

# Baby Ayla's mother: I blame her father the most

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1 of 8



Caption

PHOEBE DIPIETRO/FAMILY PHOTO

Ayla Reynolds 20-month-old Ayla was reported missing on December 17, 2011, from her Waterville, Maine, home. Her father claimed he last saw his daughter when he put her to bed the night before.

***For the latest on the baby Ayla case and what happened with the family in court this week, watch "HLN After Dark" tonight at 10 p.m. ET on HLN.***

As the two-year anniversary of her daughter's disappearance approaches, Trista Reynolds is opening up about the case in an effort to help police make progress in the investigation.

In an interview last week with CNN's Susan Candiotti, Reynolds revealed details about evidence that had never before been publicly shared -- details that she says police showed her about a year after Ayla's disappearance.

Reynolds said that, in January 2013, police showed her pictures of the home where Ayla was last seen.

Reynolds told Candiotti she saw police photos that allegedly showed 20-month-old Ayla's blood on her baby doll, and both her blood and her saliva on the belongings of her father, Justin DiPietro.

"On the side of [the baby doll's] face there was some blood, like a swipe, so that's what made me think she tried wiping blood from her mouth with the doll," Reynolds explained. "Her slippers also, she had pink princess slippers with pom-poms on them, and on the pom-poms were droplets of her blood."

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DiPietro reported Ayla missing from his home in Waterville, Maine, on December 17, 2011. He claims he last saw his daughter when he put her to bed the night before. The home belongs to Ayla's paternal grandmother, Phoebe DiPietro. She wasn't home that night, but police say Ayla's aunt Elisha and Elisha's daughter, Gabby, were there and slept on the ground floor. Ayla was reportedly alone in her own room across the hall from her aunt and cousin. Justin DiPietro was in the basement of the home that night with his girlfriend, Courtney, and her son. The basement is where Ayla's blood was found by investigators.

Reynolds told Candiotti that police showed her pictures of the home's basement and called it "a murder scene."

"I'm sorry, but it's the truth," Reynolds said with tears in her eyes. "There was just, like, Ayla's blood everywhere. There was blood on sheets, blood and saliva mixed on a mattress, blood on a fan cord, on the TV, VCR. There was blood found in Justin shoes, blood spattered on the walls," Reynolds said. "There was a tote that had blood on it and in it, and then inside of that tote there was a white sheet that was wrapped up with all kinds of blood spots on it, like someone could have wrapped Ayla's body in it. The blood was just everywhere."

Reynolds said police told her that about a cup of blood was found in DiPietro's basement, and they had determined foul play was involved in her daughter's disappearance. Reynolds told Candiotti that police said the blood they found was from internal and external injuries, and after finding that much blood, they could determine Ayla wasn't abducted. She said police also told her the people in the home that night, including Ayla's father, "aren't telling us the truth."

All three adults who were in the home that night claim to know nothing about Ayla's disappearance.

"Sometimes I think maybe, was something going on in that house," Reynolds said. "Was there a party going on, were there drugs there, did she get a hold of drugs or what not and that's what happened to her, and that's why she was bleeding, and why it could be internal. And then I think, were they doing drugs and maybe Justin just got upset with her cause he was messed up or just abused her? It's just so hard to think of ways that your daughter could suffer," Reynolds said in the interview.

"But at the end of the day, no matter what happened, I still blame three people, and those three people need

to be prosecuted for what they did to Ayla," she said.

No one has been charged in connection with Ayla's disappearance, and when asked why she decided to reveal this evidence now, Reynolds said she decided she had to do something to get justice for her daughter.

"The only thing I could think of was letting everybody hear and know about the evidence that I had seen," Reynolds told Candiotti. "To get that justice for Ayla is by sharing it, with everybody, but it was mainly to put pressure on [Justin DiPietro] to see if it will get Justin, Courtney and Elisha to speak of that night and to tell someone, anyone, where Ayla is or at least what happened to her."

Reynolds said that since police have made no apparent progress in solving her daughter's disappearance, she doesn't think revealing this information will jeopardize the case. Since no one has come forward with any information in two years, Reynolds thinks revealing this evidence can only help.

"Maybe by me releasing that information and the evidence that they have all refused to see, maybe those people out there who do know something won't want to back [the three people who were in the home] up, they will actually want to speak on behalf of Ayla," Reynolds said.

Although Reynolds wants the investigation into her daughter's disappearance to move forward, she says she doesn't believe her daughter could still be alive.

"I don't want to believe that my 3-year-old is no longer alive," she said. "But in two years and with all of the evidence I've seen, there's no way that she is still alive. If she is, it would be a blessing and it would be a miracle, but I do believe that she is with the good lord and I do believe that she is looking down through the sky with her beautiful blue eyes. I just don't think she survived that night."

"Anybody who sees [the evidence] knows that Ayla did not make it through that night," Reynolds continued. "She couldn't have."

When asked about the investigation and why no arrests have been made, Reynolds told Candiotti that, considering the evidence, she doesn't understand what police are waiting for. She said that state police have told her they are continuing to interview people about the case.

"You have been interviewing people for almost two years and you still don't have something," Reynolds said. "But you have evidence of my daughter's blood, you have a room full of her blood and you have it on her car seat, you found it on a pair of slippers, you found it on her baby doll, you found it on Justin's shoes, but you want to tell me that you don't have enough evidence to go ahead and prosecute? I don't believe it."

Authorities have not confirmed the authenticity of the alleged evidence Reynolds claims to have seen, nor her analysis. Maine Deputy Attorney General William Stokes told Candiotti that there is not enough evidence for the state to prosecute anyone yet, and Reynolds' decision to go public with this information will not pressure them to make an arrest.

"No amount of press conferences is going to change the reality that as professional prosecutors, [we'll only make an arrest] if and only if the evidence warrants it," Stokes said. "To allow this type of pressure to influence either the investigation or prosecution undermines the integrity of the investigation or any prosecutor's decision in the future. It simply cannot happen."

While Reynolds continues to search for answers, she says she blames Ayla's father the most for what happened to the little girl.

"As a father, you have a job, you have a duty, you are to protect your child. That was the whole reason he took her from me, because he thought I was unstable to raise Ayla...I did a better job than he did," she said.

"In my eyes, Justin is full to blame because he should have protected her and he should be the one to speak on her behalf. But all three of those people were in that house that night. All three of them know what happened to Ayla, and all three of them should be prosecuted for it."

***See more evidence and Candiotti's full interview with Trista Reynolds tonight at 10 p.m. ET on HLN After Dark.***

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