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Transcripts detail Justin DiPietro's 911 call reporting Ayla Reynolds missing

The biggest criminal investigation in state history began with a 911 call in which a father said his 20-month-old daughter was last seen about 10 hours before.

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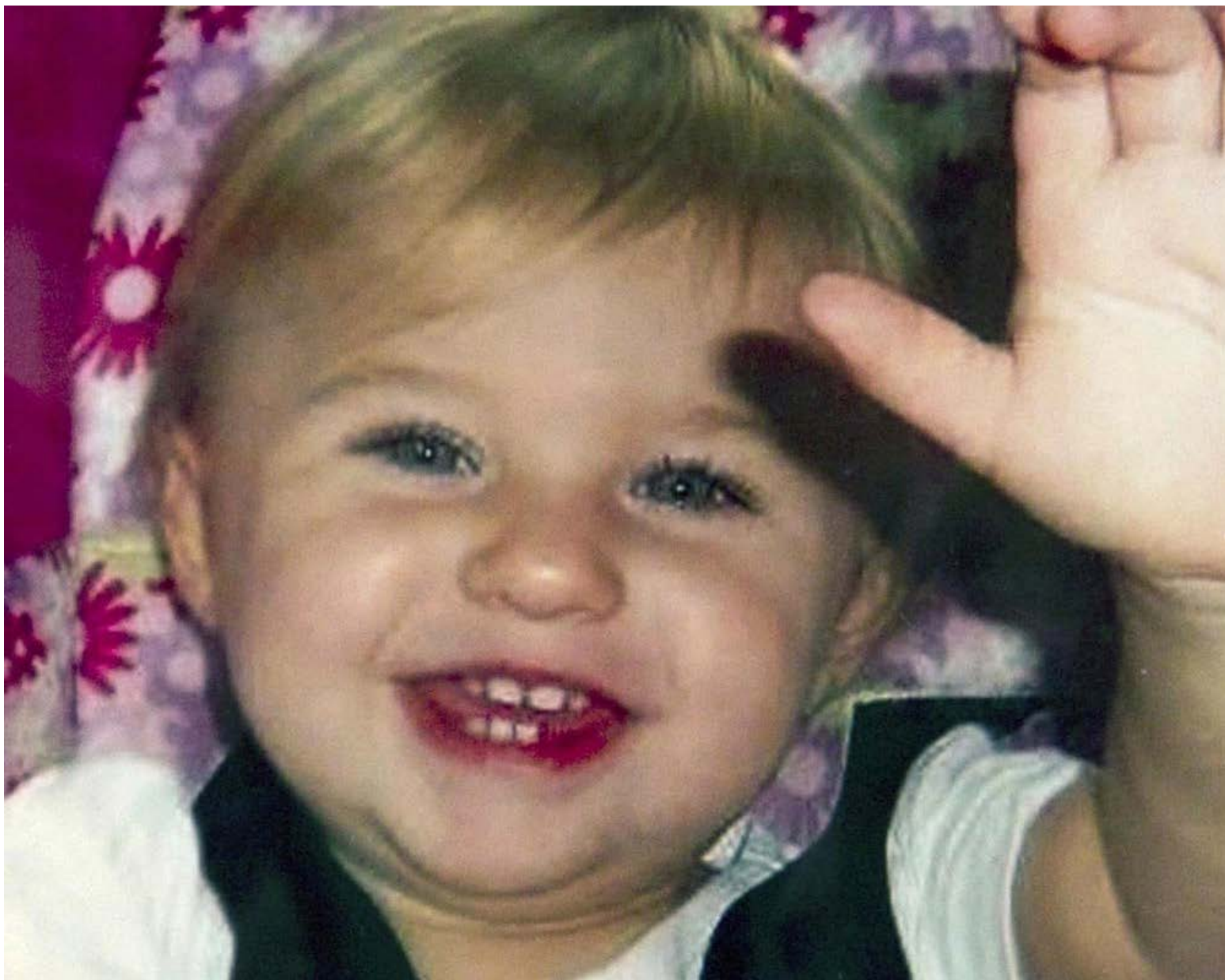
WATERVILLE — The biggest criminal investigation in state history began with a 911 call in which a father said his 20-month-old daughter was last seen about 10 hours before, gave a brief description of the green pajamas she was wearing and said “there’s no way” she could have crawled out of her crib.

In transcripts obtained Monday first by the Associated Press and then by the Morning Sentinel through the Freedom of Access Act, Justin DiPietro told the emergency dispatcher that he put his daughter Ayla Reynolds to bed at 8 p.m. Dec. 16, 2011, and that his sister checked on her two hours later, at about 10 p.m.

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS



Ayla Reynolds



MISSING: Ayla Reynolds, who disappeared Dec. 16, 2011, from her father's home at 29 Violette Ave., in Waterville, is seen here shortly before her disappearance. She was 20 months old at the time. *Reynolds family photo*

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He [dialed 911 the next day at 8:49 a.m.](#)

During the call, DiPietro is asked when he last saw Ayla.

“When I put her to bed last night. My sister checked on her. Um, woke up this morning, went to her room and she’s not there,” he says. At one point, the phone call ends and DiPietro calls back, explaining “my cellphone died.”

Asked by a dispatcher about the exact time someone last saw Ayla in her crib, DiPietro asks his sister, Elisha.

“Um, Elisha, when was the last, when is last time you went in her room last night when you saw her?” DiPietro asks. She responds 10 p.m. and he repeats the time to the dispatcher.

The Associated Press and Morning Sentinel requested the material after the state Supreme Court ruled

such transcripts should be made public unless law enforcement officials can show how releasing the documents would harm an investigation. The Portland Press Herald last year sought transcripts of 911 calls in connection with a fatal shooting in Biddeford, prompting the court's ruling on such transcripts.

Ayla was reported missing from the Waterville home on Violette Avenue where DiPietro lived with his mother. The night she disappeared, his sister and girlfriend, Courtney Roberts, were at the house with their children. His mother was not home that night.

The 911 call prompted a search by police that grew to include game wardens, FBI agents and other officers, who canvassed neighborhoods, lowered streams and sent divers into the nearby Kennebec River. Investigators found blood inside the home, and they have concluded that Ayla is no longer alive and was a victim of foul play.

Detectives also said DiPietro, Elisha DiPietro and Roberts know more than they've told investigators, but the case remains unsolved and no charges have been filed.

The 911 transcripts didn't identify the caller, but state police said previously DiPietro dialed 911. He told the dispatcher that he was in the home with Roberts, his sister, and their two children.

DiPietro was adamant when the dispatcher asked it was possible if Ayla had crawled out of her crib and whether they had "checked all through the house."

"No, ma'am, she, there is no way she coulda got, there's no way she could," he responded.

Trista Reynolds, Ayla's mother, has been pressing for investigators to bring charges against DiPietro or other adults who were in the house that night. Last summer Reynolds said detectives told her they'd found Ayla's blood inside the DiPietro home and, she and her supporters say that should be enough to bring charges. There's also an online petition calling for Attorney General Janet Mills to bring charges.

"We certainly understand the frustration," said Deputy Attorney General Bill Stokes Monday. "We share it. There's nothing worse than losing a child."

But he added, "You have to make sure you protect the integrity of the investigation by following the evidence."

On Jan. 25, Reynolds attended a demonstration outside the Waterville Police Department where about 35 people gathered to urge authorities to file criminal charges against DiPietro.

She and her father, Ronnie Reynolds Sr., and stepfather, Jeff Hanson, did not organize or initiate the demonstration, but said they were there to support those who attended and are keeping the case in the

spotlight.

Ronnie Reynolds Sr., of Portland, talked of the heartbreak, anger and sadness he continues to experience knowing his granddaughter is likely dead and those responsible are free.

“Every day it kills me — it really does,” he said at the demonstration. “Where is Ayla? The pain gets so unbelievable at times.”

Email and a cellphone message sent Monday to DiPietro's mother, Phoebe DiPietro, seeking comment were not returned. She owns the Violette Avenue house from which Ayla disappeared.

Trista Reynolds said Monday that she's focusing on organizing a “celebration of life” on Ayla's fourth birthday, April 4.

“I'm thankful for all of the supporters and everyone helping out,” she said.

Justin DiPietro couldn't be located for comment. A lawyer who represented the family didn't immediately respond to a message.

State police say the case remains active.

Detectives have vetted 1,414 tips from the public and a team of detectives continues to pursue the investigation, said Steve McCausland, spokesman for the Maine Department of Public Safety.

“It is the largest investigation in state police history. It continues to be worked on daily,” he said.

The state Supreme Court ruling in November doesn't require law enforcement officials to release all 911 transcripts. But it provided guidance and required justification for withholding transcripts. Under Maine law, 911 transcripts are to be made public under the FOAA law, but there can be exceptions for “intelligence and investigative records.”

Before the court ruling, the attorney general's office routinely declined to release the Ayla Reynolds' 911 transcripts to the Morning Sentinel and other media organizations.

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