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Demonstrators at Waterville Police Department demand arrests in Ayla Reynolds disappearance case

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WATERVILLE, Maine — About 30 people gathered outside the Waterville Police Department at noon Saturday to pressure police to make arrests in connection with the case of Ayla Reynolds, the 2-year-old girl who was reported missing just over two years ago.

“We’re out here to press for prosecution,” said Heather Garczynski, who helped organize the protest after learning about the disappearance of Ayla Reynolds on social media earlier this month.

Garczynski said the demonstration was not a protest of the Waterville Police Department, but of the Maine State Police, who are investigating the case. The event was held in Waterville because that is where Ayla was last seen.

Over the past two years, pieces of evidence related to the investigation have been revealed to the public and anger over the absence of any arrests has grown, drawing national attention. Garczynski lives in Erie, Pa., and drove 13 hours to Waterville to attend the protest.

Forty-five minutes into the demonstration, Ayla’s mother, Trista Reynolds, 25, arrived with Dunkin Donuts coffee and treats for the protesters.

“I want closure,” she told reporters. “I want answers. I want to see arrests made.”

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Ayla Reynolds' father, Justin DiPietro, reported his daughter missing on Dec. 17, 2011, telling police that she disappeared during the night. The Maine State Police launched the largest missing person search in the state's history, but the child has not been found and no one has been charged in the case.

Since Ayla's disappearance and the subsequent missing person search, investigators have told reporters that they have [ruled out the possibility that the child was abducted](#), that they believe her disappearance was [a result of foul play](#) and that they believe DiPietro and two other adults who were in the home at the time of Ayla's disappearance are [not being truthful with police](#).

Last September, [Trista Reynolds told reporters](#) that police investigators had shown her photos of blood in the apartment where Ayla was last seen. She has since made an effort to draw the public's attention to the case as a way to put pressure on police to press charges.

Many of the attendees of Saturday's event never knew Ayla Reynolds or her family, but had learned of the event from Facebook.

"I have two daughters of my own and I would like to see more done with this case," said Josh Dunn of Waterville. He said that after Ayla's disappearance, he and some friends went out in search of the girl in an attempt to help police. Since then, he's followed the case closely, he said.

Protesters faced the police station and unrolled a large yellow and purple missing person sign with Ayla's picture on it. Garczynski led the group in a chant:

"Who are we here for?"

"Ayla!"

"What do we want?"

"Justice!"

Later, as snow started to fall, protesters, joined by Trista Reynolds, stood on either side of Front Street and waved signs, imploring motorists to honk. Most cars did not honk, but the demonstrators' shouts grew louder as afternoon wore on.

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