



Adrienne Renelli, a resident for the past 12 years at Willowbrook State School, gets assistance from her family's attorney, Bronx Congressman Mario Biaggi, right, in the County Courthouse, St. George. She is flanked by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Renelli. S.I. Advance Photo by Robert Parsons

Too many to handle, says Willowbrook aide

By RAYMOND A. WITTEK

An attendant at Willowbrook State School, a high school graduate who had the benefit of a three-week orientation to prepare for her job, testified yesterday she took it upon herself to decide when and for how long she would try to train 22-year-old Adrienne Renelli, to eat with utensils or to dress herself.

The attendant, Mrs. Eunice Lee Howell of East Orange, N.J., said she had "too many people to handle" in her ward to give Adrienne more attention. At the time, Adrienne was among 63 mentally

retarded patients then in Ward A of Building 22. The patients were cared for by two to five attendants.

Mrs. Howell said she gave up trying to teach Adrienne after about a week. Experts have said that Adrienne, despite an IQ of 28, is capable of learning rudimentary self-care steps.

Mrs. Howell testified at the third day of a Supreme Court hearing into allegations that Adrienne, who also is an epileptic, had been mistreated

during the 12 years she has been at Willowbrook and that the state failed to provide her with training programs that would have helped in her development.

Adrienne's parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Renelli of the Bronx, are seeking a court order that would compel the state Mental Hygiene Department, which has jurisdiction over Willowbrook, to take steps to insure Adrienne's safety and health and provide her with training

programs to help her grow as a human being.

Mrs. Renelli said yesterday she and her husband brought the court action in an effort to spotlight conditions at Willowbrook. Mr. and Mrs.

Renelli's attorney, Congressman Mario Biaggi of the Bronx, said he hopes that a ruling in favor of the Renellis will benefit all patients at Willowbrook, as well as those throughout the state.

Assistant State Attorney General Judith Gordon has conceded that the state is under