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Mother thinks missing child Ayla Reynolds gone forever, urges charges

The mother of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds says she hopes information she reveals from the investigation puts enough pressure on prosecutors to press charges.

BY JESSE SCARDINA STAFF WRITER

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The mother of missing toddler Ayla Reynolds says she hopes information she reveals from the investigation puts enough pressure on prosecutors to press charges.

Trista Reynolds said in a phone interview Tuesday that evidence the police showed her should be enough to charge the three adults who were in the house where Ayla was reported missing.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS



Trista Reynolds, 25, holds a photo of her 20-month-old daughter, Ayla Reynolds, during an interview with the Associated Press in Westbrook, Maine, Tuesday. Reynolds, whose daughter went missing in December of 2011, says she's going to release more information she's been told by investigators in hopes of calling attention to the case and bringing it to a resolution. *AP photo*



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“After seeing what I’ve seen, I do believe Ayla is dead and I don’t think they’re going to find her,” Reynolds

said.

Reynolds said she plans to release more information police gave her, but added that she wouldn't provide additional specifics until next week on the website aylareynolds.com.

Ayla's father, Justin DiPietro; his sister Elisha DiPietro; and Justin's ex-girlfriend Courtney Roberts were the three adults in the Waterville home when the toddler was reported missing in December 2011.

Reynolds said she thinks the three adults who were in the house should be held accountable for whatever happened. "I honestly believe there is something they can be charged for, and I just want justice served for Ayla," she said.

Last week Reynolds said during a television interview that police told her they found Ayla's blood in Justin DiPietro's vehicle, on his shoes and in his bedroom.

Last month, Reynolds announced that she would provide more information on aylareynolds.com about what she said she had received from state police. It was described on the website as "horrific physical evidence." The website is maintained by Ayla's stepgrandfather, Jeff Hanson.

Reynolds said she will release the information through the website Tuesday and hold a news conference in Portland's Lincoln Park the next day. Reynolds' news conference is scheduled to start right after DiPietro is scheduled to appear at nearby Cumberland County Superior Court on a domestic-violence charge unrelated to his daughter's case.

"The goal for releasing this is to get Justin to crack and speak about where Ayla is," Reynolds said. "That's our main goal: Get Justin, Elisha and Courtney to speak on Ayla's behalf."

Roberts, Justin DiPietro and Elisha DiPietro couldn't be reached for comment.

Reynolds said the last time she contacted DiPietro was in February, and that she and Justin DiPietro "can't seem to hold a conversation." After DiPietro was charged with domestic-violence assault stemming from an incident in Portland in which he allegedly shoved Roberts, Reynolds tried calling her.

"I thought by reaching out to her and talk to her and see where I'm coming from, mom to mom, but that failed to happen. She just doesn't want to talk to me at all," Reynolds said. "She was one of the last people to see my daughter. I just have questions about what Ayla's last few hours were like."

Reynolds said she spoke with Maine State Police a couple of weeks ago but was given no assurance that the investigation was progressing or that any charges would be made soon. Reynolds said police are hesitant to press any charges now because if anyone is acquitted and additional evidence surfaces, police will be unable to bring the charge again. Under constitutional law, the double-jeopardy clause prevents a person from being

charged with the same crime a second time if that person already has been acquitted of it.

“Every time I asked the questions about why hasn’t anyone been charged yet with the evidence that has been presented, it’s the same thing with this whole double jeopardy,” Reynolds said. “I don’t care about double jeopardy anymore.”

Maine State Police spokesman Steve McCausland confirmed that police spoke to Reynolds about three weeks ago, but he would not get into specifics about the conversation.

“We have done our best to keep her informed and we’ll continue to do so,” he said.

Reynolds still holds out some hope that she will one day see her daughter again, but from what she’s been shown by police, the optimism is dwindling.

“I don’t want to believe I’ll never see her again, because I hope there’s that day that Ayla and I are together and I get to hold her and love her,” she said. “But after seeing what I’ve seen, it made it clear to me that she’s probably deceased.”

Ayla was reported missing on Dec. 17, 2011, from 29 Violette Ave. where her father was living at the time.

State police have said those who were home the night Ayla disappeared know more about the disappearance than they are saying.

State police at a news conference in May 2012 in Waterville said Ayla probably no longer was alive.

Jesse Scardina — 861-9239
jscardina@mainetoday.com

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