Florida woman who was switched at birth opens up about divorcing her biological parents, blowing her million-dollar settlement and being a mom to six children by four different fathers

- Kimberly Mays and Arlena Twigg were switched at birth in 1979, something that came to light after Arlena had a blood test as a child
- The hospital eventually settled with the Twiggs for $7million and Kimberly and her father for $6.6million
- The Twiggs set out to find Kimberly after Arlena died of a congenital heart disease, and when she was 11 began to visit with the girl
- After Kimberly’s father Robert Mays cancelled the visitations, the Twiggs sought full custody of Kimberly
- Kimberly responded by suing the Twiggs to terminate their parental rights, winning her case
- She would eventually split her time between both families even after the case, and married when she was 18
- Kimberly, 36, now has six children by four fathers, has worked as a stripper and was homeless for a few months of her life
Kimberly Mays made national headlines in 1988 when it was revealed that she and another girl, Arlena Twigg, had been given to the wrong parents.

This was revealed after Arlena - who died of a genetic heart defect at 9-years-old - had a blood test which showed that Ernest and Regina Twigg were not her biological parents, and that it was Robert Mays and his late-wife Barbara who were her parents.

Over the course of the next 10 years Kimberly would move in with the Twiggs, divorce the Twiggs and move back in with Robert, run away multiple times and eventually marry her high school boyfriend and give birth to a son Devin.

She has avoided the spotlight for years, but is now speaking about her life with Barbara Walters for an episode of Barbra Walters Presents American Scandals airing Monday night on Investigation Discovery.

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Wrong mom too: Barbara's daughter was given to Regina Twigg, who named the girl Arlena (above)

Kimberly was born on November 29, 1978 at Hardee Memorial Hospital in Wauchula, Florida. Three days later, on December 2, Arlena was born at the same hospital.

Kimberly was delivered quickly after her heart rate began to go down while her mother was in labor while the Twiggs were told they had given birth to a healthy baby girl.

Right as they were about to check-out of the hospital however, the Twiggs were told their daughter had a heart problem, something they had previously had experience with and which had caused the death of a previous child.

Arlena's heart began to fail just days after leaving the hospital, leading to problems with her lungs, but the newborn managed to survive and hold on for nine more years.

While undergoing a blood test in her childhood years the Twiggs learned that Arlena was not their daughter, but at the time decided to focus on their daughter's health, which was rapidly deteriorating as she got older.

She passed away in 1988 during open-heart surgery. Shortly after the Twiggs set out to find their lost child.

They went public with their search, which soon revealed that only two white babies had been born in the hospital during the time of Arlena's birth.
Tough times: The Twiggs (Regina above in 1993) learned Arlena was not their daughter after she underwent a blood test.

Tough talk: Robert (above in 1993) told his non-biological daughter about the switch but would not let her get tested until she was 11.
Once Robert - his wife having died of cancer - learned what had happened he sat down with Kimberly and explained everything to her 'like it was a story."

He refused to let the Twiggs test his daughter however, waiting until she was 11 years old to finally have blood drawn, which proved that Kimberly was the biological daughter of Ernest and Regina.

Robert said however before he allowed the test that the Twiggs could not seek custody, and would only be allowed visitations with Kimberly.

'We cried for an hour in her bedroom,' said Robert of learning the news at the time.

Kimberly met the Twiggs shortly after, and made several more visits in the months that followed to their home.
Things began to get difficult for Kimberly however, who said in interviews that Regina asked the young girl to call her ‘mom,’ and even asked to call her 'Arlena.'

Kimberly agreed to call the woman 'mom,' but refused to be called 'Arlena' while at the Twigg household.

Robert stopped the visits soon after they began however, citing Kimberly's poor grades in school.

At this same time both families were involved in lawsuits with the hospital, with Robert suing for $10million and the Twiggs going so far as to accuse the hospital of deliberately switching the babies.

The Twiggs eventually settled for $7million while Robert and Kimberly received a $6.6million settlement.

Opening up: Kimberly is now speaking about her life with Barbara Walters for an episode of Barbra Walters Presents American Scandals airing Monday night on Investigation Discovery
Back in the day: Kimberly (above aged 11) in a home video that was filmed while she visited the Twiggs

Despite the settlement, the Twiggs continued to accuse the hospital of switching the babies, something a nurse's aide later claimed did happen shortly before her death.

That woman, Patsy Webb, said that Dr. Palmer at the hospital was aware of the switch and that money had been paid to him. Regina would also accuse Barbara, at that point dead of ovarian cancer, of being involved in the switch.

Regina said that Barbara's family the Cokers, a well-to-do family in the town, likely paid for the switch in order to ensure getting a healthy baby as Barbara had suffered fertility problems for years.

She even shared this version of events with Kimberly - then just 11-years-old - when she first visited with the Twigg family.

'She said that my grandmother had so much money that she bought to switch us,' said Kimberly in a 1993 interview with Walters.

When Walters pointed out to Regina in that same 1993 interview that calling Robert a criminal could have a negative impact on Kimberly, she responded by saying; 'Well Kimberly is going to need to learn to live with the truth one day.'

Having had their visitation rights taken away by Robert, the Twiggs responded by seeking full legal custody of Kimberly.

The 14-year-old fired back however, and sued to terminate the parental rights of Ernest and Regina. Her decision resulted in national media attention and a heated trial.

During his opening statement the Twiggs' attorney said; 'Kimberly Mays died five years ago. This lady sitting at this table here is Arlena Twigg and she was born on December 2, 1978, and if you pull out her birth certificate her legal parents are Ernest and Regina Twigg. Kimberly Mays is an alias for Arlena Twigg.'

The trial was being broadcast at the time, and as he spoke Kimberly could be seen in the background hysterically sobbing while he spoke, unable to catch her breath.

When asked what she would say to Regina if she had the chance, Kimberly said in that 1993 interview; 'I wish I had my life back. A normal life. It's ruined.'

She then broke down as she told Walters; 'I don't have a normal life.'
Kimberly eventually won her divorce from the Twiggs. Then, six months later in a move that shocked everyone who had been following the case, Kimberly moved in with Ernest and Regina.

The move was actually at the request of Robert who was trying to deal with Kimberly after she ran away from home and began staying at a YMCA for troubled teenagers.

She did this again when she was 17 years old and living with the Twiggs, again staying at a YMCA, and after that split time between both households.

Kimberly married boyfriend Jeremy Weeks in February 1997 when she was just 18-years-old, and that August gave birth to a son Devin.

When Devin was 22-months-old, she and Jeremy lost custody of the child for reasons that have remained unspecified, though they did get the boy back in April of 2000 - almost one year later.

Little was heard from her after that point, until she sat down with Walters for a one-on-one interview.

She now lives in Clearwater and works at a call center to support herself and her children.

Kimberly says living with the Twiggs for the two years she moved in was difficult, and that the younger children hated her for tearing apart their family and being the focus of all their mother’s attention.

'I couldn't handle the resentment,' said Kimberly of her decision to eventually leave the family.

'The bickering. Just the arguing and the yelling. At me.'

She then added; 'They wanted their mom back. That's all.'
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Home: Kimberly now lives in Clearwater, Florida with her children

Family: Kimberly has given birth to six children with four different fathers

Mom: Regina has not spoken to Kimberly in ten years, but said she still loves the little girl she lost at the hospital over 30 years ago
Once on her own, Kimberly's life quickly became almost as complicated as it had during her teenage years.

She was divorced from Jeremy by the time she was 22, and married once again. Her six children have four different fathers.

Over that time she burned through her hospital settlement, and in 2012 her Robert died.

At one point, she even turned to stripping.

'I did it for money,' Kimberly told Walters.'To put a roof over my head and food in my stomach. And diapers on [daughter] Jasmine.'

She was also homeless at one point, living in a car while pregnant with one of her daughters, Shania, before moving into a shelter for a few months.

Kimberly said she refused to reach out to her father because he had urged her to have an abortion, something she does not believe in.

Regina meanwhile has not spoken to Kimberly in ten years, but said she still loves the little girl she lost at the hospital over 30 years ago.

When asked if she had any desire to see Regina again, Kimberly told Walters 'no.'

She said that chapter of her life is closed.