

# WELLSVILLE DAILY REPORTER

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## Wellsville missing teen case highlighted on A&E

**By Chris Potter / Wellsville Daily Reporter**

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### Wellsville Police Department, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children looking for leads

WELLSVILLE — A Wellsville missing person case received national attention over the weekend with an appearance on A&E's Live PD Nation.

Hao Liang, a 16-year-old, reportedly left school the afternoon of Feb. 15, 2019 and never returned home. She has not been seen or heard from since.

“Hao’s parents are very, very worried. They know that on the day she disappeared she only had her iPad, her iPhone and her backpack. She apparently had no money with her,” stated Angeline Hartmann, of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, during the broadcast. A clip from the show quickly spread across social media.

The Village of Wellsville Police Department has been investigating the disappearance. Police Chief Tim O’Grady said Liang was previously involved in a missing person case handled by the New York Police Department in New York City.

“She failed to return home after visiting New York City,” O’Grady said of the previous incident. “She was eventually located and did return home. It appears she ran away from Wellsville back to New York City via Buffalo.”

Cheektowaga Police aided the Wellsville Police Department as the search moved to the Buffalo area. NYPD got involved in the investigation once again as a lead took the case to the Brooklyn area.

“We know that just before she disappeared she got a package in the mail,” Hartmann said. “Her parents didn’t think anything about it at the time, but when they went back and looked at the wrapping, it turns out that the sender was from Brooklyn, New York. Police have tried to look at that, tried to follow that lead, but so far nothing. It is possible that she may be in Brooklyn, New York at this time.”

O’Grady confirmed that police investigated a package sent to Liang, but the information did not lead to a break in the case.

“We don’t know what the package was. We did have NYPD check out the return mailing address. That was a dead end,” he said.

The broadcast speculated that Liang may have been “lured away” from home and back to the New York City area.

“We don’t have a lot of details about this, but her parents say they believe she had been communicating online with an older male,” Hartmann said. “If that’s the case, it’s very likely that she was lured away and she could be in very serious danger right now.”

O’Grady said the Wellsville investigation did not turn up any such communications when Liang initially went missing.

“We didn’t have any information like that. I’m not sure where that came from,” O’Grady said. “I’m not sure where they’re at with what they’ve discovered.”

Police follow a set protocol in missing person cases.

“The first thing we do is gather up all the information we can,” O’Grady said. “Then we can put it into the state portal system, e-justice, which sends everything out to all the agencies in the state. In case they run across the individual, they would know the person is missing and contact us.”

The next step is to potentially put out an alert, but different criteria exist for different alerts. Amber Alerts, for example, are sent when a child has been abducted.

“It depends on the situation. This girl is believed to be a runaway so it’s a little different protocol,” O’Grady said. “When we exhausted our resources we contacted the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to get them involved.”

O’Grady said Liang’s family no longer lives in the Wellsville area and has since relocated to Ohio, but the case is still pending for the Wellsville Police Department.

“Certainly we’re looking for any leads just like the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is,” he said.

Hao Liang is five feet tall and weighs approximately 100 pounds. She has brown eyes and black hair. If you have information regarding her whereabouts, contact the Wellsville Police Department at 1-585-593-5600 or the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).

The Live PD Nation clip had been shared over 1,000 times by Monday afternoon. To view it, visit <https://www.facebook.com/OfficialLivePD/>