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Wednesday marks 3 years since Ayla Reynolds disappeared

Mother talks about how she's worked to overcome the incident

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Paul Merrill



Political Reporter

WATERVILLE, Maine — It has been three years since anyone has seen Ayla Reynolds.

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The Waterville toddler's father reported her missing on the morning of Dec. 17, 2011.

The search for Ayla has become the biggest criminal investigation in the history of the state of Maine.

Multiple police agencies have devoted countless hours to dozens of searches, which have failed to determine what happened to the 20-month-old girl.

Trista Reynolds, Ayla's mother, said she's coming to terms with the pace of the police investigation into her daughter's disappearance and that she's staying strong for the sake of

her two other children.

However, the joy that she gets from raising her two sons is equally matched by the pain she feels about Ayla's disappearance.

"As I watched Raymond grow up, I wonder, well, what would she look like now? How long is her hair getting? Or how much more is she talking? Or what would she be doing with her brothers? Not having answers definitely keeps me locked in the past," Reynolds said.

As the anniversary approached, Reynolds and her family pushed for police to file some sort of criminal charges against the three people who were with Ayla on the night before she was reported missing.

Investigators say there were three people inside the Waterville home on the night Ayla vanished: Ayla's father, Justin DiPietro; her aunt, Elisha DiPietro; and DiPietro's girlfriend, Courtney Roberts.

There have been no charges related to the toddler's disappearance, but police say they believe that the three people in the house know more than they're saying.

Investigators said they found blood in the house and believe that Ayla is no longer alive.

Reynolds asked police to file a misdemeanor charge, such as child endangerment, before the three-year statute of limitations expires. But she said she's accepted that investigators have a different goal in mind.

"I do believe that they're working her case every day and I do believe that they're trying to get me my answers, but it's hard to get answers when you've got three individuals who just stay hidden and don't want to talk about what happened that night," Reynolds said.

Until Reynolds gets those answers, she said she'll find happiness, and hints of Ayla, in her two boys.

"They resemble her so much, especially Anthony. He's my blond-haired, blue-eyed baby. And there's days that he'll make a smile and I see her face, and I feel like it's her saying, 'Hey, Mommy, I'm still right here,'" Reynolds said.

Justin DiPietro did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

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