

# THE SEARCH FOR JENNIFER



New York Post: James Norman  
**Kenneth and Karen Schweiger hold a picture of their missing daughter, Jennifer, in their Staten Island backyard. The 12-year-old has not been seen since Thursday.**

**By JOY COOK**

A 12-YEAR-OLD girl with Down's Syndrome — missing since she was seen walking off Thursday with a "seedy-looking" stranger — was the target yesterday of a massive search around Staten Island's abandoned Wilbrook mental institution.

The third frantic day of searching for Jennifer Schweiger produced no traces. Massive efforts by some 20 police officers, civilian volunteers, police helicopters and bloodhounds focused on the heavy woods in the area.

The search, halted at nightfall, was set to resume this morning.

"As time goes by, we know something has happened. But we hope something hasn't," said Police Emergency Services Sgt. James Lapedra, who led the day's search.

Sgt. James Sackel said police have received several calls from people who spotted the girl "in the general area with this man we believe to be

homeless."

He added:

"We believe this man perhaps took her by the hand and walked her into the abandoned complex."

The child was last seen Thursday afternoon, six blocks from her home at 291 Wardwell Av.

She was gazing trustfully and walking hand-in-hand with a man who was described by those who spotted him rummaging through garbage as "seedy."

"All we can do is sit here and hope," said the girl's anxious father, Kenneth Schweiger, 40, an assistant manager in the New York Telephone Co.'s accounting dept.

Her heart-broken mother fought tears as she gestured toward the backyard above-ground pool, and recalled how her daughter "loves to play in the pool."

The girl, 4-foot-3 and 65 pounds, with mongoloid features, light brown hair in pigtails, and hazel eyes, was wearing a pink Seaside Street T-shirt.

The man was described as about 60, 5-foot-8 and 165 pounds, balding and missing some front teeth. He was wearing a blue shirt and gray pants.

Police at a command post at the Jett Avenue firehouse asked anyone with information to call the hotline number: (718) 447-4168.

## Cops comb

## Woods for

## 12-year-old