

## POLICE DOUBT MISSING BOY WAS EVER AT LIVONIA MALL

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Livonia police for the first time are publicly punching holes in the story of a Detroit mother who reported her 4-year- old son missing Dec. 11.

"Evidence from the tapes at Wonderland would indicate that **D'Wan Sims** was never at Wonderland," Livonia Police Detective Lt. Pete Kunst said Tuesday.

Police also have come up with no witnesses who saw **D'Wan** or his mother, Dwanna Harris, at the places they visited the day he disappeared from Wonderland Mall in Livonia.

Harris said police don't want to believe her because they want her to admit she killed her son.

"I'm surprised they didn't say it sooner, because they've been saying it to me all along," she said Tuesday. "I was upset; now I'm just mad. I contacted them for help, and this is what I got."

Police have viewed mall surveillance tapes several times, but there are no signs of the boy. Harris doesn't show up on the tapes until about 4 p.m., when she was shown searching for her son with mall security staff.

Police are asking people to come forward who may have seen Harris in a red 1991 Ford Thunderbird between noon and 3 p.m that day.

"A child does not vanish in a vacuum," Kunst said. "There are circumstances that surround an event. We're trying to put those pieces of that puzzle together."

In addition to the 50-plus investigators already on the case, Livonia police are enlisting more specialists from the State Police major crime unit.

"We're looking at all possibilities," Kunst said. "Several of those possibilities are rather grim."

Harris' mother, Beverly Harris, said the stress and rumors are starting to take a toll.

Dwanna Harris said she has to be forced to eat. She's lost weight, and she's finding it hard to sleep at night.

"You don't know the nightmare until you live it," she said. "My mother has had to pick me up off the floor."

Beverly Harris said prayer is a regular part of her life now. Her pastor, the Rev. Robert Hunter of Grace Church of the Nazarene, leads her in daily meditations. Each morning, she recites the Lord's Prayer.

Beverly Harris is considering advice from friends to consult a psychic.

"I'm getting desperate," Harris said. "So, I'm willing to try anything."

Meanwhile, the family's holiday spirit is dimming despite the well-trimmed tree topped with a large yellow bow.

On the mantel hang six large red stockings -- the one with **D'Wan's** name is tucked between "Courtney" and "Victor." Under the tree are the Power Ranger bicycle and other gifts **D'Wan** put on his Christmas list.

Beverly Harris had planned to take **D'Wan** Christmas shopping Monday. Afterward, she said, she planned to take him to see a Christmas movie. She misses conversations with her talkative grandson.

"You take it for granted every day until something like this," Beverly Harris said. "Then you do realize nothing can be taken for granted."

Harris, a Detroit fire inspector, said her supporters give her emotional strength. Since **D'Wan's** disappearance 11 days ago, she has received about 300 phone calls from all over the country. A steady stream of visitors come and go, some of whom Harris has not seen in years.

One guest was James Gilmore, president of the Phoenix, a group of black Detroit firefighters. The group is raising money to supplement a \$5,000 reward offered by Wonderland Mall.

"As I look at this situation, the community has to step forward," Gilmore said. "Everywhere I go, people have this stand-off attitude."

It's something Beverly Harris senses too, especially in the faces of the crowd that gathered when police searched her home Monday.

"They had the same attitude as they do when they see an accident on the freeway," Harris said.

"Why would you want to see somebody else's misery? I think it's so sad."

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