

# DAILY NEWS

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## PSYCHIATRISTS EVALUATE SUSPECT IN KIDNAP OF LITTLE JEN

# Rand competent to be tried



Andre Rand

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Andre Rand, charged with kidnaping 12-year-old Jennifer Schweiger and the prime suspect in the Staten Island girl's death, has been found mentally competent to stand trial, the Daily News learned yesterday.

A well-placed source said Rand, 43, was found competent by two psychiatrists at Kings County Hospital, where he has been undergoing court-ordered psychiatric evaluation since Aug. 5.

Rand is scheduled to appear in Staten Criminal Court Friday. At that time, the psychiatrists are to pre-

sent their findings to Judge Michael Brennan, who will rule on Rand's competency.

### The criteria

A person is legally competent to stand trial if he understands the proceedings against him and is capable of consulting with counsel and assisting in preparing a defense.

Usually judges adopt the state psychiatrists' competency findings, but the findings may be contested by the defense.

A Staten Island grand jury is to begin hearing evidence in the case today.

Rand is charged with kidnaping Jennifer, a victim of

Down's syndrome who disappeared from outside her Westerleigh home July 9.

The child was found dead Aug. 12 in a shallow grave near a campsite that had been used by Rand on the grounds of the old Willowbrook mental hospital, authorities said. Medical examiners have not yet determined the cause of death.

Rand, a vagrant ex-convict who allegedly had been seen walking hand-in-hand with Jennifer, was arrested Aug. 4.

He was convicted in 1969 of sexually assaulting a 9-year-old Bronx girl and has been identified by police as a suspect in the disappearance of three other Staten Island girls.