

# Schoolgirl admits abduction claim was a hoax

**CAMDEN:** Schoolgirl Karen Sharp, 18, admitted yesterday that her abduction claim was a hoax and that she had run away by herself.

The girl, from Oakdale, near Camden, who went missing from school on Tuesday, sparked a police search which involved homicide detectives.

Police were considering last night if she could be charged, possibly with public mischief offences.

Miss Sharp, who dramatically appeared at nearby Campbelltown police station on Friday night saying a man had tried to kill her, also admitted to sending a series of bizarre and obscene notes to her parents and former boyfriend.

Sergeant Allan Smith said she had claimed to have run away because of mounting personal problems that have not been made public.

During a five-hour interview with

detectives she had explained what had happened during the three days when her case had raised concern around the country.

She had said that on Tuesday she had driven from Camden High School to Campbelltown where she had changed clothes and caught a train to Sydney. She had then caught a ferry to Manly and had spent three nights at an unnamed hotel alone.

Because of the publicity she had decided to return and had given herself up to police on Friday, claiming that she had been kidnapped and held captive by a man.

Sergeant Smith said it was believed that if it had not been for the publicity the girl might not have returned home.

Her family said they were very upset and declined to talk to the media, but her former boyfriend, Grant Robertson, 17, said he had no idea why she might have staged the

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"All I can say is that I hope things will be all right for her in the future," he said. "She's emotional and things must have got to her."

Police say that an anonymous phone call and reports of screams near Camden weir that sparked Friday's search had been discounted and that the case was closed.

A distressing aspect of the supposed kidnap were the notes sent to Grant Robertson and Mr and Mrs Sharp after Miss Sharp went missing.

The notes, which were described as obscene and only partially disclosed, read in part "Nude pictures look best", "By the time you get this Karen might be dead", and "Karen is safe, but for how long?"

Police said a man also made obscene telephone calls to Miss Sharp's home for four days before her disappearance.