigators.

On Sunday, Ayla's step-grandfather posted a brief summary of the meeting on his website, saying that investigators told Trista Reynolds that there is "unequivocal evidence" that her daughter Ayla is dead. Police, however, won't confirm the claim.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS



Ayla Reynolds *Contributed photo*



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

Jeff Hanson, the step-grandfather and webmaster for aylareynolds.com, also wrote that investigators shared photographs of items that were found in the Kennebec River during searches by state police last spring, but “Trista could not identify the items as Ayla’s.”

Reynolds, a Gorham resident, said he was asked by investigators to withhold additional details from the meeting because it could jeopardize the case, according to the website.

Department of Public Safety spokesman Steve McCausland said he had “no reaction” to the website’s claims, adding that the information shared during that meeting “is between us and her.”

“I’m not going to get into specifics other than to repeat what I’ve said: We think it’s unlikely (Ayla) is still alive,” he said.

Investigators met with Reynolds on Jan. 3 for a review of the investigation into the toddler’s disappearance, McCausland said. Reynolds did not respond to a request for comment, but in December she said investigators were planning to show her evidence that had been gathered, including items that were recovered during searches near the Lockwood Dam.

A similar meeting took place in October, when investigators met with members of Ayla’s paternal family from Waterville: father, Justin DiPietro, aunt, Elisha DiPietro and grandmother, Phoebe DiPietro.

Steve Bourget, an attorney for Phoebe and Elisha DiPietro, has said the October meeting included an update of the investigation and a review of the physical evidence that has been collected. The family was told that DNA discovered in the basement of the Violette Avenue home belonged to Ayla, but it wasn’t necessarily blood, Bourget said.

McCausland, during a press conference in December, described the October meeting with the paternal family as a frank conversation. In January, McCausland wouldn’t characterize the tone of the meeting with Trista Reynolds other than to say investigators “gave her specifics that we felt a mother should know,” he said.

Investigators have not had a similar meeting with Courtney Roberts — a Portland woman who was at the Violette Avenue home the night before Ayla was reported missing. The meetings were only for Ayla’s family members, McCausland said.

McCausland said the case is still open and active, but there have been no new developments. State police continue to receive some tips in the case, but the numbers have “declined greatly.”

Ayla was reported missing on Dec. 17, 2011, by her father. No one has been named as a suspect. Justin DiPietro contends that Ayla was abducted. Police say a kidnapping did not happen and they believe the three adults who saw her last — her father, aunt and Roberts — are withholding information in the case.

Since Ayla’s disappearance, Hanson has reported some information through his websites, including the discovery of Ayla’s DNA in the basement, which was later verified by McCausland.

In May, McCausland announced that investigators believe Ayla is likely dead. State police are asking that anyone with information call them at 624-7076.

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

FCC proposes new rules to block robo-calls

Senate votes to block start of new protections for consumers’ internet data

Augusta man convicted on child pornography charges

Recruiters hop bus to Boston to find new hires