

# Los Angeles Times

## Girl, 12, Not Abandoned, Police Say

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A 12-year-old girl who claimed to have been abandoned near Panorama City after being smuggled across the border from Mexico and then raped by two men is actually a Los Angeles runaway who made up the story, police said Wednesday.

The girl left for school March 2 and never returned home, police said, leading her guardian to file a missing-persons report.

The girl's original story unraveled under questioning from detectives, said Los Angeles Police Department Det. Jesse Alvarado. Police initially questioned the girl after a San Fernando Valley woman noticed her sleeping behind businesses in Panorama City.

Alvarado said the girl is in the custody of the Los Angeles County Department of Child and Family Services pending an investigation of her family situation.

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2001-mar-22-me-41140-story.html>